

COUNTERING NEW FORMS OF ROMA CHILD TRAFFICKING:
PARTICIPATORY APPROACH
(CONFRONT)

**Guidelines for conducting field work in countries of
destination (Austria, Greece, Italy)**



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The purpose of this document is to propose the methods and tools for collection of data on the three forms of trafficking of children for exploitation: begging, pick-pocketing, sexual exploitation of boys, affecting the Roma minority. It accounts for the difference with regard to the issues and challenges faced by countries of destination: Austria, Italy and Greece. It is developed on the basis of the Methodology for participatory research, the Research guidelines for destination countries and the discussions during the Workshop in Sofia 17-18 February 2014.

1. Preliminary desk research phase

The preliminary phase of field research aimed to gain a better understanding of the relevant stakeholders at national level. On the basis of the preliminary desk research areas for field visits and key non-Roma stakeholders have been identified. A literature review and identification of the main sources of information has provided an understanding of the migration patterns and mechanisms of recruitment. It also has provided an in-depth understanding of the institutional framework and main actors involved in child assistance and CT efforts (national institutions, service providers and NGOs). Following the literature review, interviews were conducted with national counter trafficking (CT) bodies, police, units for combatting organized crime, child protection authorities, social assistance agencies, service providing NGOs running shelters for victims of trafficking or for children and other relevant to the national context stakeholders.

The preliminary research phase has identified a set of common challenges for data collection that can be summarised as:

- lack of centralised data collection for victims of trafficking;
- lack of disaggregated data (by ethnicity and forms of exploitation);
- low identification rates;
- data protection issues as a reason for refusal of information;
- reluctance for cooperation from some authorities;

- highly decentralised governance system (especially Greece; Italy and Austria to a lesser extent);
- hard to identify vulnerable communities as in some cases they are not compact.

2. Field research phase

2.1 Main goals

The main goals of the field research phase are to fill in the gaps of knowledge, address the challenges identified during the preliminary research and give a better understanding of the situation “on the ground”. For this purpose it will take into account the recommendations made at the methodology workshop in Sofia. These include:

- actively seeking the views of service providers, experts on THB, Roma NGOs on all the identified challenges;
- seeking expert assessments on actual extent of trafficking/ share of Roma child victims of the three forms of trafficking: begging, pick-pocketing, sexual exploitation of boys;
- asking service providers/ NGOs about information on numbers of victims and share of Roma children;
- data protection issues could be addressed by requesting aggregated information, with no personal details of victims;
- socio-economic indicators (high levels of poverty and social exclusion) could be used to identify potentially vulnerable Roma communities and local NGOs could be interviewed to identify/ confirm vulnerability of groups;
- local authorities could be contacted to compensate for reluctance of national authorities to cooperate.

2.2 *Research questions*

The research questions that will seek to be answered through the field research phase are related to access and quality of the care provided to children, victims of trafficking for exploitation: begging, pick-pocketing, sexual exploitation of boys; the extent of this phenomenon in the destination country and what are the gaps in protection and cooperation between the countries of origin and destination that need to be addressed.

The research questions should be formulated on the basis of the research topics listed in the preliminary research guidelines and should be further adapted based on the finding of the preliminary research, in particular, aiming to address gaps of knowledge. Some of these topics are mentioned below in section 2.3 Questionnaire for semi-structured interviews.

More specific questions could emerge through deliberation with Roma communities in destination countries (where this takes place). This will serve to ensure their relevance and ability to capture and reflect the phenomenon child trafficking with its specificities in terms of recruitment strategies, vulnerability of victims etc. It will also serve to ensure the sensitive approach towards the topic.

2.3 *Methods*

Data collection tools for this phase will include field visits to service providers throughout the country and in-depth interviews.

The ***field visits*** aim to give a better understanding and to assess the situation of Roma child victims' assistance "on the ground". It will give information about the available facilities and access to them for victims of trafficking and exploitation, the adequacy and quality of the care provided, the systems in place with regards to child victims assistance and repatriation.

Conducting ***semi-structured*** interviews with relevant authorities and service providers for collection of qualitative in-depth information about the factors, forms, types and mechanisms of child trafficking in all selected project localities. Semi-structured interviews are open enough to allow sensitive

adaptation of questions. At the same time the collected data could be analysed along comparable analytical matrix that allows cross local and cross-country comparisons.

The questionnaire will consist of 10-15 questions gathering data on:

- ❖ Extent of child trafficking in the destination country in the three forms (begging, pick-pocketing, sexual exploitation of boys):
 - number of victims identified, where possible disaggregated by country of origin and ethnicity /where ethnically disaggregated data is not available, you may ask for expert assessment/
 - number of victims assisted (disaggregated by form of exploitation, country of origin, ethnicity)
 - number of victims repatriated (disaggregated by form of exploitation, country of origin, ethnicity)
- ❖ Profile of victims (expert assessments)
 - Prevalent age group for each form of exploitation
 - Socio-economic status (occupation, income, levels of poverty, education, family situation, etc.)
 - Affiliations with family members/relatives in the country of destination
- ❖ Mechanism of exploitation in the country of origin: role of organized crime, role of families
- ❖ Migration patterns of the victims – typical in-country migration patterns for the different types of exploitation. Concentration of the different types of Roma child trafficking in different cities/regions
- ❖ Challenges in victim identification – police and service provider perspective
- ❖ Challenges in provision of care for victims of trafficking and exploitation
- ❖ Challenges in gathering information (evidence) on the act of trafficking and exploitation – law enforcement perspective
- ❖ Enforcement of child rights based approach in victims assistance

- ❖ Strengths and weaknesses in the mechanisms for inter-institutional cooperation between the relevant stakeholders in countries of destination (i.e. between law enforcement/ social services/ NGOs)
- ❖ Strengths and weaknesses in the mechanisms for inter-institutional cooperation between the relevant stakeholders in countries of destination and countries of origin with regards to child victims assistance and repatriation.

Where possible it is recommended that ***participatory research*** with Roma stakeholders from countries of origin is considered. It will involve the identification of Roma stakeholders and collecting information directly from representatives of the Roma communities. For this purpose communities that are from the particular country of origin and living in the country of destination should be identified and contacted.

The methodology to be followed is based on the one already developed for participatory research and follows the main principles of process orientation. However, due to the budgetary and logistical constraints of the research in destination countries, it may be difficult to involve Roma (?) participants in the formulation, data collection and analysis of the participatory research. Recognizing this, it is recommended that a general open-ended approach is followed. The gaining of trust and creation of safe space during this participatory research phase are essential. The tools proposed for consideration are qualitative semi-structured interviews (face-to-face) and the collection of life stories.

Semi-structured interviews can be carried out with individuals or families and even large groups. An interview guide targeting Roma stakeholders in destination countries and taking into account their specific circumstances (such as possibly living in illegal settlements) be developed, it will consist of informal grouping of topics and questions that the interviewer can ask in different ways for different participants. Some of these topics can include:

- Their situation in the country of destination, including reason for migration, legal status, living conditions etc.

- Awareness of any attempts made by criminal networks to recruit and exploit children Roma children
- The mechanisms for recruitment and exploitation
- Specific vulnerable communities
- Awareness of available help and protection for children and families.

The **life story** technique is a respondent-led process which puts greater emphasis on eliciting personal narratives, that is, asking the interviewees to tell their life stories in their own words and recounting events in their preferred order without asking them too many direct and predetermined questions. The purpose of the life story is to put the individual experience and narrative at the center of the research and give an account of the way the respondent views the world.

3. Deliverables

The deliverable of the preliminary research, fieldwork and participatory research will be a National report and a Catalogue of Good Practice. The structure of the report and guidelines for good practice identification and will be developed and shared at a later project phase.