



# TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN CONFLICT AND POST-CONFLICT SITUATION

Caritas research-action  
coordinator :  
Geneviève Colas,  
Secours Catholique  
Caritas France

Researched  
and written:  
Olivier Peyroux

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CARITAS ALBANIA, ARMENIA, BOSNIA-  
HERZEGOVINA, BULGARIE, KOSOVO, FRANCE, LEBANON, TURKEY

JUNE 2015 - PROGRESS REPORT



## CONTENTS

<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Presentation of the research .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Relevance .....	6
Objectives.....	7
Definitions .....	8
Trafficking in human beings.....	8
Displaced people, refugees, asylum-seekers Definitions and changes .....	9
<b>Participants and methodology .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Choice of participants/Participants .....	9
Research-action stage .....	10
<b>Scope and limitations of the research-action.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Changes in the international context on the refugee issue and increased vulnerability of people .....</b>	<b>12</b>
Closure of Europe's borders and increased role of third countries in receiving and taking charge of refugees	12
<b>Identification of the different situations of exploitation in countries in conflict (Part I), third countries (Part II) and countries in reconstruction (Part III).....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PART I : Trafficking in countries in conflict .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Sexual exploitation .....	16
Abduction of women for the purposes of sexual exploitation abroad.....	17
Forced / Early marriages to obtain protection and/or provide for the family's needs .....	17
Enlistment of children in armed militia .....	19
Trafficking in organs.....	19
<b>PART II : Exile in a neighbouring country and risk of trafficking.....</b>	<b>20</b>
Marriages to obtain protection .....	20
"Temporary" marriages among girl refugees.....	21
Prostitution.....	22

Survival sex .....	23
<b>Exploited children .....</b>	<b>24</b>
Children tasked with helping their family .....	25
Street children .....	26
Agricultural child labour .....	28
Risk of teenage enlistment.....	30
<b>Belonging to a minority relected by all belligerents .....</b>	<b>31</b>
Iraqi Christians and Yazidis.....	31
The Dom people.....	31
<b>Economic exploitation .....</b>	<b>33</b>
Vulnerability due to administrative barriers to obtaining legal employment .....	33
Blackmail and attempted recruitment for other forms of exploitation .....	33
Recruitment agencies.....	34
<b>Continuing the journey to Europe and debt .....</b>	<b>34</b>
Risk of labor exploitation due to the administrative barriers.....	35
Children and risk of trafficking .....	35
Debt and risk of trafficking.....	36
<b>PART III : Trafficking related to post conflict situation.....</b>	<b>38</b>
Development of sexual exploitation as a result of the presence of military and international STAFF in the post-conflict period (e.g. Bosnia herzegovina and Kosovo) .....	38
Forgotten population and Development of international networks for trafficking in human beings .....	40
Destabilisation of neighbouring countries and effect on trafficking in human beings .....	42
Children on the move .....	42
Early marriages .....	43
Sale of children .....	44
<b>Examples of Experimentation .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>General Recommadations .....</b>	<b>46</b>

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While some of the forms of exploitation covered by this research are specific to countries directly involved in conflict - child soldiering and organ trafficking to treat wounded fighters - the remaining types of trafficking in human beings have many points in common in conflict and post-conflict periods. Recruitment methods, psychological control techniques and the forms of exploitation do not depend on particular geographic zones.

### EARLY AND FORCED MARRIAGE FOR THE PURPOSES OF EXPLOITATION

---

Our research showed that, in the countries in conflict, girls were abducted by various armed groups from their families, or near border areas, for the purposes of sexual slavery. However, in all of the countries studied, the methods of recruitment revolve around various types of arranged marriages. The girls and their families were apparently seldom aware of the risks. Whatever the religion involved, the dowry system is regularly corrupted and turned into the purchase price of a human being. These marriages are used for one or other type of exploitation, or even for several types of exploitation at once. They turn into domestic exploitation, sexual exploitation, forced prostitution, temporary marriage or debt bondage, all of which can include being forced to commit offences.

### ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION

---

This type of exploitation, and the many forms it takes, is found in all of the countries studied. The quasi-impossibility for refugees to enter the legal job market, because of limited rights or the absence of status, fosters large-scale economic exploitation. Although there is little chance of changing domestic legislations at this point, our research showed that economic exploitation can generate other forms of exploitation, such as drug running, sexual exploitation, debt bondage, etc. This leads us to advocate for the establishment of a distinction of type, not degree, between economic exploitation and undeclared work.

### USE OF CHILDREN

---

In countries with large numbers of refugees, child labour can be seen in every sector that requires unqualified labour: agriculture, street vendors, shoe-shiners, construction, shop salespeople, etc. The report<sup>1</sup> on minor Iraqi refugees in Lebanon showed that these practices were far from common before the conflict. In the sample quoted, 92% of the children had not worked in Iraq and 59% had completed at least elementary schooling. While this exploitation through work, which sometimes turns into sexual exploitation or forced crime, is dictated by the economic hardships experienced by refugee families, there is a tendency for it to become commonplace, even institutionalised. The example of refugee families living in informal tented settlements on private lands in the Bekaa Valley or Northern Lebanon,

---

<sup>1</sup> An Insight into Child Labor among Iraqi Refugees in Lebanon. CLMC, Beirut, 2012.

who have to send their children out to work in the field of the landlord in order to be able to pay for the piece of land used, is a worrying illustration of this. Humanitarian organisations tend to work through the *chawichs* and regularly assign them the task of distributing aid (food, blankets, etc.), thereby further bolstering their position in the camps.

## VULNERABLE MINORITIES

---

The post-conflict situations studied in this research show that past and present civil wars lead to certain minorities being permanently rejected, on ethnic or religious grounds, by all of the belligerents. In the post-conflict period, these groups' place in society continues to be threatened. These minorities find themselves marginalised and represent a pool of potential victims of trafficking in human beings over several generations. The exclusion from social institutions in their countries of origin condemns them to living in isolation and reinforces the clan mentality and crime. The example of Bosnia and Kosovo shows that, more than 15 years after the end of the conflicts, the lack of protection for these population groups in their home or host countries generates an internal structuring of so-called grey activities that can degenerate into crime and human trafficking.

## MIGRANT SMUGGLING AND TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

---

Many studies draw a type distinction between smuggling migrants and trafficking in human beings. This is based on the assumption that, once the migrant has paid the required sum and been smuggled into the country, the person is no longer tied to the smuggler. Our research tends to prove the opposite. Migrant smuggling can be a stepping stone to trafficking in human beings. Many people who cannot afford to pay the smuggler on the spot end up in a situation of debt bondage. Some families are obliged to marry their daughters to the first suitors who come along in order to recuperate the dowry money; others, especially in Western Europe, are caught up in economic exploitation or forced crime.

## PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH

### RELEVANCE

Trafficking in human beings in conflict and post-conflict situations is a subject on which little research has been done, and which is seldom addressed by the stakeholders tasked with supporting displaced people and/or refugees. In the field, the reception or "management" of people fleeing conflicts, whether by international organisations, States or civil society, essentially boils down to providing humanitarian aid to meet these populations' basic needs: food and drink, medical care, shelter, and so on. Emergency aid programmes during the conflict phase and reconstruction programmes still do too little to address the exploitation

or presence of vulnerable groups, such as children without a family guardian, unaccompanied women or persecuted minorities.

According to the Caritas organisations working in the field, because of the proliferation of conflicts around the world (Middle East, Ukraine, etc.), which mainly affect civilians and which result in an unprecedented number of displaced people and refugees, human trafficking and exploitation would appear to be increasingly in the forefront. Failure to address these issues can result in the permanent entrenchment of this phenomenon in countries being rebuilt after a period of conflict. Accordingly, this research-action aims to insights into trafficking in conflict and post-conflict situations to all stakeholders so that they can put forward the solutions best suited to the situations in the field.

#### OBJECTIVES

- ˘ Understand trafficking in human beings in conflict and post-conflict situations: the forms it takes and how it is carried out;
- ˘ Help Caritas and its partners more effectively support refugees fleeing conflicts and who are at risk of or victims of trafficking, by producing new tools;
- ˘ Draw up a series of recommendations, based on local research and trials, to better address human trafficking in aid programmes for conflict and post-conflict situations, and disseminate them to local, national, regional and international stakeholders.

## DEFINITIONS

### TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

The Palermo Protocol (2000), which was ratified by 147 countries, provides the following definition of "Trafficking in persons" in its Article 3, entitled "Use of terms":

"For the purposes of this Protocol:

(a) "Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

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;

(b) 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;

(c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in persons" even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;

(d) "Child" shall mean any person under eighteen years of age."

European Directive 2011/36/EU, which focuses more on the protection of victims, expands on this definition in its Paragraph 11:

"In order to tackle recent developments in the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings, this Directive adopts a broader concept of what should be considered trafficking in human beings than under Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA and therefore includes additional forms of exploitation. Within the context of this Directive, forced begging should be understood as a form of forced labour or services as defined in the 1930 ILO Convention No 29 concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour. Therefore, the exploitation of begging, including the use of a trafficked dependent person for begging, falls within the scope of the definition of trafficking in human beings only when all the elements of forced labour or services occur. In the light of the relevant case-law, the validity of any possible consent to perform such labour or services should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. However, when a child is concerned, no possible consent should ever be considered valid. The expression 'exploitation of criminal activities' should be understood as the exploitation of a person to commit, inter alia, pick-pocketing, shop-lifting, drug trafficking and other similar activities which are subject to penalties and imply financial gain. The definition also covers



trafficking in human beings for the purpose of the removal of organs, which constitutes a serious violation of human dignity and physical integrity, as well as, for instance, other behaviour such as illegal adoption or forced marriage (...)."

---

## DISPLACED PEOPLE, REFUGEES, ASYLUM-SEEKERS DEFINITIONS AND CHANGES

People obliged to leave their place of residence because of conflict and/or persecution are considered **displaced** when they remain in their country and **refugees** when they leave their country.

The term "refugee" is defined by Article 1 A (2) of the 1951 Geneva Convention: " (...) the term "refugee" shall apply to any person who: (...) owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country".

The signatory countries (139 countries) base themselves on this convention to define the right to asylum in their national legislation. Depending on the States, people other than refugees in the sense of the Geneva Convention may be entitled to apply for asylum. Other legal grounds may be claimed, such as being persecuted for one's opinions or belonging to an ethnic, religious or sexual minority. In France, this type of application comes under so-called "subsidiary" asylum.

## PARTICIPANTS AND METHODOLOGY

---

### CHOICE OF PARTICIPANTS/PARTICIPANTS

The plan to conduct a research-action was discussed among the Caritas organisations involved in the Euro-Mediterranean anti-human trafficking project in Madrid in January 2014. At a meeting in Lebanon in May 2014, more targeted discussions were held on the objectives and methodology, and a presentation document was produced. Based on this document the Caritas organisations in Albania, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo, France, Lebanon, Turkey and Ukraine<sup>2</sup> decided to take part of this research. To date, the first organisations are already actively involved and other Caritas organisations may join the project.

---

<sup>2</sup> Because of the circumstances Caritas Ukraine wasn't able to provide accurate information.

---

## RESEARCH-ACTION STAGE

The term research-action refers to a variety of approaches developed by the social sciences to "boost" social change. A panel of international researchers produced the following tentative definition<sup>3</sup>: "research in which there is deliberate action to transform reality; research with a dual objective: transform reality and gain insights into these transformations".

In this work, the link between research and action will be made in the following steps:

***Step 1: Conduct research, in the participating countries, into the different types of trafficking in human beings in conflict and post-conflict situations;***

***Step 2: The participating Caritas organisations decide to develop tools through concrete experimentations on one or more of the types of trafficking identified;***

***Step 3: Assess the impact of the tools used;***

***Step 4: Disseminate the research-action and advocate recommendations to put into practice.***

In Step 1, each Caritas organisation involved in the study appointed a research officer (sometimes the Caritas coordinator for efforts to stop trafficking in human beings, or some other person). The latter conducted documentary research and interviewed institutional stakeholders and stakeholders in the field. Whenever possible, the researchers gathered first-hand accounts from victims or people at risk, using two methods:

- semi-guided interviews;
- focus groups<sup>4</sup> conducted with Syrian and Iraqi refugees.

The research officers were coordinated by a senior researcher specialised in trafficking in human beings.

---

<sup>3</sup> At a symposium held at the INRP (National Institute for Educational Research) in Paris

<sup>4</sup> This tool provides a comparison of different stakeholders' viewpoints that is more apt than individual interviews to bring out differences of assessment, internal reasoning, possible malfunctions, etc.

## SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH-ACTION

This research-action, which spans a period of two and a half years, consists of a qualitative analysis of the forms and operation of trafficking in human beings among people who are displaced or refugees as a result of conflict and post-conflict situations.

The number of interviews of victims or people at risk per country was limited (maximum of approximately 30 per country). This makes it impossible to report on the quantitative scale of the phenomenon, and thus limits the possibility of providing and exhaustive listing of the various forms of trafficking that are being conducted in the respective countries.

Obstacles and limitations:

- Very little research has been done on trafficking in human beings, so documentary research had to be extended to include press articles, especially to corroborate certain information provided by the refugees but not necessarily recorded by studies;
- The scope of action among the engaged Caritas organizations is geographically limited to their home countries, so it was not always possible to report on specific regional features within the different countries;
- The victims or people at risk who took part in the interviews and/or focus groups had been identified by the Caritas organisations or their partners, so the group polled was, *de facto*, not representative of all victims. A series of filters inherent to social work sometimes meant that certain categories of victims (women, people who spoke the language of the specific country where the study took place, etc.) were more likely to be selected to participate;
- The techniques used to exploit and gain psychological control over people change according to the person's status, the practices of the stakeholders in the field, the arrival of new vulnerable populations, etc. The analysis presented here, therefore, corresponds to a partial snapshot of the various forms taken by trafficking in human beings at a given time.

## CHANGES IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT ON THE REFUGEE ISSUE AND INCREASED VULNERABILITY OF PEOPLE

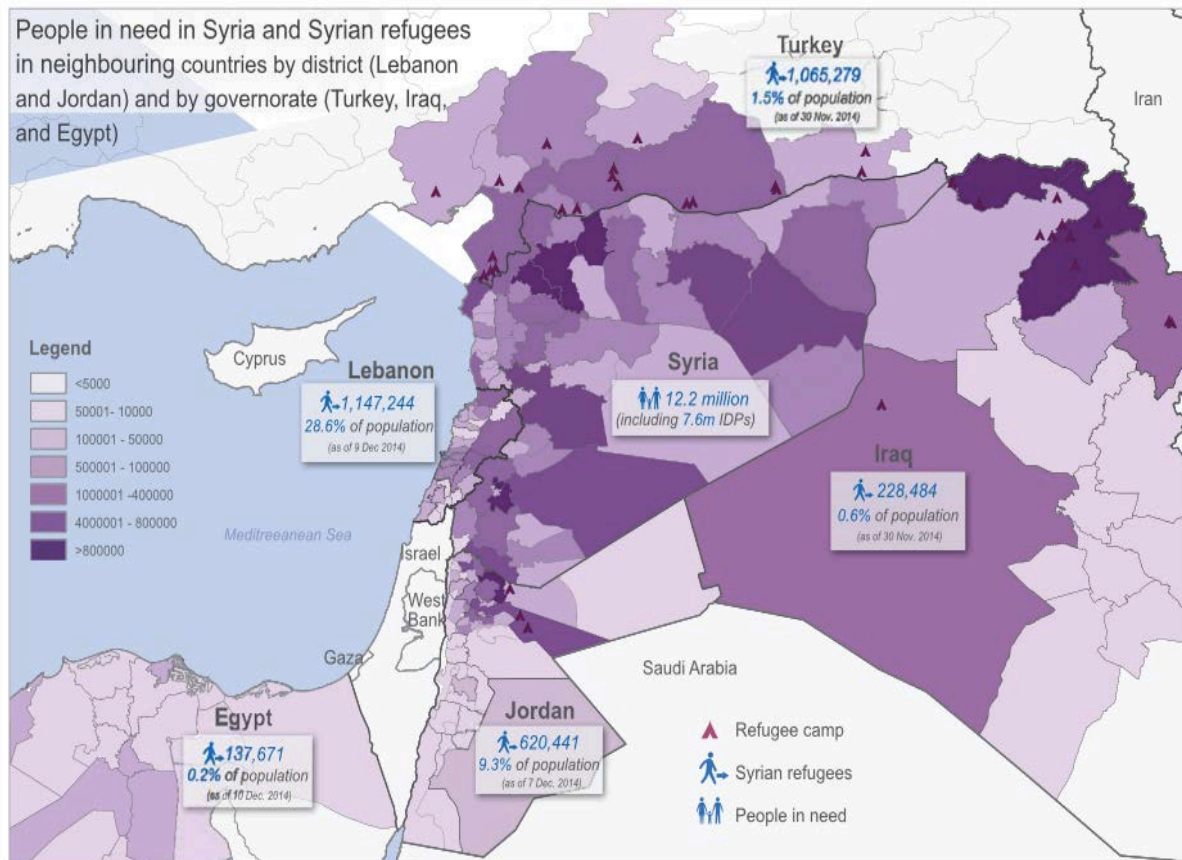
### CLOSURE OF EUROPE'S BORDERS AND INCREASED ROLE OF THIRD COUNTRIES IN RECEIVING AND TAKING CHARGE OF REFUGEES

According to research by Gérard Noirel<sup>5</sup>, beginning in the 1980s, Western countries introduced policies to curb the filing of asylum applications in their respective territories and to lower the acceptance rate. In 1980, the rate of acceptance of asylum applications in European Member States stood at 85%, whereas, in the 2000s, the proportion was completely reversed and reached an 85% rejection rate. Over the years, the status of refugee has thus become less protective. The future prospects it procures are increasingly uncertain. An analysis of the figures on the distribution of Syrian refugees between the Middle East and Europe confirms this trend.

In December 2014, the High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR) estimated the number of Syrians forced to flee their country at more than 3 million (out of a population of 22 million). The majority of them found refuge in the following countries: 1, 147,244 million in Lebanon, 1,065,279 in Turkey, 620,441 in Jordan, 228,484 in Iraq and 137,671 in Egypt. Still according to the HCR, 12.2 million people have been displaced within Syria.

---

<sup>5</sup> Gérard Noirel, *Réfugiés et sans-papiers, La république face au droit d'asile XIX<sup>e</sup> – XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris: Hachette / Pluriel, 1999.



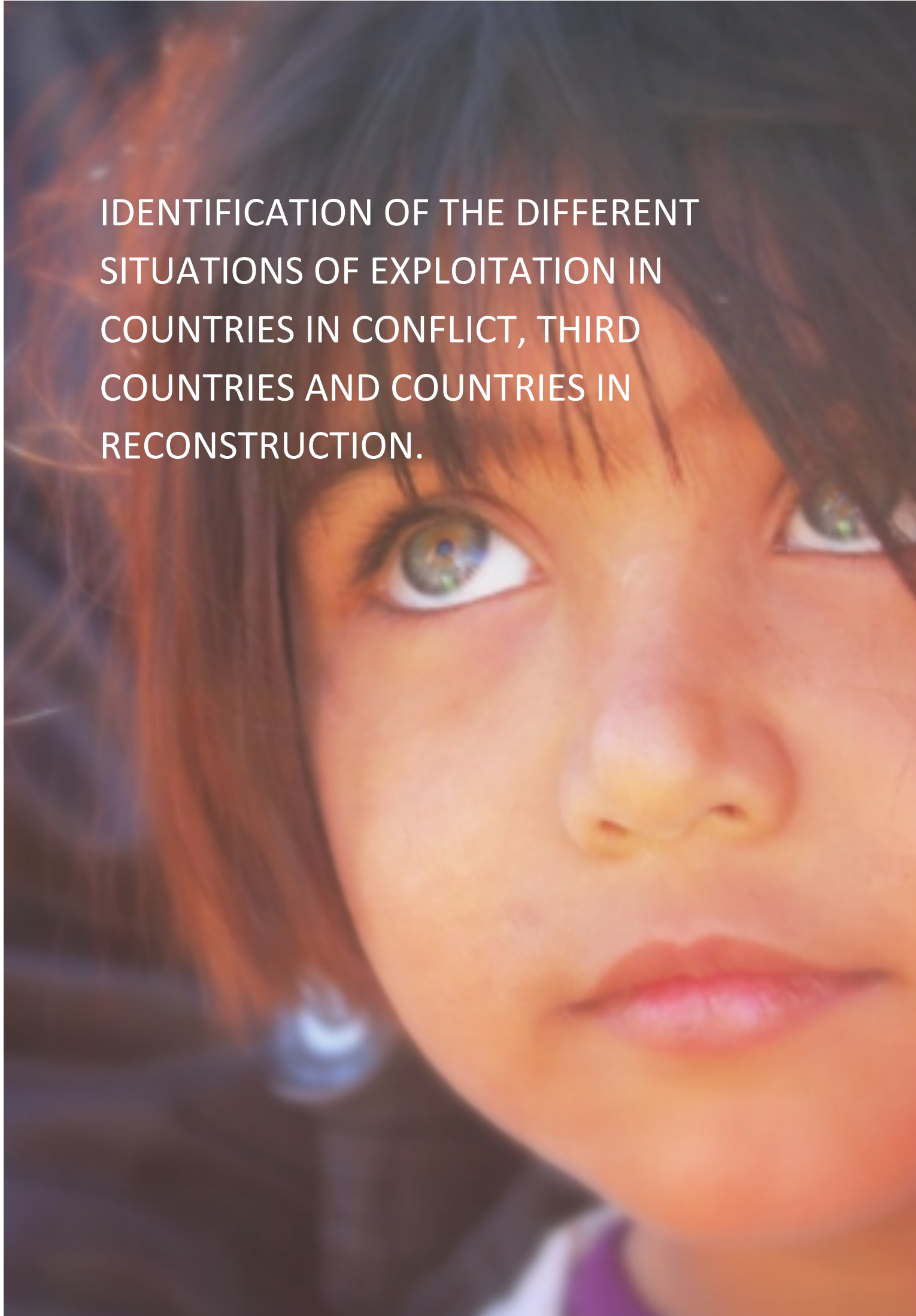
Amnesty International<sup>6</sup> estimated the number of Syrian asylum seekers in the European Union at around 55,000 in 2013 (roughly equivalent to the number of Syrian refugees who managed to reach Europe). In 2013, the EU Member States had pledged to grant asylum to 12,340 people selected by the HCR and living in camps in the Middle East. Of these, 10,000 would go to Germany and 500 to France.

When we compare the figures, we can see that only 2.2% of Syrian refugees are in Europe. The EU Member States declared that they would grant asylum to 12,340 people in 2013 (excluding asylum seekers who had entered the Members States illegally), i.e. 0.5% of the Syrian refugees settled in the countries adjoining Syria. A similar trend can be seen for refugees of other nationalities, such as Iraqi refugees. In recent years, there has been mounting pressure from the European Union on countries adjoining conflict zones to accept onto their soil the flow of people fleeing the fighting. Although the EU has allocated substantial sums to these States, to international organisations and to NGOs, as a result of the ever-increasing number of refugees and domestic legislation in the host countries, actual protection of refugees remains limited. Among the countries currently hosting the largest number of refugees, Lebanon is not a signatory to the Geneva Convention and Turkey has placed a geographical restriction on the Geneva Convention, to the effect that it accepts only asylum seekers coming from Europe. To remedy the resulting lack of status among those

<sup>6</sup> *An International Failure: The Syrian Refugee Crisis*, Amnesty International, December 2013.

seeking asylum, temporary hosting protocols have been signed with the HCR. Even so, the status of refugees remains very limited in terms of protection. It varies with the refugee's nationality and provides few prospects for the future (temporary status, ban on working, etc.). This minimal level of protection makes refugees even more vulnerable to trafficking in human beings in the adjoining countries, the transit countries and Western Europe.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE DIFFERENT  
SITUATIONS OF EXPLOITATION IN  
COUNTRIES IN CONFLICT, THIRD  
COUNTRIES AND COUNTRIES IN  
RECONSTRUCTION.





PART I : TRAFFICKING IN COUNTRIES IN CONFLICT



SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

In the focus groups, a number of women refugees from the city of Mosul said that Muslim girls and those girls who were members of religious minorities (Christians and Yazidis) had been kidnapped from their homes by the Islamic State or other armed militia. To stop them from escaping and returning to their family, they are raped in front of their parents, creating an indelible feeling of shame with regard to their family. After being abducted, they are made the sexual slaves of the fighters. Although it is hard to know the full extent of the phenomenon, similar facts have been reported in a number of press articles. The Huffington Post UK<sup>7</sup> reported on the rare story of a Yazidi girl who managed to escape, a few weeks after having been reduced to the role of sex slave. She described her ordeal and mentioned that 40 other girls were with her, the youngest of them aged 12. In three interviews conducted by Caritas Turkey, Syrian women refugees in Istanbul between the ages of 17-24

---

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2014/09/08/yazidi-sex-slave-islamic-state-isis\\_n\\_5782714.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2014/09/08/yazidi-sex-slave-islamic-state-isis_n_5782714.html)



stated that they had been raped during the conflict in Syria and that, due to fear of social exclusion, they could not let their families know. Among girls and women involved in prostitution, most of them had been victims of rape in Syria. In Turkey, four male and three female interviewees stated that prostitution is socially unacceptable in the Syrian culture, but girls or women have no other choices due to the economic situation of refugees.

#### ABDUCTION OF WOMEN FOR THE PURPOSES OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION ABROAD

Numerous observers in countries at war confirm that, apart from the cases of sexual slavery, women and teenagers are being abducted and then sold abroad, mainly for the purposes of forced prostitution. As early as 2003, Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported an increase in abductions of young women<sup>8</sup>. The same year, the NGO *Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq* reported that 400 women had been kidnapped in the Kirkuk region<sup>9</sup>. There was evidence that 18 of them had been sold for sexual exploitation in nightclubs in Egypt<sup>10</sup>. More recently, the NGOs contacted for this research drew attention to possible sales of women, primarily to buyers in the Gulf States. In Iraq and Syria, the risk of abduction is currently highest in the border areas. Numerous armed groups use these crossing points to raise finance by smuggling migrants and selling women.

#### FORCED / EARLY MARRIAGES TO OBTAIN PROTECTION AND/OR PROVIDE FOR THE FAMILY'S NEEDS

During the conduct of research for this study, reports were made of numerous cases of Syrian girls in Turkey being forced to marry and become the second or third wife. This also has been corroborated by articles in the press.<sup>11</sup> According to accounts by victims, the usual scenario is as follows: Turkish men, generally quite old, contact Syrian go-betweens to find Syrian wives aged between 13 and 25. Once the deal has been made, they go to areas on the Syrian border in the south of Turkey. The Syrian go-between then crosses the border with the wife and hands her over to the future husband in exchange for the sum of money negotiated beforehand. The payment is used to pay the bride's dowry to the girl's family in Syria and remunerate the go-between. Caritas investigations suggest that the main motivations of the men who contract for such brides are:

- the fact that the dowry amount is much smaller than what is paid for Turkish women;
- the opportunity for men over the age of 50 to have a young and docile wife.

From the many testimonies of victims collected by NGOs and journalists, it became possible to understand the recruitment procedure. The victims explained that they were obliged by

<sup>8</sup> Human Rights Watch (2003): *Climate of Fear*

<sup>9</sup> *Over 400 Iraqi women kidnapped, raped in post-war chaos*, Jordan Times, August 25, The Arab Regional Resource Center on Violence against Women. Aman News Center: [www.amanjordan.org](http://www.amanjordan.org)

<sup>10</sup> Mlodoch, Karin: *Lange Schatten der Vergangenheit*, ai-journal, amnesty international, Heft 10, Oktober 2003, pp. 12-13.

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/suriyeli\\_kuma\\_ticareti\\_kira\\_veremiyorsan\\_kizini\\_ver-1172732](http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/suriyeli_kuma_ticareti_kira_veremiyorsan_kizini_ver-1172732)

their uncle or father to take a Turkish husband. If they agreed, it was to help their family financially through the dowry money paid to the family. According to their accounts, the amount was between \$150 and \$200. On arriving in Turkey, the victims found that the go-between (often a relative or neighbour of theirs) had deceived them about the husband's material circumstances and family status. In the majority of accounts, the latter had been described as a widower or childless, in comfortable financial circumstances. It was only when the new Syrian wife entered his home that she discovered that her husband had several wives and dependent children. The housing conditions were much poorer than had been announced. The girls who told their story explained that they had been held in a situation of domestic and/or sexual exploitation. They had also been abused by the other wives, who resented their arrival.

***About early marriage and trafficking in human beings:***

*According to the UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking, forced marriage, as distinct from arranged marriage, may occur as:*

- 1) a method of recruitment for trafficking – for example, by the promise of dating or marriage abroad leading to sexual exploitation; as in, “come for the wedding, stay for the forced prostitution!” and/or*
- 2) the result of trafficking, in other words, being trafficked for the purposes of marriage, usually accomplished via the threat of force, fraud, or coercion. The Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery also refers to servile marriage, in which a woman might be promised and/or given in marriage without her consent.*

*“Child marriage can be said to be slavery, primarily if the following elements are present: firstly, if the child has not genuinely given their free and informed consent to enter the marriage; secondly, if the child is subjected to control and a sense of “ownership” in the marriage itself, particularly through abuse and threats, and is exploited by being forced to undertake domestic chores within the marital home or labour outside it, and/or engage in non-consensual sexual relations; and thirdly, if the child cannot realistically leave or end the marriage, leading potentially to a lifetime of slavery”<sup>12</sup>*

*In 2013 the first United Nations Human Rights Council resolution against child, early, and forced marriages was adopted; the resolution recognizes child, early, and forced marriage as involving violations of human rights which “prevents individuals from living their lives free from all forms of violence and that has adverse consequences on the enjoyment of human rights, such as the right to education, [and] the right to the highest attainable standard of health including sexual and reproductive health,” and also states that “the elimination of child, early and forced marriage should be considered in the discussion of the post-2015 development agenda”<sup>13</sup>*

---

<sup>12</sup> Extract from the website “girls not brides” <http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/when-does-child-marriage-become-slavery/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/states-adopt-first-ever-resolution-on-child-marriage-at-human-rights-council/>

## ENLISTMENT OF CHILDREN IN ARMED MILITIA



Information from Caritas Ukraine indicates that children are being used to build barricades against the regular army. Some of them are enlisted in separatist militia. Similarly, in the focus groups conducted in Lebanon, women refugees reported that boys were regularly kidnapped and then enlisted in armed militia. This information has been corroborated by the US Department of State's report on Syria<sup>14</sup>, which refers to boys being forcibly recruited into armed militia. When Caritas Armenia interviewed Armenian refugees from Syria, the latter said they were particularly exposed to child soldiering because of their religion. According to them, boys from religious minorities or considered non-Sunni were targeted more than others. While this information is plausible because it reflects strategies that are common practice during conflicts<sup>15</sup>, we should nevertheless remain cautious. The number of testimonies collected is not sufficient to corroborate this information. It does not allow us to determine whether the faith-based criterion increases the risk of forced enlistment, and if so, in what way.

## TRAFFICKING IN ORGANS

In the focus groups, the Syrian and Iraqi refugees were adamant in stating that trafficking in organs does indeed exist. Although, to our knowledge, there have been few reports or articles on this information, the testimonies collected were relatively precise. Several

<sup>14</sup> See the US Department of State's *Trafficking in Persons Report 2014*, which reports that children in Syria, in particular, are being abducted for use as child soldiers.

<sup>15</sup> During the war between Afghanistan and the URSS, minorities, i.e. people seen as ethnically non-Russian, were sent to the front before the others.

women reported that people who had undergone an operation in hospitals for the removal of a kidney without their knowledge. Others in the group reported that, on the road to Lebanon, there had been attempts to threaten them into donating their organs. If such trafficking probably existed before the conflict, it seems to have intensified. The most detailed testimonies reported situations of wounded fighters in Syria, who, for security reasons, sought treatment in Turkey in the border town of Kilis, but later were found dead with organs missing. Some articles<sup>16</sup> seem to corroborate this situation. They also give examples of organ trafficking among refugees in Lebanon<sup>17</sup> and clearly assert that the business is booming and exploits desperate refugees needing to obtain money in order to survive in a country that is very expensive. UNHCR's report on trafficking in Syria (published in Nov. 2014) also confirmed this point. This is reminiscent of another recent organ trafficking scandal: in 2013, one of nine suspected of illegal organ trafficking at the Medicus clinic (a private Kosovo/Turkish Clinic) in Kosovo pleaded guilty to all charges of having committed such crimes during the previous years. The clinic was founded in 1999 by a European philanthropist who helped during the war in Kosovo. Officials say that it secretly evolved into a center for illegal organ trafficking. An investigation into the practices of the clinic began in 2008, and the center was closed. Thirty illegal transplants are said to have taken place at the site, with donors falsely promised up to 15,000 euros for their kidneys. The donors were often left in frail condition and without any payment<sup>18</sup>.

## PART II : EXILE IN A NEIGHBOURING COUNTRY AND RISK OF TRAFFICKING

### MARRIAGES TO OBTAIN PROTECTION

The various stakeholders interviewed for our research in Lebanon spoke of the risks associated with the growing practice of marrying Syrian refugee girls to Lebanese or foreign adults. These practices are legal under the domestic legislation. Girls as young as 12 are allowed to marry. Depending on the many family codes in force (15 in all), in some communities, the marriageable age can even be lowered to 9. In rural Syria, early marriage was a common practice before the conflict, but it was part of a tradition that gave the wife a certain number of guarantees and protections. Among refugee families in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Turkey, such marriages have been perverted. They are losing their symbolic value as a uniting of two families and are becoming a means for the parents to find a safe haven for their daughter and/or obtain money.

<sup>16</sup> "Organ smuggling: Turkish hospitals Traffic Injured Syrian Citizen'Organs" by Centre for Research Globalization 02/2014 <http://www.globalresearch.ca/organ-smuggling-turkish-hospitals-traffic-injured-syrian-citizens-organs/5367869> and "L'El, J.Foley et le trafic d'organes" In Le monde blog 12/12/2014.

<sup>17</sup> "Lebanon black market in refugee organs" in Middle East Monitor, 5/01/2014 <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/blogs/lifestyle/9067-lebanons-black-market-in-refugee-organs>

<sup>18</sup> <http://globalbioethics.org/news-articles-and-public-addresses/news/suspect-pleads-guilty-in-kosovo-illegal-transplants-case/>

Several testimonies in the focus groups recounted similar stories. The women we interviewed all said that they knew parents who were trying to marry their 13 or 14-year-old daughters in an attempt to give them a better future. Others talked more about the economic criterion, saying they knew families trying to find wealthy husbands for their daughters. These strategies are not without risk for the health of the young brides. If they become pregnant quickly and still at an early age, their anatomy is not yet sufficiently developed and their health is jeopardised.

#### "TEMPORARY" MARRIAGES AMONG GIRL REFUGEES

These marriages could be a front for sexual exploitation, encouraged by go-betweens who take advantage of the families' vulnerability to urge them to marry their daughters without being too inquisitive about the husband. There is a real market in these marriages, as witnessed by the creation of a Facebook page entitled "Syrian refugees for marriage"<sup>19</sup>.

These marriages are in fact as known as "temporary marriages". To avoid sexual relations outside marriage, Muslims are allowed to take a wife for a very short period (sometimes 24 hours). After a matter of days or weeks, the girls are repudiated by their husband. Depending on the families, they can be taken back by their parents, or rejected because of the "shame" associated with their status as repudiated wives. If they were taken to live abroad when they married, especially in the Gulf States, the fact of being abandoned condemns them, in effect, to prostitution in the new country so that they could earn a living<sup>20</sup>.

Research has shown that the dowry paid to the family is one of the reasons that parents try to marry their daughter on arrival in Lebanon. Poor families or those that left everything behind in their hurry to leave went into debt to be able to cross the border. Often they have no / few alternative but to marry their daughters to escape from the usurers.

The economic hardships experienced by refugee families in Lebanon or Turkey (especially outside the camps) because of the cost of living and rent<sup>21</sup> have made practices akin to child prostitution commonplace. The Lebanese association ABAAD mentioned the existence of an office in Northern Lebanon (Tripoli), where men come from throughout the region to choose a bride<sup>22</sup>. Similar phenomena have been reported in Jordan, in the vicinity of the Zaatari

---

<sup>19</sup> Following complaints by a number of associations, including Caritas Lebanon, the page was blocked by Facebook. <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2014/May-22/257377-facebook-page-promoting-syrian-refugee-brides-blocked.ashx#axzz3DN2fGIgy>

<sup>20</sup> <http://levant.tv/blog-posts/syrian-crisis-temporary-marriages-and-sexual-exploitation-by-sara-yasmin-anwar/>

<sup>21</sup> [http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/suriyeli\\_kuma\\_ticareti\\_kira\\_veremiyorsan\\_kizini\\_ver-1172732](http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/suriyeli_kuma_ticareti_kira_veremiyorsan_kizini_ver-1172732)

<sup>22</sup> Information reported in Running out of Time, Harvard FXB Center, January 2014, USA



camp, said to be a market for "temporary brides"<sup>23</sup>. These underage girls, under the pretext of repeated temporary marriages, are forced to prostitute themselves to help their family.

## PROSTITUTION

In 2013, the Lebanese anti-trafficking department identified 27 victims of trafficking in human beings for the year. In May 2014, 22 cases already had been identified. The majority of cases involved Syrian girls sold in Syria by relatives. Col. Asmar, Head of the Internal Security Force's Vice Squad, stated in an interview that there were several scenarios:

- Syrian men send their wives to Lebanon with a promise of decent work. But once in Lebanon, the women are forced to work in bars or forced into prostitution by Lebanese and / or Syrians;
- Poor Syrian families wanting to marry their daughter decide to use a Lebanese go-between, who then takes the girl to Lebanon. Once there, he sells the girl or forces her into prostitution.

To obtain a better understanding of the recruitment procedure, the question was raised during a focus group. The participants emphasised that the family is seldom aware of fate that awaits their daughter. If the family married her to a foreigner, it was in an attempt to give her a better future. They said the majority of recruiters relied on deceit.

A report<sup>24</sup> released by Harvard University in January 2014 states that the police had broken up a prostitution ring on the outskirts of the refugee camps set up in the Bekaa Valley (Lebanon). At certain times of the day, Syrian girls approached Lebanese men, asking them if they needed anything. This type of practice seems to be relatively common around the camps. There are also phone numbers in circulation for obtaining paid sexual relations, making the activity more difficult to detect. According to the NGOs questioned, some of these girls are underage.

Although it is difficult to determine the role of the family or husband in these situations of forced prostitution, the number of cases recorded by the Lebanese Vice Squad seems far short of the actual numbers. The main reason for this seems to be that few cases are reported by the local stakeholders (NGOs included).

In Turkey, many alleged incidents of trafficking for sexual exploitation in prostitution involving Syrian refugees have been reported in the Turkish media<sup>25</sup> (T24, 2014; Milliyet,

---

<sup>23</sup> "Marriages of shame. Child marriages among Syrian refugees have turned into a lucrative business" In Now, Ana Maria Luca, 15/11/2013.

<sup>24</sup> Running out of Time, Harvard FXB Center, January 2014, USA.

<sup>25</sup> (2014) 'Suriyelilerle evlilik ticarete donustu, Milliyet Daily newspaper, 26 January 2014.

Available at: <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/suriyelilerle-evlilik-ticarete-gundem/detay/1827612/default.htm>

2014) as well as international media. Many of the interviewees in the Tarlabası region of Istanbul also reported such cases. One household mentioned that it has been three weeks since they last heard from their 17 year-old daughter. She had been working in a textile factory, and they believe she was trafficked and taken to another city. However, the family's efforts to find out the whereabouts of their daughter gave no result. The family was afraid to contact the authorities due to the fact that they were not registered in Turkey and because the father was working illegally.

#### SURVIVAL SEX

In Lebanon, Armenia, Turkey and France several cases of people forced to have sexual relations for economic reasons were recorded during our research. One of the people (an Armenian woman refugee from Syria), interviewed for our research in Armenia, said that she had been the victim of sexual harassment by her boss. Her refusal to accept his advances had, she thought, led to her dismissal and the non-payment of the remuneration due to her. She explained that this type of advances on the part of employers was frequent.

Similarly, the only one comprehensive report about the sexual exploitation of non-camp Syrian refugee women and girls in Turkey (Mazlumder, 2014) emphasizes that the social and cultural discrimination faced by Syrian refugee women makes it difficult for them to raise their voices and denounce sexual harassment and exploitation.

The Harvard report relates several stories by Syrian women in the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon who, in order to obtain a tent in a camp or additional food vouchers, had sexual relations with the camp manager, NGO employees, etc.



Although it is impossible to calculate the number of victims of these various forms of sexual exploitation from the research, UNHCR<sup>26</sup> has estimated that 10% of Syrian women refugees have suffered sexual or physical violence, which represents more than 100,000 people. The problems of early marriage, forced marriage and forced prostitution existed in Syria before the conflict, but the vulnerable situation in which women refugees presently find themselves have resulted in an unprecedented increase in sexual exploitation, which, through the various forms of "marriage" described here, have turned into a fully-fledged industry.

## EXPLOITED CHILDREN

Our research into exploited children identified various background profiles:

- children or teenagers who are helping their refugee family settle in the country;
- children tasked by their family to go abroad and regularly send back money;
- children or teenagers who have lost their parents and are consequently living in the street.

Whatever forms of exploitation the children are subjected to, this variety of backgrounds seemed to be present: begging, selling small objects, construction work, waiting at table, sewing, etc. Even with this overview of activities in which the children are engaged, it

---

<sup>26</sup>2013 Syria Regional Response Plan, United Nations, 2013.



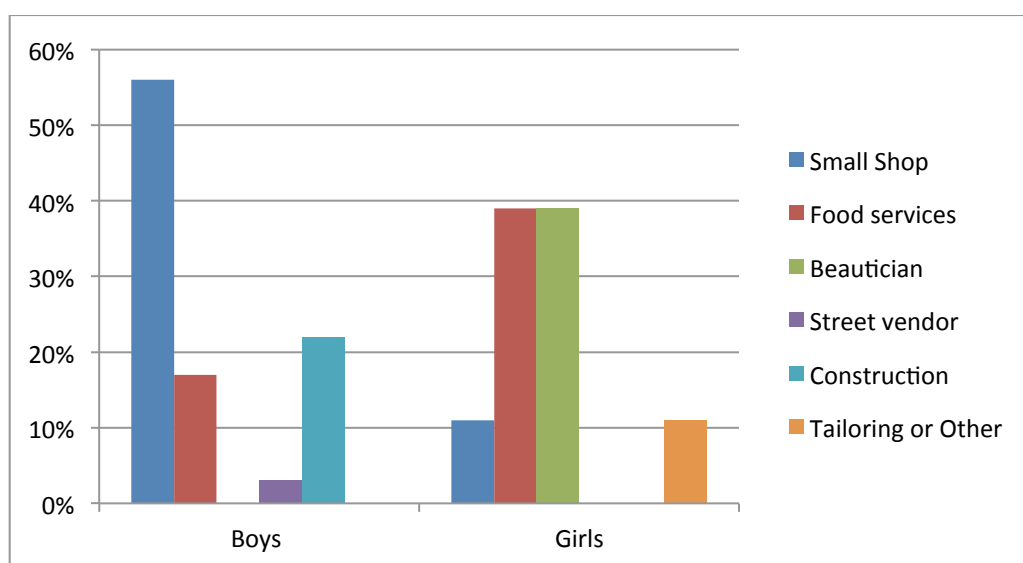
remains difficult to determine the vulnerability of the children or the danger to which they are exposed as a result of the activities in which they are engaged. However, this background profile remains a determining factor in terms of social support.

#### CHILDREN TASKED WITH HELPING THEIR FAMILY

In 2012, Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center conducted a study<sup>27</sup> on 1,957 Iraqi refugee children settled in Lebanon. All of them were living with their families. Those forced to work represented between 4.8% to 8.9% of the sample group. With the arrival of new families and the worsening economic situation, the proportion probably has increased.

The children identified in the study who were forced to work ranged in age between 11 and 17 years: 92% of them had not worked in Iraq; 59% had completed at least an elementary school education. There is not necessarily any correlation, therefore, between the social level in the country and the fact that the children have to work. The determinant is to be found elsewhere: it is thought to stem from the parents' inability to work in Lebanon. According to the study, in 44% of the cases, the children explained that their parents were unable to work because of a chronic illness or a disability.

Both boys and girls are engaged in child labour. Whatever their work, the younger the children are, the less they are paid. The breakdown by activity is as follows:



Source p.39 *An Insight into Child Labor among Iraqi Refugees in Lebanon*. CLMC, Beirut, 2012.

These situations of economic exploitation of children result in:

- health problems for 54% of the boys in the sample and 46% of the girls;
- the risks of missing school, a third of the children had had to drop out of school.

<sup>27</sup> *An Insight into Child Labor among Iraqi Refugees in Lebanon*. CLMC, Beirut, 2012.

Concerning this last point, apart from the phenomenon of exploitation, the influx of refugees is making the situation increasingly critical. For the 2014-2015 school year, the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education can enrol only 75,000 refugee children (only in the morning). The number of children who will attend classes in the afternoon has not yet been notified by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. However, UNHCR estimates the number of school-aged refugee children at 425,000.

Fieldwork in Turkey in the Tarlabası neighborhood and its surroundings (Istanbul) showed that child labor constitutes the most common form of trafficking of Syrian children. Most of the children work either in textile factories or sell food on the streets. The interviews showed that it is mostly the younger children who work while the older one goes to school. In most cases, the child is the breadwinner either because the father is wounded, or because there is no adult male member in the household, or because the adults cannot find work. Some children interviewed indicated that, at the end of the work day, their money is stolen from them on their way home, and some stated that they are beaten up by the older youth in the neighborhood. For Kurdish children, it becomes easier to ward off such attacks through establishing patronage relations with the older local Kurdish youth in the neighborhood. Some children have stated that they work in workshops established by Syrians. In such cases, child labor exploitation is also very common, with the children not being able to get their salaries or working for very low wages.

Lastly, child labour situations sometimes mask other forms of exploitation. A number of journalists' investigations<sup>28</sup> have gathered testimonies from children who complained of mistreatment and sexual abuse by their employers.

Through fieldwork in Turkey 3, other households indicated that they have witnessed sexual exploitation of Syrian children in parks and other public places around Tarlabası. Those families were not willing to provide information about the traffickers or about what the children or the families were offered in return. However, local witnesses also confirmed the phenomena of sexual exploitation of Syrian children in Tarlabası.

## STREET CHILDREN

Only a very small amount of information is available concerning refugee children who work in the streets of large cities throughout the region. However the nature of their activities makes them more exposed to abuse and a higher degree of exploitation. A report produced by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) on behalf of humanitarian agencies working on the Syrian refugee in Lebanon in May 2015 provides some accurate data on this phenomenon. The report is based on information provided by UNHCR and partner agencies.

---

<sup>28</sup> Exploitation et abus, le difficile quotidien des enfants syriens réfugiés au Liban, In Le monde dated 24/09/2013

“The exact number of street children in Lebanon is difficult to gauge. But a February 2015 survey by the International Labour Organisation, UNICEF and Save the Children (SCI) under the patronage of the Minister of Labour indicates there are at least 1,500 children, nearly three-quarters of them Syrian, begging or working as street vendors. Most street children are boys and half are under 12 years of age. Some are as young as two. Most live with their impoverished parents or relatives who have had to make the heartbreaking decision to send their children into the streets so the family can eat, pay rent or afford other basic essentials. The UNICEF / International Labour Organisation / Save the Children study indicates that children are concentrated in the busy neighborhoods of Beirut and its suburbs (e.g. Corniche el Mazraa, Gemmayzeh). Some are transported daily from the northern city of Tripoli to the streets of Beirut and back. Street and working children often work excessive hours to earn the necessary income to support their families. Of the 77 children interviewed by International Relief Committee in January and February, 28% reported working over 11 hours a day and 14 percent reported working a seven day week. They sell gum, tissue paper and flowers or work shining shoes and begging. Their income depends on the type of work they do. Shoe shiners, for example, earn around \$23 a day on average. Beggars earn between \$8-25 a day, and gum sellers between \$10-20 a day. Children working at night and younger children usually earn more. Many street children assisted by International Relief Committee explained that their income is mainly used by their parents to cover the rent. Street and working children are among the most vulnerable children and are at high risk of violence in the streets. They are at high risk of sexual exploitation and harassment by passersby as well as by other children and adults with whom they compete. They are also at risk of neglect by their parents and live in constant fear of being arrested by the police, and of being fined or detained.”<sup>29</sup>

During the mission in Lebanon, we were able to see that these minors have very limited protection. When children are assaulted, the police take them to one of the few children's homes. The staff shortages and under-funding in these establishments (which are mainly financed by private foundations) mean that the majority of children, once placed, decide to run away.

---

<sup>29</sup> “Lebanon inter-agency update Street Children”, UNHCR, May 2015, Beirut.



During the mission to Lebanon, we were taken to visit some refugee camps. On the road leading there, trucks were transporting children to work in the fields for approximately \$4 per day. This first-hand information is corroborated by a number of reports<sup>30</sup>, which state that many children are used in the Bekaa Valley to collect and bag potatoes and to prepare the fields by picking up rocks. In the Tripoli area (Northern Lebanon), children work in market gardens and orchards. They are regularly abused by the landowners, who beat them if the yields are low.

During interviews of refugees living in two camps in the Bekaa Valley, the families living in tents told us that they had to pay for their tent space. To pay their rent, electricity and day-to-day expenses, they had to work and/or send their children out to work.

To gain a better understanding of this quasi-institutionalised exploitation, we need to look more closely at the operation and appearance throughout Lebanon of these "informal settlements", where the majority of the refugees are massed.

#### **Chawich and Lebanese landowner**

A *chawich* is a person of Syrian origin who was sometimes present in Lebanon before the Syrian crisis. He exercises a form of moral authority over the inhabitants of his village. He is also the person that deals with people outside the camp, UNHCR staff, NGOs, Lebanese employers, etc. Due to the influx of Syrian refugees and increasing rent prices, the refugees started renting pieces of land from Lebanese landowners to set up the tents that are cheaper than renting an apartment. In the beginning of the crisis, it cost around \$200 to rent a piece of land on the field. Because of the steady influx which peaked (June 2014)<sup>31</sup> was 2,500 of new refugees a day, according to the HCR, the prices have gone up. It costs a

<sup>30</sup>In particular Running out of Time, Harvard FXB Center, January 2014, USA.

<sup>31</sup> Since summer 2014 the number fell and the decline is expected to continue as the government announced that the borders would be closed for Refugees <http://www.lorientlejour.com/article/892156/le-liban-sur-le-point-de-fermer-ses-frontieres-aux-nouveaux-refugies-syriens.html>

refugee family between \$400 and \$600 a year - roughly \$40 a month - to live in a tent. The camps we visited had around 80 tents. A tax of \$10 a month is levied for electricity, etc. In one of the camps visited, the families, mostly made up of women and children, told us that the monthly expenses for living in the camp amounted to between \$50 and \$70. To cover these expenses, they had no choice but to work and/or send their children out to work. To find an employer, they approach the chawich, who negotiates their pay directly with the landowner or Lebanese employers. The wages of the people and children are then paid directly to the chawich, who deducts the amounts due for living in the camp.





## RISK OF TEENAGE ENLISTMENT

The camps located on the Syrian border sometimes are used as a support base by combatants who have installed their families there. Similar situations exist in Iraqi Kurdistan. Some wounded combatants stay there several weeks to recover. To have combatants and families living in close quarters increases the risk of teenagers being recruited by armed groups. Although little research has been done into this particular aspect, the enlistment of children, including refugees, is part of the strategy of the majority of militia, as a recent Human Rights Watch report<sup>32</sup> points out.



---

<sup>32</sup> "Maybe We Live and Maybe We Die" Recruitment and Use of Children by Armed Groups in Syria, June 2014, New York.

## BELONGING TO A MINORITY REJECTED BY ALL BELLIGERENTS

Recent conflicts have taken on the features of civil wars. They oppose people living in the same country, on ethnic or faith-based grounds. Some minorities that had a place in society in the past are particularly at risk in the present situation. Overnight, they can find themselves hunted by some or all of the belligerents and forced to leave everything behind them to avoid becoming victims of genocide. A sudden, rushed departure and tensions with the rest of the population, some of whom are refugees, make them particularly vulnerable to exploitation wherever they go.

### IRAQI CHRISTIANS AND YAZIDIS

In early August 2014, when the Islamic State seized control of Mosul and Qaraqosh, approximately 200,000 Christians and Yazidis were forced to flee their homes (sometimes overnight), leaving behind all of their belongings. At first, they had no choice but to take refuge in Iraqi Kurdistan. Because of the very high cost of living and the risk of young people being forcibly enlisted in the Peshmerga (Kurdish fighters), Iraqi Kurdistan was seen as a transit zone by Christians and Yazidis hoping to leave as soon as possible, mainly for Turkey. According to the interviews, Turkey was seen as accessible (an ID card was all that was necessary to enter the country), more stable than its neighbours, and with a lower cost of living. Once there, however, the sums asked for rent can lead to forms of economic exploitation. Some men are obliged to work for their landowner for no pay in order to pay off their debts. Because these migrants have arrived only very recently, our research was unable to identify other forms of exploitation. Careful watch should be kept on the situation, however, because the lack of an established Christian or Yazidi community in Turkey for the majority of these families, and the prejudice against these minorities (and especially the Yazidis), make them potentially very vulnerable.

### THE DOM PEOPLE

The Dom people, who live in many Middle Eastern countries, have a similar ethnic origin to that of the Roma in the Balkans. They do not have a specific religion, and most use a language, Domari, that is spoken only by their group. The majority populations hold many stereotypes about Doms and identify them as working in commerce or marginal activities, such as music, dance, begging, selling flowers, etc.

The increasing visibility of adults and children begging in Istanbul is frequently reported. The Caritas Turkey field observation of children begging in different neighborhoods of Istanbul<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Amnesty International (2013). 'Türkiye: Suriyeli Mültecilerin İhtiyaçlarını Karşılama için Ulusal Yetkililer ve Uluslararası Toplum İşbirliği İçinde Hareket Etmeli', Uluslararası Af Örgütü Bilgilendirme Raporu (Amnesty International Report). London: Amnesty International Publications.

shows that such begging by children usually involves the entire family, or a group of children. This issue is also widely covered by the local media. It is estimated that there are approximately 10,000 Syrians begging and homeless in Turkey (Yeni Şafak, 2014). While some of them later accepted voluntarily to go to the camps, some have refused, according to the statements of the governor of Istanbul (Reuters, 2014; Yeni Şafak, 2014). Some upper class Syrian business owners and politicians in Turkey have requested Turkish authorities to remove the Syrian beggars and place them in camps since they cause “bad reputation” for Syrians. Also, many Syrians state that the beggars are mostly “gypsies” and they used to work as beggars back in Syria as well. Most of the newspaper articles on the subject limit their focus to the ‘how many beggars are caught by the police’ aspect of the phenomenon while the vulnerability of beggars to exploitation is largely absent in the literature.

From the first signs of the Syrian conflict, in March 2011, Dom families in Syria took refuge in Lebanon or Turkey, generally avoiding the refugee camps. In Istanbul, for example, Doms became very visible, even if they are not so many, because they engaged in family and child begging. At present, too little research has been undertaken concerning the exploitation among Dom refugees for us to be able to draw any conclusions. A 2010 report<sup>34</sup> produced by Terre des hommes on the situation of Dom children in Lebanon highlighted various situations of exploitation, due mainly to the poverty of certain families. Many boys were not going to school and either begged or worked in the street every day in order to help their families.



---

--- (2014) ‘Struggling to Survive, Refugees from Syria in Turkey’, Amnesty International Report. London: Amnesty International Publications. Available at: [http://amnesty.org.tr/uploads/Docs/struggling\\_to\\_survive\\_refugees\\_from\\_syria\\_in\\_turkey811.pdf](http://amnesty.org.tr/uploads/Docs/struggling_to_survive_refugees_from_syria_in_turkey811.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> The Dom People and their Children in Lebanon, Terre des hommes, 2010



The girls seemed to face a particularly high risk of sexual exploitation: their reputation as dancers meant they were readily hired in bars and restaurants to entertain the clients. The report documents several cases of sexual exploitation of underage Dom girls.

## ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION

### VULNERABILITY DUE TO ADMINISTRATIVE BARRIERS TO OBTAINING LEGAL EMPLOYMENT

There is a risk of economic exploitation in all of the countries in which refugees settle. The main cause lies in the fact that these people cannot obtain a work permit in their new country. If we take the case of Lebanon, there is a bilateral agreement with Syria that allows nationals of both countries to work legally for six months. Once the six months are up, Syrians are required to renew their residence permit or apply for a work permit. According to ILO (International Labour Organization) statistics<sup>35</sup>, 390 new work permits were issued and 571 renewed in 2011. If we compare these statistics with the number of refugees (estimated in total at 2,500,000 by UNHCR including the no recorded refugees), we can see that the vast majority of refugees (including refugees of other nationalities) are not covered by any contract or other form of protection. In Turkey, the Balkans and Western Europe, refugees are not allowed to work. These barriers to employment establish a regulatory framework conducive to economic exploitation in the overwhelming majority of refugee host countries. In Turkey Most of the interviewees mentioned cases of labor exploitation since they did not receive any or part of their salary from their employers. However, they did not report this to the official authorities since they work informally/unofficially even though the legal system in Turkey grants them the right to report such incidents despite the fact that they were working illegally. Such cases also show the fact that the lack of work permits and lack of legal aid render Syrians more vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking. It is stated that for the textile sector, the hourly wage for refugees is around US\$0.42 per hour, whereas the hourly rate for a Turkish employee in the same industry is US\$5.48 (Today's Zaman, 2014).

### BLACKMAIL AND ATTEMPTED RECRUITMENT FOR OTHER FORMS OF EXPLOITATION

In Armenia, despite the possibilities for Armenian refugees from Syria to obtain legal employment, our research provided insights into the risks of economic exploitation. Of the 31 people interviewed, 26 said they had been laid off after several months of work without having been paid. The interviews showed that the reasons for these dismissals mask attempts at sexual exploitation or recruitment to carry drugs. One young woman said she had been dismissed on the spot after having rejected her employer's advances. A kitchen hand had been approached by employees who proposed that he use drugs with them and become involved in selling drugs. When he refused, he was dismissed some time later.

---

<sup>35</sup> Assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon and their Employment Profiles, ILO, 2011

There were also reports of bonded labour among debt-ridden Armenian refugees from Syria who were living in Armenia. In an interview, a refugee explained that, after a sudden steep increase in his rent, he was unable to pay. The landlord accordingly offered him a job in construction to pay off his debts. He was paid \$5 for 11 hours of work a day.

#### RECRUITMENT AGENCIES

Syrian refugees of Armenian descent who fled to Armenia have great trouble coping with the cost of living there. Because the unemployment rate is constantly rising (officially 17.8% in the first quarter of 2014), many decide to move instead to other countries such as Turkey or the Emirates, for linguistic reasons (they all speak Arabic and sometimes Turkish) and for job opportunities. US Department of State information indicates that many women were then sexually exploited in Turkey and the Arab Emirates. Similarly, there were reports of labour exploitation in these countries. This information is difficult to confirm because, in the absence of diplomatic relations between Turkey and Armenia, there is no cooperation between their police or legal systems. Only an Armenian association that regularly cooperates with a Turkish association was able to confirm that women had been sexually exploited. The methods used to recruit these men and women involve advertisements for well-paid jobs, passed on by local agencies run by criminal groups. On arriving in Turkey or the Emirates, the men are forced to work 12 hours a day for a pittance, while the women are taken to places used for prostitution<sup>36</sup>.

#### CONTINUING THE JOURNEY TO EUROPE AND DEBT

Since the beginning of the Syrian crisis in March 2011, the Balkans have seen a steep increase in the number of migrants from the Middle East. For refugees and economic migrants from Africa, Asia and the Middle East, the Balkans has become a destination since 2008. That year, Serbia (on the European Union's outer border) received 51 applications for asylum. In 2011, the number had risen up to 3,000. Most of the Balkan countries are ill-prepared for this influx and lack the necessary infrastructure to receive these people. Likewise, very few associations are engaged in supporting migrants or accredited to work directly in the centres housing refugees. This largely accounts for the shortage of information on the situation of refugees in these countries and the lack of any reported cases of trafficking in human beings among the refugees. The research being conducted there tends to focus on Bulgarian situation (EU member from 2007). 21 refugees from Caritas centres and Red Cross centers were interviewed. 10 meetings were conducted with the main stakeholders.

---

<sup>36</sup> <http://hetq.am/eng/news/10960/armenian-turkish-cooperation-the-trafficking-of-armenian-women-to-antalya.html>

## RISK OF LABOR EXPLOITATION DUE TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE BARRIERS

In 2014, approximately 8,200 asylum seekers were on Bulgarian territory, half of whom were accommodated in seven centers. The other half of asylum seekers was accommodated in external addresses on their own account. Even to asylum seekers in state centers, the State provides only basic needs of shelter and hygiene materials but does not provide food. In this country, asylum seekers have to live with 2 euros per person donated by the State.

In Bulgaria, the risk of labour exploitation is high: from the 21 interviews conducted for the research with refugees, 5 persons complained that they had to work in agriculture from morning to night in agriculture for low pay.

The asylum seekers have no right to be granted a work permit and may not be employed under an employment contract during the first year of the asylum application. After one year, they are allowed to register as unemployed with the Labor Office. But the procedure to obtain a work permit in Bulgaria has to be initiated by the employer who must submit to the Labor Directorate, through the Employment Agency, a list of legal documents including personal documents of the employee-asylum seeker, including information about his education, specialty, competence or professional qualifications, skills and experience. The foreigner's permit expires automatically at the end of the employment contract. Foreigners are only allowed to work for the period specified in the work permit. Due to the administrative barriers the asylum seekers have to work without contract which makes them more vulnerable to economic exploitation.

## CHILDREN AND RISK OF TRAFFICKING

Bulgaria, as a member of the EU, and because of its geographical location, plays an important role as a gateway for entry and transit of migrants looking for a better future in Europe. The vast majority of irregular migrants arriving in Bulgaria want to reach another European country. Trafficking routes to Bulgaria go predominantly through Turkey. The interviewees reported that they usually found smugglers in Istanbul, who got them to Bulgaria at the cost of approximately 400 Euros per person. Most of newly arrived asylum seekers are citizens of Syria. The number of families with children is significant, most of the families count more than 3 children each, and many of the women are pregnant. 2 Of the 5 families interviewed, they reported having to use their children to help for the well-being of the family: to sell bags, working in shops, etc.

In parallel to this phenomenon, there is an increase of unaccompanied children: from 190 to more than 855 between 2013 and 2014 asking for asylum in Bulgaria. They are mostly from Afghanistan (70%) and Syria (23%). The 3 interviews conducted with the group members revealed that these children are coming from families (remaining in the home country) who

paid to send one family member to travel abroad. Some of these children could be qualified as exploited, because they intend to support their families sending money back home.

A significant number of unaccompanied children disappear before applying for asylum. In 2014, 10 % (85 children) disappeared after applying for asylum.

#### DEBT AND RISK OF TRAFFICKING

Most migrants reached the Balkans by passing through Turkey and/or Greece. To date, there is too little information available about the living conditions in these countries and about the activities in which they had to engage in order to finance their passage to allow our accurate assessment of the risks inherent in trafficking. From a number of testimonies collected for our research and corroborated by other sources<sup>37</sup>, we know that the price for entering the Balkans is approximately \$350 per person. By analogy with the risks identified in Western Europe, migrant sexual exploitation and the use of refugees to carry drugs from Turkey into Europe should be taken into account. According to the authorities and the Albanian, Bosnian and Bulgarian associations interviewed for our research, the few cases recorded mainly concern economic exploitation and child begging. This seems to be a incomplete view of the situation because, during the interviews, most of the migrants say they went into debt to finance their passage and will have to pay between €3,000 and €5,000 to enter the Schengen Area. The Albanian police confirmed that there were organised groups charged with taking these migrants from Greece to Albania so that they could enter Italy. However, because the phenomenon is quite recent, we were unable to find out how these networks operate and what they require of the migrants in exchange.

In France, according to our interviews with the Revivre association, which works with migrants in the street and provides legal services, relatively few refugees are arriving from the Middle East. There are two types of situation:

- family reunification: Syrians or Iraqis living in France have their family or relatives come to join them;
- group arrivals.

In the former situation, a few cases of exploitation have been observed between distant relatives. Most of the time, the people taken in must pay rent and work free of charge for their landlord. There was one case in which a woman and her daughter complained of pressure to provide sexual services.

For group arrivals, two groups of 200 people (probably Doms) arrived in Saint-Ouen in the Paris area in April 2014 and July 2014. Some of them (97 people) wished to apply for asylum and were then divided among the CAFDA centres (which house asylum-seeking families) in

---

<sup>37</sup> Nevena Borisova, "Bulgarie dans le quotidien des réfugiés syriens", In Babel Café, January 2014.

France. Muslim associations took charge of the others. These organisations appeared to be a front for a network of human smugglers, which was supposed to transport these people into Germany. There was no material evidence of any forms of exploitation. According to the mediators, the families appeared to be relatively well-off and may have been in a position to pay the go-betweens to apply for asylum in Germany. Note that the police did not take any fingerprints on their regular visits (even though this is a mandatory procedure under the Dublin II Regulation).

The recent emergence of the phenomenon and the cost of coming to Western Europe may explain why exploitation is relatively limited for the moment. According to observers, only relatively well-off families or those with family ties manage to come. Unaccompanied minors from Iraq and Syria seem to have appeared in Calais, France, even if there is still some doubt as to their actual nationality. A tighter watch will have to be kept on these situations in the coming months.

**The isolation suffered by the refugees in these countries calls for specific mediation.**

Post-conflict periods seem to foster a rapid increase in organised crime. There are several reasons for this:

- it often takes several years to reconstruct a institutions in a country, and the lack of legal framework and functional institutions results in a relative impunity for the perpetrators of trafficking of all sorts, including trafficking in human beings;
- many former warlords who derived their income from arms trafficking, pillaging and other arbitrary taxes they collected, try to build a new business for themselves engaging in organised crime (trafficking in drugs, cigarettes and human beings) to offset the financial shortfalls resulting from the end of the war. Their influence on the structures of the State as a result of their former relations, and the money accumulated during the war and now used to corrupt key people, often give them a form of immunity for many years.

Alongside the weakness in State structures and the development of criminal structures, the upheavals in society create a number of factors that facilitate the recruitment of victims:

- the appearance of vulnerable population groups (unaccompanied women and orphaned children);
- the dissolution of the traditional value system (lack of trust between people, especially after ethnic or religious conflicts);
- the lack of economic opportunities as a result of the country's impoverishment.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AS A RESULT OF THE PRESENCE OF MILITARY AND INTERNATIONAL STAFF IN THE POST-CONFLICT PERIOD (E.G. BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA AND KOSOVO)

To illustrate this aspect, we shall return to the case of the Balkans, and more specifically Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, where the arrival of the “blue helmets” sparked an unprecedented increase in the trafficking of women. In 2002, at the conference on trafficking, slavery, and peacekeeping operations organised by the United Nations, in Turin, , it was recognised that "The combination of the end of hostilities and the arrival of relatively rich peacekeeping operation personnel drove the hasty establishment of brothels and, in turn, founded the links between UNMIK personnel and trafficking syndicates. Within this observation lies the most significant challenge, then, to the peacekeeping operations in regards to trafficking - the fact that peacekeepers are often part of the problem."

To gain a better understanding of the phenomenon, a review of the past time line is necessary. On 30 May 1992, the UN Security Council decreed an embargo on Serbia that lasted until 1995. There was a proliferation of cross-border smuggling with Romania, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania to bypass the restrictions on petrol, cigarettes and all sorts of everyday products such as clothing, foodstuffs, cosmetics, etc. This illicit trade created networks of acquaintances at very diverse levels among Romanians, Serbs, Bosnians, Kosovars and Albanians, among others.

In 1992, the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina prompted the international community to intervene by sending in the “blue helmets”. After the Dayton Peace Accords, this international force comprised nearly 60,000 men, who were gradually withdrawn over more than 10 years. This massive influx of soldiers with substantial purchasing power, along with the numerous employees of international organisations and NGOs, gave a real boost to trafficking in women and teenage girls. A few cases were reported from 1992 onwards, but before then, there had been extremely little prostitution in the region. The pattern of circulation of these victims was similar to that used for smuggled goods, passing through a wide variety of organisations. This ranged from groups of individuals who barely knew each other and exchanged girls from one side of the border to the other, to more structured organisations controlling the whole chain of operations, from the recruiter to the hotel owner, to corrupt customs officers, and local and international police. The teenage girls were recruited with false promises, duped by relatives, or seduced by their “pimps”. They came from Romania, the Republic of Moldavia, Ukraine, Russia, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Albania.

In 2000, the UN identified 260 clubs in Bosnia-Herzegovina, while NGOs estimated that there were approximately 900 clubs and that the number of teenage girls and women ranged from four to 25 per establishment<sup>38</sup>. The HRW report<sup>39</sup> sheds light on complicity between the local and federal police and peacekeeping forces, such as the Stabilisation Force (SFOR). According to local NGOs, 50% of the clients were internationals, mainly SFOR soldiers, who accounted for at least 70% revenue coming into these establishments<sup>40</sup>. This quasi-official presence underscored powerlessness of the international forces or the lack of will to combat the phenomenon. As the American journalist Victor Malarek<sup>41</sup> discovered, through his investigations, that the rare expatriates who tried to attack the business incurred their superiors' wrath and were rapidly sent home.

In 2000, after the NATO bombings of the Serbian forces, the arrival in Kosovo of 50,000 soldiers from the Kosovo Force (KFOR) resulted in a similar phenomenon. Brothels sprang up

---

<sup>38</sup> Limanowska, Barbara. *Trafficking in Human Beings in Southeastern Europe*. Belgrade: UNICEF, 2002

<sup>39</sup> Human Rights Watch World Report, 2001.

<sup>40</sup> Sex Trafficking: The Impact of War, Militarism and Globalization in Eastern Europe By Vesna Nikolic-Ristanovic, Ph.D., Faculty for Social Education and Rehabilitation, Belgrade University, Victimology Society of Serbia, Serbia and Montenegro

<sup>41</sup> Victor Malarek, *The Natashas, The New Global Sex Trade*, Westwood Creative Artists Ltd, Toronto, 2003.

throughout the province. Despite the prevention messages issued by the international organisations, the virtual absence of any legal proceedings against soldiers in internationally-led forces made it impossible to curb the phenomenon. Consequently, given what happened in Bosnia, the boom in this trafficking was only to be expected. Fighting this phenomena was not high up on the list of priorities of the international community, as Amnesty International noted with regret at the time<sup>42</sup>. The traffic is still going on today; police raids regularly discover girls from Moldavia, Ukraine and Kosovo being sexually exploited in nightclubs.

Because of the geographical locations of the Albanian-speaking networks, Kosovo soon became the hub of trafficking in women destined for Western Europe. Its brothels were used as a stopover for girls subsequently sent to Italy, England, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany and France. After more than 15 years of wide-scale sexual exploitation, trafficking in human beings has established a constant structure in these countries. The networks have grown into international organisations, making the phenomenon difficult to combat, and thus it is still very much alive.

#### FORGOTTEN POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS FOR TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

The development of trafficking in human beings in the Balkans is the result of a series of geopolitical events and the passive complicity of the international community. After being virtually risk-free and very lucrative for nearly 10 years, the business has flourished. As European police forces slowly became aware of the problem and the international presence in the Balkans declined, the traffickers were forced to change tack. From 2005 onwards, the most powerful Serbian, Bosnian, Kosovar and Albanian networks turned from street prostitution to other types of trafficking considered to be more lucrative, namely drugs, cigarettes and arms. With regard to trafficking in human beings, the sexual exploitation of women was not abandoned, but the forms changed, with a preference for closed premises, especially in the Western European countries where prostitution had become tolerated or legal. Organisations - often families - started using children in Western Europe, forcing them to commit thefts for their benefit.

The Hamidovic clan, which is known in Italy, Spain, Austria, Belgium and France, is an example. In 2010, 17 people were arrested in several European countries, revealing a family organisation that used more than 100 children as pickpockets in the Paris metro. These minors, mostly girls, are recruited through marriages in Bosnian refugee camps in Italy, in the Bosnian regions of Zenica and Tuzla, or among families settled in France some time

---

<sup>42</sup> See Amnesty International's 2004 report entitled *Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro): "So does it mean that we have the rights?" Protecting the human rights of women and girls trafficked for forced prostitution in Kosovo*, which states that the business generated by international organisations' civilian and military personnel represented 80% of these establishments' revenue. Taking legal action against these expatriates would therefore have dealt a serious blow to the profitability of this traffic.



before the war. The organisation demands that the children bring in €300 every day. If such large numbers of children were able to be recruited, and are still being recruited, it is due to the deterioration in living conditions in general and the situation of Bosnian Roma more specifically in the post-conflict period. The 1995 Dayton Accords set up mechanisms that govern relations and the social safety net for the three main communities: Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims). For want of specific provisions, minorities such as the Roma are, in practice, excluded from the social security system. Very few of them obtain legal employment and access to the healthcare system. Many children are not registered at birth. Their lack of civil status makes them particularly attractive for human trafficking networks, because there is no way for foreign authorities to establish their age or family ties, etc. Surprisingly enough, similar phenomena exist with ex-Yugoslavian refugees that have long been settled in Western Europe. In September 2011, nearly 20 years after the first refugees arrived, the Council of Europe, speaking through its Human Rights Commissioner Thomas Hammarberg, reminded the Commission that 15,000 ex-Yugoslavian Roma in Italy were still considered stateless and that no solution had yet been found to regularise their administrative status.

During the ex-Yugoslavian conflict, some of the neighbouring countries, such as Albania were destabilised, even though there had been no fighting on their land, and are still suffering the effects today. In 1997, a widespread financial pyramid scam<sup>43</sup> ruined thousands of small investors. Two years later, because of the former Yugoslavia war, 400,000 refugees from Kosovo poured into Albania and Macedonia, again contributing there to cross-border trafficking and border porosity. This period of instability in Albania permanently weakened the foundations of the constitutional State. It contributed to the population's massive emigration (nearly one million people) and the marginalisation of families that had left their village in an attempt to settle in the city. These economic troubles initially prompted Albania and Roma families to emigrate to Greece.

#### CHILDREN ON THE MOVE

During the 1990s, thousands of children were working in the streets of Greece by begging or selling small items in the street. As a result, around 300 children were arrested between 1993 and 1999 in Athens for begging<sup>44</sup>. Most of the children were recruited directly from Rom and Egyptian families to be taken to Greece. The traffickers asked the parents to pay for the trip and, in exchange, promised they would receive regular money transfers. According to Albanian street social workers who were engaged in service at that time, very few received the money they had been led to expect, although many had gone into debt to cover the transportation costs. As the members of the Thessaloniki-based NGOs explain, once in Greece, these children had to clean windscreens, sell small items and, especially, beg. In the early 1990s, because the Greek society is very religious, substantial sums were earned. In the early 2000s, when the families realised how much their children were earning for the traffickers, they decided to take control back. Some of them migrated to Greece and settled into a business model in which the bulk of the family income came from the children. Until 2005, because there no provision in the law concerning child labour, the Greek authorities were powerless to address these issues. Since the crisis in 2008, exploitation routes have changed, and Rom and Egyptian children are no longer the only ones concerned.

Kosovo, which Albanians can enter with just an ID card, has become a new site for begging. The Montenegro town of Ulcinj, where most of the population is Albanian, is also concerned by this more or less structured type of family exploitation. In both these countries, the

<sup>43</sup> This was a fraudulent financial scheme based on the Ponzi system. It works as follows: the high returns paid to fund shareholders are derived solely from the sums contributed by new entrants. When there are no longer sufficient new entrants, the fraud becomes apparent. The investors rush to sell their shares. The fund collapses, while a large part of the sum has already been siphoned off for the benefit of the scheme's initiators. Most of the shareholders lose the savings they invested.

<sup>44</sup> Unicef and Terre des Hommes. The trafficking of Albanian Children to Greece. 2003.

language (Albanian), the currency (the euro) and the presence of emigrants returning regularly to spend their money in their home country has made this an increasingly lucrative activity for families. According to a street observation report, at least 91 children coming from Albania were found begging in the streets of Kosovo<sup>45</sup>. Furthermore children are exploited for car maintenance and hard labor in the mines and shoe or clothes factories<sup>46</sup>. If very few children are officially identified as victims, one of the reasons is that an ill-suited legal framework impedes any effort to fight family exploitation<sup>47</sup>.

The situation of street children is of increasing concern. During 2014, UNICEF undertook a study on the children on the streets. The study included counting the children in such situations during two periods in July and October 2014. During the first count, it was reported that 2014 children were on the streets, and 2527 in October 2014<sup>48</sup>.

---

## EARLY MARRIAGES

Girls, especially those coming from poor families or Roma families are forced into marriage at an early age. The family gives these girls into marriage with the idea that they will go into a rich family and live in better conditions. The same occurs with children from rural remote areas, where parents force their daughters to marry a rich emigrant somewhere in UK or Germany in order to provide economic support for the family.

Other cases reported from the field give evidence of an increased number of women and girls being married outside Albania, in Montenegro or Serbia and Macedonia. Most of the cases involve women who are forced into marriage with a foreign person, thus hoping for a better life, when in fact she is forced to work in the field or agriculture, take care of house chores and in most of the cases serve as a servant to the first wife.

The traffickers pressure the victims by saying they will kill their families, or harm them, in case the victims complain or run away.

---

<sup>45</sup> Save the Children and Terre des Hommes Investigation report for Kosovo. 2011

<sup>46</sup> UNICEF: Consultation with children on the implementation of the Child Rights Convention. October – November 2014.

<sup>47</sup> There is a gap in the proper identification and referral of victims or potential victims of trafficking. This happens because law enforcement personnel lack appropriate training on the identification of victims or potential victims of trafficking. This is why Caritas Albania in close collaboration with CRS and the Ministry of Interior will implement a two year project in strengthening the capacities of the Albanian Government on protection of victims of trafficking.

<sup>48</sup> UNICEF: National Study on the Children in Street Situation in Albania. 2014.

---

## SALE OF CHILDREN

Trafficking in babies seems to be a new consequence of destabilisation of neighbouring countries due to the war in Yugoslavia. The phenomenon appeared mostly in Bulgaria a few years ago. Last year, according to Bulgarian authorities, 7 cases of trafficking of babies were recorded as having been prosecuted. Most often infants go to families in Greece. The price for a boy is around € 18,000 and a girl between 13-14,000 Euros. In all these cases children are Roma, and their biological mothers receive a fraction of the money. Sometimes, however they did not receive any money as reimbursement of their debts to moneylenders.

Documents for the sale of babies are drawn up by lawyers and notaries, and doctors often take part in the scheme. In most cases, traffickers of children are themselves parents and relatives. Children are 'exported' mainly to Western Europe.

## EXAMPLES OF EXPERIMENTATION

These recommendations come from the work of Caritas at the meeting in Istanbul on the various forms of exploitation identified in the research / action. Experimentation phase is just starting. In 2016 they will be evaluated and used as a basis for recommendations on the final report.

### **Example 1 - Lebanon**

#### **Raising Awareness among Law Enforcement Staff about trafficking in refugee children**

##### **Background:**

As this research showed, in conflict and post-conflict situations, child labour can be seen in every sector: agriculture, street vendors, shoeshiners, construction, shops. The fieldwork in Turkey stated that some Syrian children are used for prostitution in parks in some districts of Istanbul.

##### **Proposal:**

To fight against these situations, Caritas Lebanon proposes updating the curriculum on different types of trafficking to emphasize the need to identify VOTs/ potential VOTs among refugees, especially children, in a conflict/post-conflict situation. This curriculum is conducted on a regular basis with the staff of different law enforcement agencies. Caritas Lebanon will coordinate the training department within the Internal Security Forces to update the curriculum.

The indicator for evaluation will be the increased identification of VOTs/Potential VOTs by the official authorities.

If the experiment is successful it will be replicated in other countries facing similar problems.

### **Example 2 – Armenia**

Prevention of Labour Exploitation of Syrian Armenians by enhancing their Opportunities of being Self-Employed

##### **Background:**

Syrian Armenians traveled to Armenia, and still travel there, due to escalation of the war in Syria since 2011. Most of them have fled from Syria quitting their jobs and without taking

anything. They have to find jobs in Armenia in order to live, but taking into account that they have a language barrier (they speak a different Armenian and do not know how to speak Russian) and are not integrated in the Armenian society either. Thus the issue of their economic exploitation has become very salient.

### **Proposal:**

The experiment will try to fight this very wide-spread phenomenon among Syrian Armenians by providing them with some opportunities of self-employment by:

- Signing an agreement with the representatives of Syrian Armenian families with the aim to conduct the project, ;
- Assisting them in terms of legal counseling, information dissemination on their services, etc.;
- Conducting monthly interviews with the families in order to find out their income from their small businesses, challenges and perspectives of development.

The indicators of success are the number of customers for the services provided by Syrian Armenians, the consumption of their goods and the income.

If this experiment is successful it could be replicated in other countries and completed by micro finance programs in order to help the refugees to develop their own business.

## **GENERAL RECOMMANDATIONS**

These recommendations come from the work of Caritas at the meeting in Paris in January 2015 on the various forms of exploitation identified in the research / action. At the workshop it was decided to work on 5 key points (identification, prevention, etc.) to fight against trafficking. These recommendations may be subject to experimentation to be validated as good practices.

<b>USE OF CHILDREN (General brainstorming)</b>	
<b>Prevention</b>	Public campaigns or awareness with communities
	Establish economical programs
	Awareness campaign with parents and teachers
	Cooperation with government agencies + UN agencies



<b>Identification</b>	<p>Case management + social worker</p> <p>Outreach workers</p> <p>Task forces</p> <p>Child protection units</p> <p>Police and social services</p>
<b>Protection</b>	<p>Volunteers / Outreach workers from communities</p> <p>Languages courses</p> <p>Programs adapted to the needs</p> <p>Shelters</p>
<b>Law enforcement / Advocacy</b>	<p>Access to justice for migrants and refugees through new laws</p>
<b>Public awareness</b>	<p>Teachers</p>

<b>ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION (Albania, Armenia, Bosnia, Lebanon)</b>	
<b>Prevention</b>	<p>Awareness raising on their rights and how they can protect themselves</p> <p>Free legal consultancy and support</p> <p>Micro-finance projects to open their own business</p> <p>Work in cooperation with employers</p> <p>Vocational trainings</p>
<b>Identification</b>	<p>Outreach workers / volunteers to refer cases to the relevant entities</p> <p>Training social welfare centers / police officers on how to identify victims of trafficking, etc.</p>
<b>Protection</b>	<p>Free legal representation before courts</p> <p>Community centers with vocational trainings, awareness, etc.</p> <p>Financial assistance</p> <p>Psychological assistance and follow up</p>

<b>Law enforcement / Advocacy</b>	<p>Reinforcement of the legal procedures: mechanism complaint against employers, contracts between employers and employees, etc.</p> <p>Advocacy with UN agencies, governmental entities, NGOs, etc.</p> <p>Trainings to law enforcement agents, authorities, etc.</p>
<b>Public awareness</b>	Teaching in schools about exploitation, trafficking, etc.

SMUGGLING IN MIGRANTS (Romania and Bulgaria)	
<b>Prevention</b>	<p>In country of origin: civil society and organizations involved in migration</p> <p>Diplomatic missions in countries of destination</p> <p>Cooperation mechanisms</p> <p>In countries destination: work with receiving centers with trainings on THB, trainings on referral mechanisms</p> <p>Work with embassies and diplomatic missions</p> <p>Work with NGOs which have programs for migrants</p> <p>Work with border police: teach how to identify victims, on referral mechanisms, etc.</p>
<b>Identification</b>	Trainings on referral mechanisms to receiving centers and border police + how to identify victims
<b>Protection</b>	<p>Victims of trafficking should have an assessment of their own needs &amp; case management program based on the needs of each person</p> <p>Basic needs, shelter, medical services, legal advice, etc. depending on the needs of the victims</p>
<b>Law enforcement / Advocacy</b>	<p>Identification of the gaps of the legislation</p> <p>Show the victims how to have access to legal protection</p>
<b>Public awareness</b>	Awareness campaigns focused on addressing the large public + local communities where migrants are (near by the receiving centers) on acceptance of the migrants, tolerance, elimination of stereotypes

VULNERABLE MINORITIES (Turkey and Kosovo)	
<b>Prevention</b>	Fight racism and hate speeches: workshops with different groups
<b>Identification</b>	Map location of the minorities to reach them
<b>Protection</b>	Inform them about their rights through trainings, education, counseling, etc. Establishment of businesses for minority groups
<b>Law enforcement / Advocacy</b>	Access to all services (education, health, etc.)
<b>Public awareness</b>	Workshop, campaigns to inform about minorities' rights

EARLY / FORCED MARRIAGE (Lebanon)	
<b>Prevention</b>	Awareness during group discussions with beneficiaries
<b>Identification</b>	Outreach work Hotlines Partnerships with other organizations Teams at border crossing areas to identify victims of trafficking
<b>Protection</b>	Shelters for victims (women who are fleeing their family to avoid early / forced marriage, or who are already married but were forced to get married, etc.) Free legal representation Free education programs Social, medical, psychological follow-up for victims Reintegration into society after a transition period at the shelter (stay at the shelter depending on the needs) Financial assistance for victims
<b>Law enforcement / Advocacy</b>	Advocacy with institutions to forbid early marriage by the law

**Public awareness**

Work in cooperation with other organizations / institutions in the field of protection of women for wider prevention campaigns in different places (hospitals, community centers, public spaces, etc.)

<i>Transversal topic</i>	<b>ORGAN TRAFFICKING (Lebanon)</b>
<b>Prevention</b>	<p>Awareness raising in hospitals (posters) explaining the risks of organ trafficking</p> <p>Distribution of flyers at border crossing areas explaining the risks of organ trafficking (since some families in desperate needs of money to survive are more vulnerable than others)</p>
<b>Identification</b>	Work in cooperation with law enforcement officers arresting trafficking networks
<b>Protection</b>	<p>Medical assistance</p> <p>Free legal representation</p>
<b>Law enforcement / Advocacy</b>	Advocate with governments and institutions for better prevention + protection of victims
<b>Public awareness</b>	Public campaigns in different places (hospitals, streets, etc.) to explain risks of organ trafficking

## TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN CONFLICT AND POST-CONFLICT SITUATION

Trafficking in human beings in conflict and post-conflict situations is a subject on which little research has been conducted, and which is seldom addressed by the stakeholders tasked with supporting displaced people and/or refugees. In the field, the reception or "management" of people fleeing conflicts, whether by international organisations, States or civil society, essentially boils down to providing humanitarian aid to meet basic needs: food and drink, medical care, shelter, and so on. Emergency aid programmes during the conflict phase and reconstruction programmes still do too little to address the exploitation or presence of vulnerable groups, such as children without a family guardian, unaccompanied women or persecuted minorities.

Because of the proliferation of conflicts around the world (Middle East, Ukraine, etc.), which mainly affect civilians and which result in an unprecedented number of displaced people and refugees, human trafficking and exploitation would appear to be increasingly in the forefront, according to the Caritas organisations working in the field. Failure to address them can result in the phenomenon becoming lastingly entrenched in countries being rebuilt after a period of conflict. Accordingly, this research-action aims to give all of the stakeholders insights into trafficking in conflict and post-conflict situations so that they can put forward the solutions best suited to the situations in the field.

Caritas research-action coordinator:  
Geneviève Colas,  
*Secours Catholique – Caritas France*

Researched and written by:  
Olivier Peyroux

Research staff: Ariela Mitri, *Caritas Albania* and *Euromediterranean project*; Hombeline Dulière, *Caritas Lebanon*; Ivana Kozina, *Caritas Bosnia-Herzegovina* ; Jakup Sabedini, *Caritas Kosovo* ; Gohar Yeranyan, *Caritas Armenia*

Participants: Gabriela Chiroiu, *Caritas Roumania* ; Najla Chahda, Sylvie Eid and Fady Moussa, *Caritas Lebanon* ; Radosveta Hadjieva, *Caritas Bulgarie* ; Movses Hakobyan, *Caritas Armenia*; Ivana Kozina and Bosiljco Rajic, *Caritas Bosnia-Herzegovina* ; Albert Nikolla, *Caritas Albania*; Belinda Mumcu and Şenay Özden, *Caritas Turquie* ; Elnara Petit, *Secours Catholique Caritas France*; Hryhoriy Seleshchuk, *Caritas Ukraine*.

© Photo credits: Hombeline Dulière

### Contact / Coordination :

[genevieve.colas@secours-catholique.org](mailto:genevieve.colas@secours-catholique.org) - +33 6 71 00 69 90