



# A SHORT GUIDE

FOR HEALTHCARE  
WORKERS

IDENTIFICATION  
AND SUPPORT OF  
VICTIMS OF HUMAN  
TRAFFICKING

Funded  
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AGAINST VIOLENCE AND TRAFFICKING

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For more information about the action and related publications visit:

Council of Europe Programme Office in Skopje  
Address: Soravia Center, Filip Vtori Makedonski br. 3.  
1000 Skopje

Website: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/skopje>

The following contributed to the publication: Dr. Marija Risteska, Center for Research and Policy Making; Prof. Dr. Elena Kjosevska and Nadica Totić, M.Sc., Institute for Public Health of the Republic of North Macedonia; Assoc. Dr. Daniela Ivanova Panova, University Clinic for Gynecology and Obstetrics, Faculty of Medicine, "St. Cyril and Methodius" University, Skopje; Marija Todorovska, Open Gate and Dr. Jörg Pont, former medical advisor of the Ministry of Justice of Austria.

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# 01

## WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking is the recruitment, transfer, transportation, harbouring or acceptance of children, women or men through the use of force, coercion, abuse of a position of vulnerability, fraud or other impermissible means for the purpose of exploitation.<sup>1</sup>

**THE HEALTHCARE SECTOR IS A KEY  
PLAYER IN THE IDENTIFICATION AND  
SUPPORT OF VICTIMS OF HUMAN  
TRAFFICKING**

Victims of human trafficking, as well as victims of other forms of abuse, suffer injuries and illnesses that often are under the responsibility of the healthcare sector, which should be addressed in a safe and confidential manner.

For a trafficked person, contacting someone in the healthcare sector may be the **first - or the only** - opportunity to explain what happened or to seek help.

### CONTACTS AND REFERRALS

#### OPEN GATE

☎ 2777 - 070

[www.lastrada.org.mk](http://www.lastrada.org.mk)

#### SOS LINE

☎ 0800 - 11111

#### CENTER FOR VICTIMS

☎ 070 359 971

#### POLICE

Anti-Human Trafficking  
Unit

☎ 192

#### FIELD TEAMS

☎ 078 306 225

[www.nacionalnakomisija.gov.mk](http://www.nacionalnakomisija.gov.mk)

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

# 02

## FORMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- Sexual exploitation;
- Labour exploitation in sectors including agriculture, construction, food processing, catering, industries (in factories);
- Forced begging;
- Force marriages;
- Domestic slavery;
- Forced criminality, including street crime and petty theft;
- Organ removal.

ANYONE CAN BECOME A VICTIM  
of human trafficking.



# 03

## INDICATORS THAT THE PATIENT IS A POSSIBLE VICTIM OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING


- Is **accompanied** by another person who seems controlling and insists on giving information and speaking on his/her behalf;
- Seems to be **afraid** to speak in the presence of the accompanying adult;
- Gives a **vague and inconsistent** explanation of where he/she lives, works or studies;
- Has old or serious **injuries** left untreated and refuses to explain how the injury occurred;
- Appears to **move frequently** (locally, regionally, nationally or internationally);
- Their appearance suggests **general physical neglect**;
- **Does not speak** the languages of the country;
- **Does not possess** documents.

More information on the **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)** and **Indicators** for Identification of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings may be found on the website of the National Commission for Combating Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration: [nacionalnakomisija.gov.mk](http://nacionalnakomisija.gov.mk)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Standard Operating Procedures - National Commission (nacionalnakomisija.gov.mk).  
Indicators - National Commission (nacionalnakomisija.gov.mk).*

# 04

## WOMEN AS VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING



In the Republic of North Macedonia **victims** of sexual exploitation are **predominantly** women and girls.

- The victim has **nowhere** to live if she returns to her community;
- The victim constantly **blames** herself for everything that happens;
- The victim is **anxious and/or scared** when she talks about herself her and family life;
- The victim **refuses to believe** that the institutions are able to help her;
- The victim **withdraws** into herself, is afraid to answer questions and seeks the approval or consent of her companion.

# 05

## CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS AS VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- They have an **unclear relationship** with the accompanying adult;
- A feeling of **fear and restlessness** is perceived when they are next to the accompanying adult;
- **Disappear** quickly from health supervision, from school, home, etc.;
- Give **inconsistent** information about their age.





# 06

## HEALTH CONDITIONS

### associated with human trafficking

- Evidence of long-term multiple injuries;
- Indications of mental, physical and sexual trauma;
- Sexually transmitted infections;
- Pregnant with delayed antenatal care or adolescent pregnancy;
- Impaired and poor nutrition, malnutrition and dehydration;
- Evidence of self-harm;
- Injuries or illnesses from exposure to harmful chemicals;
- Bad teeth condition;
- Chronic fatigue;
- Back pain, stomach pain, skin problems;
- Headaches and dizziness;
- Non-specific symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder;
- Anxiety/panic attack (e.g. shortness of breath, chest pain);
- Symptoms of psychiatric and psychological disorders.

**Victims** of human trafficking may only come to your attention when **seriously ill** or **injured** or with an injury or illness that has not been treated for some time. Persons with disabilities are a particularly **vulnerable category of citizens** who may be victims of human trafficking.

# REMEMBER



- Trafficked people do not recognize themselves as victims of human trafficking;
- Victims find it difficult to disclose their experience due to fear, shame, language barriers and a lack of opportunity to do so;
- It may take time for the victim to feel safe enough to speak up;
- Age caution – if a person tells you that he or she is under 18, or if a person says that he or she is an adult, but you suspect that he or she is not, then act as if he or she is under 18;
- Be careful with men and boys who are sexually exploited – try not to make them feel judged or prejudiced;
- WHEN THE VICTIM IS A CHILD **UNDER THE AGE OF 18**, THE CASE MUST **ALWAYS** BE REPORTED.

All **measures** taken by the authorities **to protect** the victims should be **urgent** and represent a priority. They must be **adapted** to the victims' needs, **in accordance** with their age, and to the persons with developmental disabilities.

## IF YOU ARE UNSURE

whether a person is a victim, the most important thing is that you and the possible victim stay safe!

## DO NOT CONFRONT

especially in the presence of the person accompanying the possible victim!

## SHARE YOUR DOUBTS

with another trusted staff member!

## ASK FOR ADVICE

or refer the patient to an appropriate social care organisation!

## DO NO HARM

**do not promise** what you cannot deliver!

If you feel that your safety is threatened,  
**report to 192!**

Support for victims of human trafficking is available.

FREE SOS LINE

**0800 11111**

Reports can be made anonymously.

**Encourage him/her to call for help or to talk!**

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

[www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)

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