



Organization Information

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The Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings:

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Project Information

1. Project title: Addressing trafficking for labour exploitation in Sweden (ATES)
2. Duration of the project: 1 February 2016 – 30 June 2016
3. Project budget: **245 964,00 SEK**

1. Aim of the project

The main aim of the project is to support relevant national authorities in combating trafficking for labour exploitation in Sweden.

Specific tasks of the project are to:

- To stimulate dialogue and foster experience between the authorities in Sweden, Finland, Belgium and United Kingdom to prevent trafficking for labour exploitation.
- To increase the capacity and look into the current mandate of national authorities to counteract trafficking for labour exploitation in Sweden.

2. Target groups

The direct target group consists of key national actors instrumental in combating trafficking for labour exploitation: Representatives of the National Task Force against Prostitution and Trafficking in Sweden (NMT), County Administrative Board of Stockholm (Länsstyrelsen), Tax Authority (Skatteverket) and Swedish Work Environment Authority (Arbetsmiljöverket).

Possible involvement of trade unions.

The main beneficiaries and indirect target group of the project is migrant workers potentially at risk of becoming victims of THB as well as those who have already become victims of trafficking for labour exploitation in Sweden.

3. Background of the project

Over the past decades the labour market has been changing in most countries of the world, including in Europe and in the Baltic Sea region. Increased competition and restructuring of work production is pressing down prices both nationally and internationally. All of this has affected how work is organized and contracted out in today's societies. Nowadays especially low-skilled and low-paid jobs are built on an increasingly flexible work force which consists to a large extent of migrant workers, who undertake work that no-one else wants to do. These workers can be especially vulnerable to discrimination and to exploitative practices, including trafficking for forced labour.

International sources suggest that trafficking for the purpose of forced labour is on the increase globally, at least when measured by the number of victims identified by the authorities and other organisations. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that 21 million individuals are trapped into situations akin to slavery, forced to work or trafficked globally; 610,000 of them are victims of forced labour in the European Union. People are abused, exploited and trafficked to supply unpaid or very low-paid work and/or services without receiving any remuneration and while being kept in conditions contrary to human dignity.

Until recently trafficking for sexual exploitation has been the main form of trafficking in Sweden. However, since 2010 a number of reports of suspected trafficking for labour exploitation is rising and bypassing the number of cases for sexual exploitation. But even if numbers of cases continue to increase, the issue of human trafficking for labour exploitation is receiving relatively little attention in Swedish Policy discourse.

Although Sweden is renowned for its high labour and employment standards and adherence to human and labour rights, migrant labour exploitation is a significant problem. Relevant national authorities lack mandate and/or knowledge and experience to tackle this relatively new form of human trafficking. There are no sufficient national mechanisms in place to identify victims of trafficking for labour exploitation and refer them for specialised assistance. The police, prosecutors and judges in Sweden may fail to detect cases of forced labour due to a lack of knowledge about the crime. (Vogiazides & Hedberg 2013). In 2015 there is no case of trafficking for labour exploitation that has reached the Swedish courts.

Sweden has established a number of well-functioning coordination mechanisms to combat trafficking for sexual exploitation. Nevertheless, the existing mechanisms and structures need to be developed further to address also other new forms of trafficking. While cooperation also needs to be expanded, to include a set of actors which are in a position to identify victims of trafficking for labour exploitation. The Work Environment Authority, for example, has the potential to be more active in this field. At present, the authority carries on workplace inspections on work environment and safety issues but, unlike many of its counterparts in other countries, it lacks the mandate to review wage-related issues, including terms of employment (Vogiazides & Hedberg 2013). For this to occur, some changes to policy, structure, and resources are needed. In some of Sweden's neighbouring countries, certain labour inspection units focus only on workplaces employing foreign labour. This may assist in putting aside resources specifically for critical areas.

Research findings from Finland, Sweden, Estonia and Lithuania (2013) confirm that it is not uncommon for migrant workers to pay exorbitant fees for recruitment, travel, accommodation and other "services", and to be deceived about working conditions. These workers often end up in situations of labour exploitation, especially in sectors employing low-skilled, low wage, seasonal, part-time, precarious workers, often agency workers (e.g. in the cleaning, construction, restaurant and agricultural sectors).

4. Activities of the project

The following activities will be implemented in the framework of the project:

- A 2-day study visits to Belgium and Finland to get an overview of how these countries are tackling labour trafficking and what kind of labour inspection systems are in place to monitor the terms of employment of migrant workers. The visits will focus on meetings with practitioners who have concrete experiences in dealing with labour exploitation and/or labour trafficking in their line of work. Based on the lessons learned during the study visit a short summary and a concrete set of recommendations will be prepared to outline what Swedish authorities could do to strengthen response to labour trafficking.

Meetings in Belgium

In Belgium, labour inspectors have had already for years a legal mandate to investigate cases of human trafficking, cooperate with police, prosecutors and victim referral centers in cases of trafficking in human beings. The Belgian Social Inspectorate has created specialized units operating all over the country that consist of inspectors who have been trained in detecting possible cases of labour trafficking.

- Ministry of Social Security – Directorate Social Inspectorate (Peter Van Hauwemeiren)
- Specialised units of the Social Inspectorate (meeting with inspectors)
- Federal Centre for the Analysis of Migration Flows, the Protection of Fundamental Rights of Foreigners and the Fight against Human Trafficking
- Bureau of the Interdepartmental Platform against THB (Jean-François Minet)
- Belgian Financial Intelligence Processing Unit

- NGOs & Trade unions active in the trafficking field.

Meetings in Finland

In Finland, the awareness on labour trafficking has increased in the past five years. Since first judgement on trafficking for forced labour was passed in 2012, several more cases have proceeded to court and resulted in convictions for labour trafficking. Most cases in Finland concern exploitation in ethnic restaurants, but also cases concerning exploitation in nail salon, agricultural sector, wood processing plant and plastic factory have been identified and resulted in convictions. Finland also has in place an offence of extortionate work discrimination and aggravated extortion that are used in cases of labour exploitation involving migrants. The Finnish labour inspectorate has in place inspectors who are specialized in monitoring the use of migrant labour. Their mandate also covers monitoring the terms of employment (e.g. working hours, wages). The specialized inspectors do a lot of inspections based on tips they receive and have identified several cases of serious labour exploitation.

- Prosecutors of labour trafficking cases (e.g. Peter Levlin, Österbotten; Leena Koivuniemi, Pirkanmaa; also someone from Helsinki)
- Police officers who have investigated labour trafficking cases (Österbotten; Helsinki; Pirkanmaa)/ National Police Board/National Bureau of Investigation
- Labour inspectorate (Meeting with inspectors who are specialized in migrant workers: Katja-Pia Jenu, Eveliina Liiman, Helsinki and Kristiina Linna, Anu Ikonen, Turku)
- Joutseno reception centre - National Assistance System for Victims of Trafficking
- National rapporteur and/or coordinator
- European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, HEUNI (Natalia Ollus)
- NGOs (Monika-naiset, Victim Support Finland)
- Service United trade union (PAM) (Arja Pohjola, Mikko Laakkonen)
- Trade Union

Meeting in the UK

In 2015, the UK adapted a Modern Slavery Act in order to consolidate previous offences relating to trafficking and slavery under one legislation. The act e.g. includes Transparency in Supply Chain Provisions to ensure businesses do not contribute to trafficking in their supply chains. They have also introduced an Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner who is responsible for leading efforts to tackle slavery and human trafficking. Furthermore, the Gangmasters' Licensing Authority has been successful in uncovering labour exploitation within the agricultural, horticultural and shellfish industries. Also promising initiatives have been made to involve a number of stakeholders to reduce human trafficking, forced labour and other hidden third party exploitation of workers. The Stronger Together provides guidance, resources and a network for employers, labour providers, workers and their representatives to work together to reduce exploitation.

- Modern Slavery Commissioner
- Gangmasters' Licensing Authority
- NGO "Anti-Slavery International"
- Institute for Business and human rights
- Stronger together Initiative

Final national meeting/workshop

A high level working group meeting will be organized to discuss steps to be taken in Sweden to address the risk of labour exploitation and trafficking. The participants will include representatives from the Ministries as well as from the national task force against prostitution and trafficking. It is possible to organize a more practically oriented workshop in connection with the high level meeting and invite also some foreign speakers to share their insights (e.g. Swedish speaking Finns, Danes, and Norwegians). The workshop could, for example, include group work and round table discussions on what different organisations are currently doing, what are the gaps and how they could be addressed in order to improve Sweden's responses to trafficking and labour exploitation.

5. Project outcomes

The main outcome of the project will be a project report with a set of concrete recommendations for the national authorities to strengthen responses to trafficking for labour exploitation.

6. Budget

Eligible cost categories	Explanation	SEK
Personnel costs	Project Officer 2648 SEK x 22 days	58 256,00
Travel and subsistence costs	Visits to Helsinki and Brussels for 10 persons	149 900,00
Other direct costs	Meals for participants	21 465,00
Administration/overhead	7%	16 073,00
TOTAL ELIGIBLE COSTS		245 964,00

Travel and DSA

Journey from-to (per partner)	Reasons for travel	Number of people travelling	Travel costs	Hotel	Total costs
Stockholm – Helsinki – Stockholm	Study visit (1 night)	10	2000	1100	31000
Stockholm –	Study visit (2	10	3000	3000	60000

Brussels – Stockholm	nights)				
Internal travel in Finland	Study visit	4	1600		6400
Internal travel in Brussels	Study visit	2	1500		3000
Stockholm-London- Stockholm	Study visit (2 night)	9	2500	3000	49500

Other direct costs	
Description	Total costs
Meals for participants in Helsinki (2 lunches, 1 dinner, 560 SEK per person)	5600
Meals for participants in Brussels (2 lunches, 2 dinner, 835 SEK per person)	8350
Meals for participants in London (2 lunches, 2 dinner, 835 SEK per person)	7515