



The National Assistance System for Victims of Trafficking

Overview and statistics

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TRAFFICKING

The National Assistance System

- National Assistance System is a state agency tasked to help victims of trafficking (VoT)
 - Helping victims and providing services
 - Assuring that the rights and services of VoTs are guaranteed
- Official duties from law: *Act on the Reception of Persons Applying for International Protection and on the Identification of and the Aid to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings (746/2011)*
- Works within Finnish borders
- Independent part of Joutseno Reception Centre
 - Merged to the Finnish Immigration Services in 2017
- Five full-time employees situated in Joutseno and Oulu
- 24/7 helpline and website: www.ihmiskauppa.fi
- Also on twitter (@ihmiskauppa_fi)



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- Purpose of the services
- **Supporting the victim to return back to normal social life**
- Providing the victim with subsistence and care considering their special needs and requirements (arising from the age, vulnerability, and physical and mental state of the victim, and through security considerations).
- Assisting the victims serves countering trafficking
- Indirectly, the services provided help identifying and prosecuting the criminals



Official duties of the National Assistance System

- Helping victims of human trafficking (VoT) in Finland
 - The victimisation can take place abroad or in Finland
- Ensuring that the rights of VoTs are guaranteed and fulfilled according the Finnish law
- Identifying VoTs
- Providing expertice: assisting other officials and actors who work in the counter-trafficking field

Why a specialised National Assistance System?

- Human trafficking a serious violation of human rights
 - Criminalised in the Finnish Criminal Law (25 chapter, § 3 and 3a (human trafficking and aggravated human trafficking))
- The violation prohibits the fulfilment of VoTs basic rights, freedom, personal integrity and human security
 - Need for recovery and specialised services and care
- Identification of VoTs and persecution of traffickers requires assistance for the victims
- Fully funded by government budget



Who can be accepted into the National Assistance System?

- Low threshold: no full certainty needed that the person is a VoT
- Criminal process is not a prerequisite for acceptance into the National Assistance System
- Gender, age, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, political opinions etc. do not hinder the person from being accepted to the National Assistance Systems
- Victims can be Finnish or foreign nationals
- Victimization can have taken place abroad or in Finland
- Victims can be in Finland legally or illegally
- Also the underaged children of VoTs can be accepted
 - In need of assistance due to their parent's victimisation
- And eyewitnesses, if they are in need of protection




Assistance System can grant a recovery period


- Under section 36 of the Reception Act (746/2011), a recovery period may be granted to persons legally resident in Finland. A recovery period may also therefore be granted to a Finnish citizen when admitted into the assistance system. During the recovery period, criminal investigation authorities and prosecutors may not contact the customer without the customer's consent, and the assistance system may not inform the criminal investigation authorities that the customer has been admitted into the system. The minimum recovery period is 30 days, and it may be extended up to a maximum of 90 days.



also a reflection period can be granted by the Assistance System

- The assistance system is also authorised, as per the *Aliens Act (301/2004)*, to grant a reflection period to persons who do not have a legal right of residence in Finland. As with the recovery period, the reflection period is intended to give a victim of human trafficking time to rest and recover from his/her ordeal and decide whether to cooperate with the authorities investigating the human trafficking offence of which he/she was a victim.
 - The minimum reflection period is 30 days and it may be extended up to a maximum of six months. In 2016, the assistance system granted a reflection period to three persons, of 30 days, three months and six months.
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Official identification of a victim of human trafficking

- An officially identified victim of human trafficking is entitled to the services of the assistance system until the need for services ceases, or the person himself/herself decides to leave the system. Official identification is performed as per section 38 of the *Act on the Reception of Persons Applying for International Protection and on the Identification of and the Aid to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings (746/2011, the 'Reception Act')* in cases where the criminal investigation authority, prosecutor or Finnish Immigration Service has not identified an individual as a victim of human trafficking.
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Services and support offered in the National Assistance System

- The Services for a Victim of Trafficking include
 - Guidance and counselling
 - Legal and juridical advice
 - Emergency aid (includes therapy)
 - Social and health care services
 - Interpretation services and other support services
 - Accommodation or housing
 - Reception allowance/income support and other necessary care
 - Support for a safe return



Services for VoTs

- The responsibility to organise the services of VoT depends on whether s/he has a home municipality in Finland
 - No home municipality → National Assistance System
 - National Assistance System can buy the services from a supplier
 - Home municipality → Home municipality responsible
- National Assistance System supports municipalities and monitors that VoTs get the services they are entitled to

The role of National Assistance System

- National Assistance System has a coordinating role
 - Consultant for other officials
 - Monitoring that VoT's rights are fulfilled
- Supporting courts and the police in investigation and persecution if needed
 - National Assistance System has to inform the police everytime a person is taken into the System
- Cooperation with the Finnish Immigration Office and NGOs

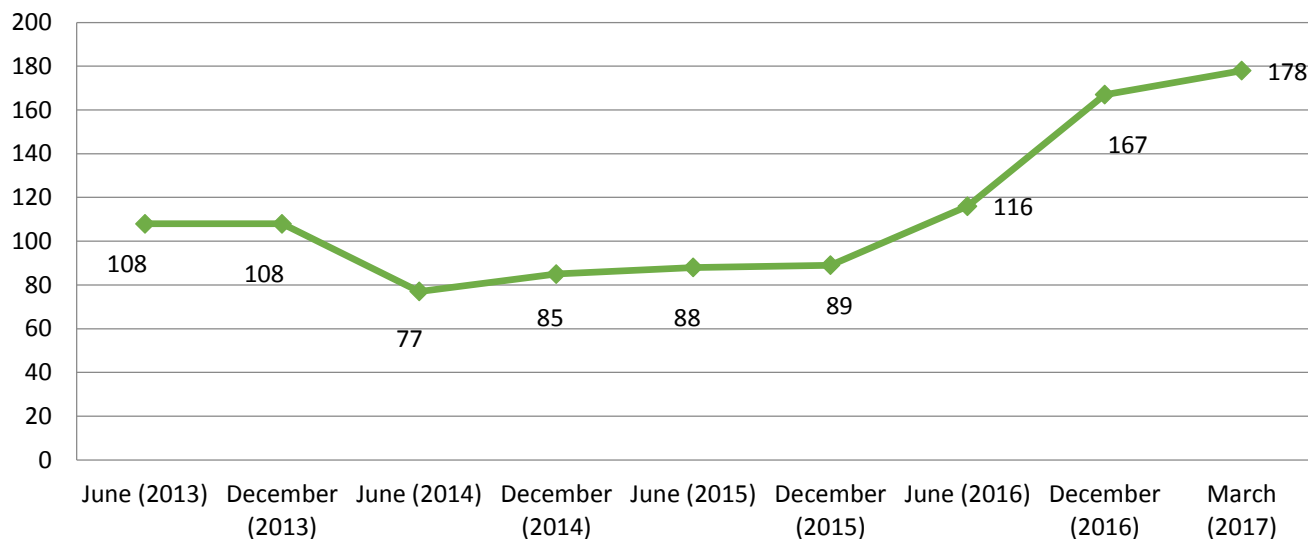


When does the customer exit the System?

- If:
 - Criminal process initiated in Finland ends and no human trafficking is suspected/no verdict is given
 - If the National Assistance System or the Immigration Office have not officially identified the VoT
 - There is no need for help anymore
 - The situation for each customer is estimated individually
 - The customer wishes to leave the System
 - Note: When a VoT is taken into the System, his/her permission is always needed
 - The customer leaves Finland

How many customers there are in the National Assistance System?

Evolution of the amount of customers in NAS 2013-2017

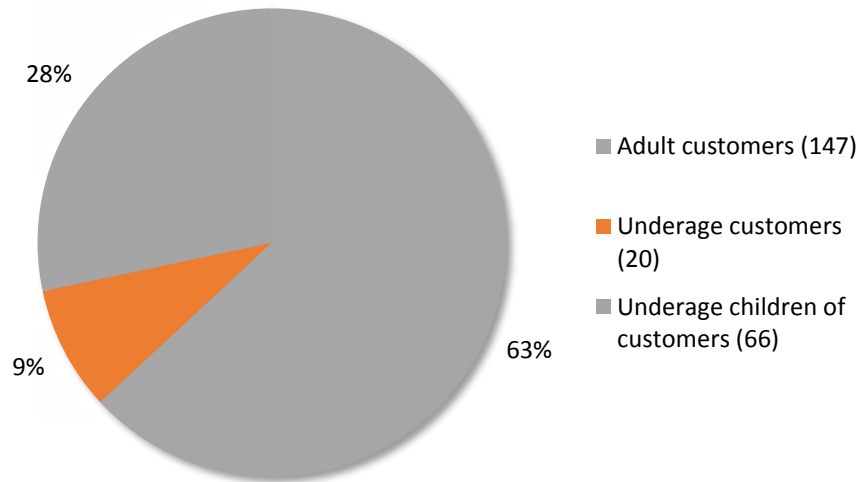


- 178 customers + 60 children of VoTs = 238 customers in total
- The growth in customers has been rapid
 - In 2010, about 10 customers

National Assistance System statistics

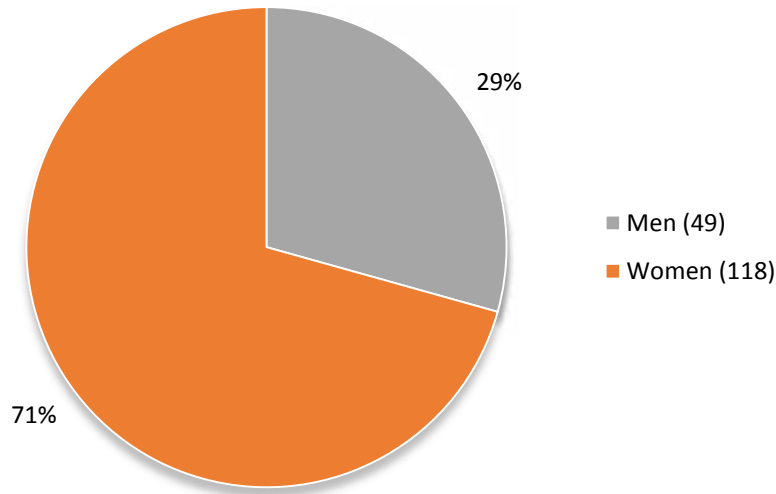
- Based on the statistical overview, December 2016

All customers and underage children of customers (233)

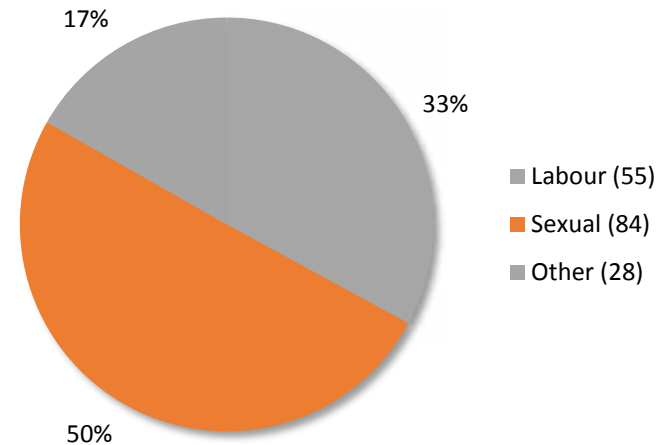


National Assistance System statistics (II)

Gender distribution of customers of the assistance system (167)



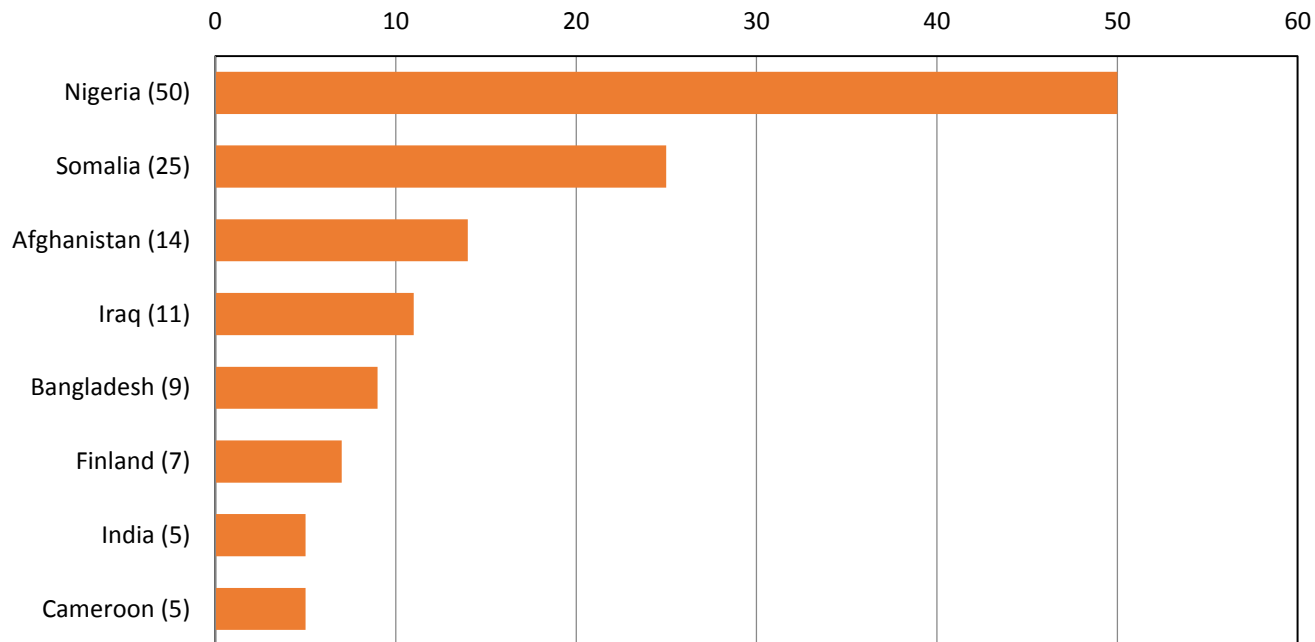
Victimisation type: all customers(167)



- Other forms of human trafficking are:
 - Forced marriages, forced criminality, forced recruitment of child soldiers, organ trade

National Assistance System statistics (III)

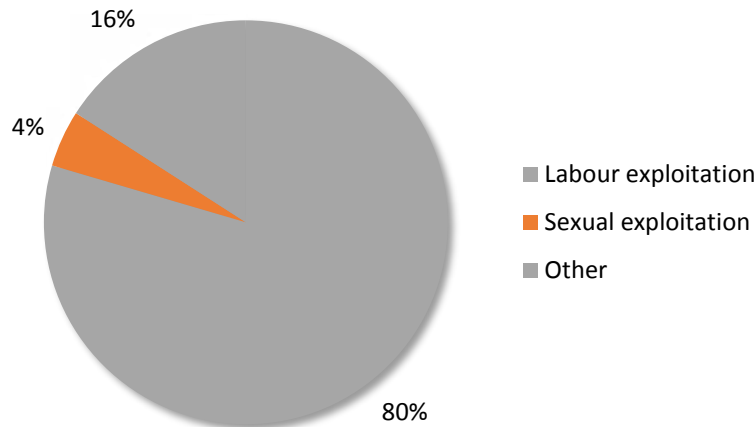
Top nationalities: all customers (167)



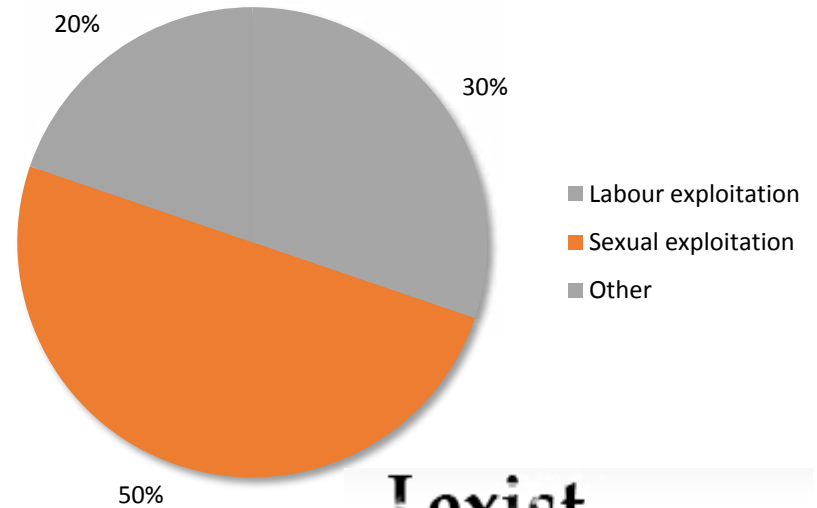
National Assistance System statistics (IV)

- New customers in 2016: 130 persons

**Victimisation type: new customers,
men and boys (44)**

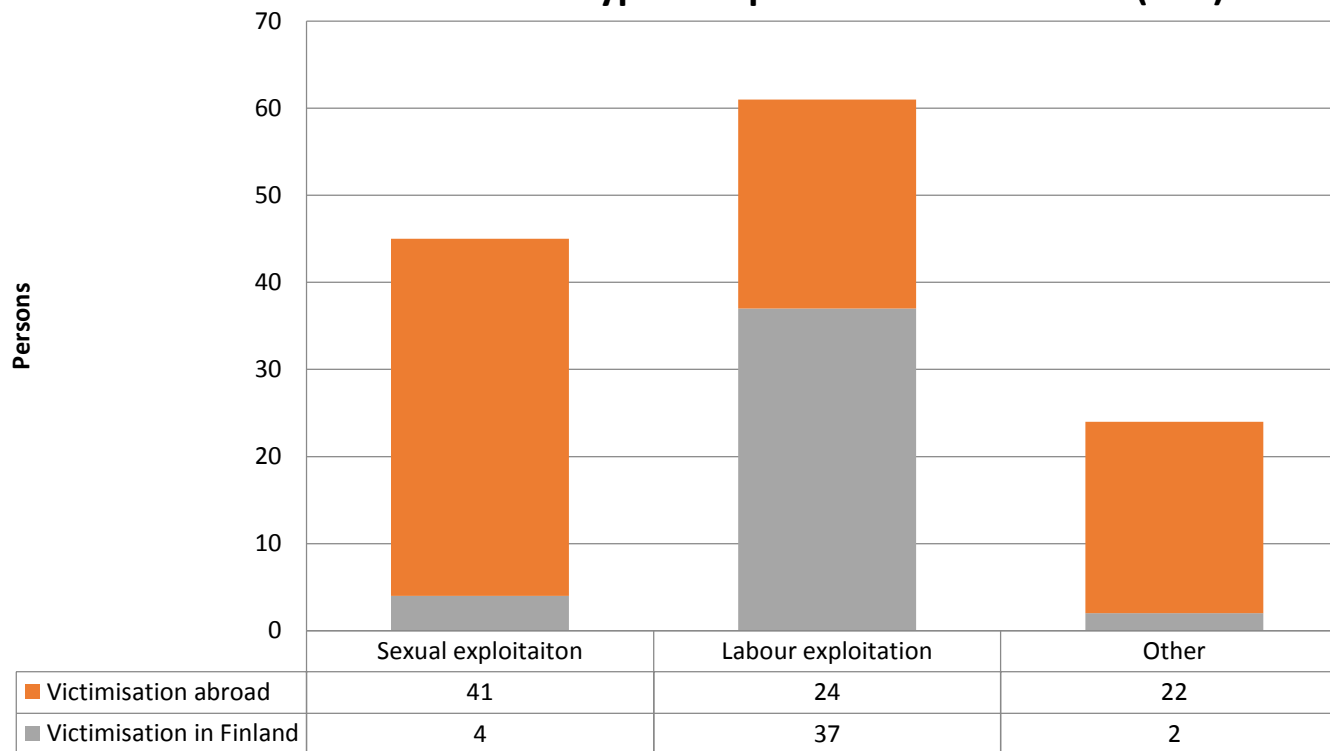


**Victimisation type: new customers,
women and girls (86)**



National Assistance System statistics (V)

New customers 2016: type and place of victimisation (130)





Questions?

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THANK YOU!

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