



STOP

**SEX TRAFFICKING
OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE**



SEX TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN IN AUSTRIA

What is child trafficking?

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation.

UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime

A child is anyone under the age of 18 years.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

What's the problem?

GLOBAL SEX TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is a complex phenomenon fueled by the tremendous growth in the global sex market. Exploitation is driven by poverty, uneven development, official corruption, gender discrimination, harmful traditional and cultural practices, civil unrest, natural disasters and lack of political will to end it.

The number of child victims trafficked worldwide for sexual exploitation or cheap labour on an annual basis is 1.2 million¹. Human trafficking, the third largest international crime, following illegal drugs and arms trafficking, is believed to be worth billions of dollars each year. Driving the trade is the demand for commercial sexual exploitation. Seventy-nine per cent of all global trafficking is for sexual exploitation.²



Largest Global Criminal Activities



SEX TRAFFICKING IN AUSTRIA

Located in the heart of Europe and, at the same time, providing natural access to the eastern part of the continent, Austria is both a destination and transit country for trafficking in children for sexual purposes.³ In recent years, the countries of origin of trafficked victims have included primarily Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Moldova, Belarus, Ukraine, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia,

Mongolia and Nigeria.⁴ While victims originating from Africa (both Northern and Sub-Saharan) may be trafficked to or through Austria via Italy, the latter country is also often a destination for victims trafficked through Austria from Ukraine and Belarus. More recently, especially in conjunction with Romania and Bulgaria's accession to the European Union, the number of children trafficked from these countries for sexual purposes has reportedly been decreasing.⁵ The decrease of child victims from these countries may also be related to an initiative of the City Council of Vienna, Department for Youth Welfare, which established a specialist centre for unaccompanied and/or trafficked children, called "The Drehscheibe". This institution has established good cooperation and referral mechanisms for foreign minors with the Viennese police. Furthermore, "The Drehscheibe" has established bilateral cooperation with child protection authorities in Romania and Bulgaria since 2005, aiming at improving the care and protection for returned minors.⁶

Who gets trafficked?

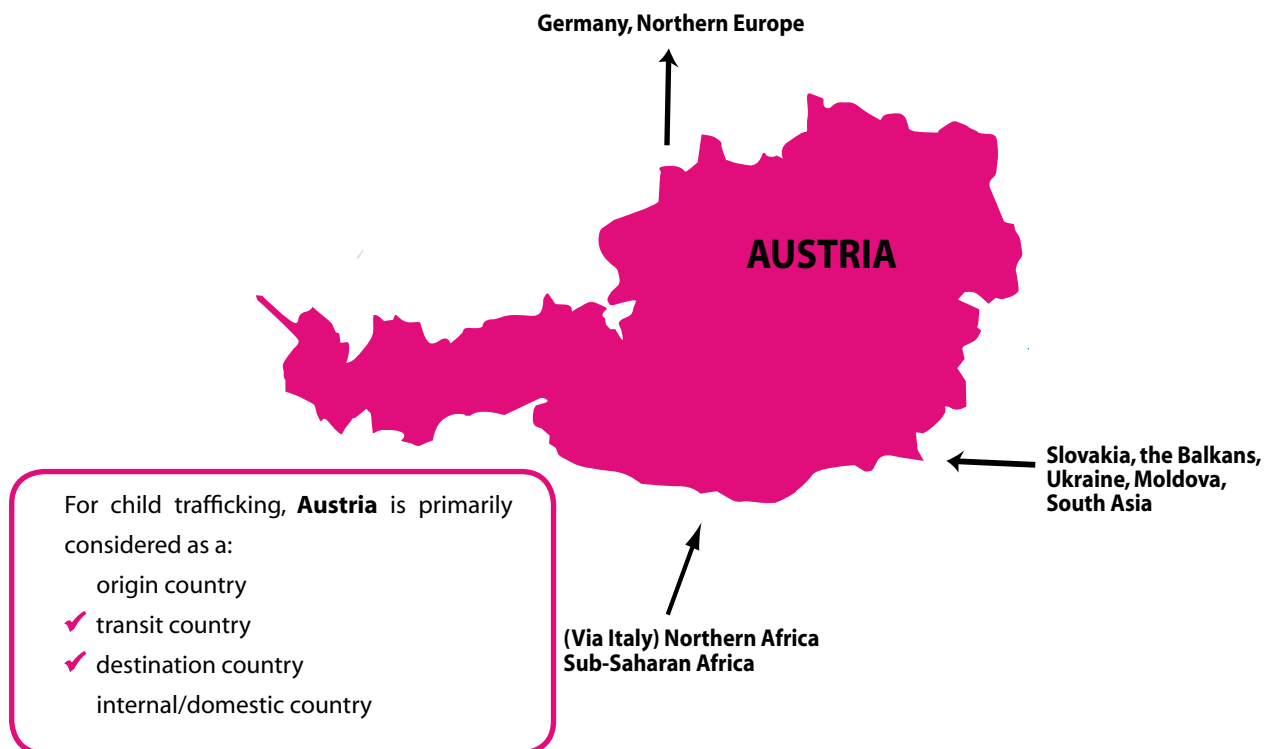
Official national reports focusing on the issue of child trafficking for sexual purposes in Austria provide insufficient data to form a clear picture of the origin of children trafficked into the country, as well as their age and gender. This is one of the aspects in need of improvement if the problem of trafficking is to be understood in full and adequately addressed, with suitable responses in terms of sheltering and care of victims.⁷ Another aspect is the fact that awareness on child trafficking, for instance among Youth Welfare Authorities as well as NGOs dealing with refugees and unaccompanied minors, is still limited, which leads to low – or in some Austrian counties even zero – numbers of identified child victims. Vienna state authorities report numbers ranging from 100 to 700 children per year – both boys and girls – accommodated in local shelters (between 2003 and 2007), an estimated two thirds of whom may have been trafficked.⁸ The number of children rescued from trafficking and placed in shelters appears to have decreased between 2005 and 2007, with Bulgarian children – once the clear majority – following the same downward trend for the reasons explained above.⁹

Children are especially vulnerable to being trafficked because they are often less educated, easy to overpower and easy to persuade to do what an adult tells them to. They are also in a position where they believe they must help to support the family and may even be sold or sent abroad by family members to do so. Street children, children in refugee camps, children whose family and community life has been disrupted and do not have someone to look out for them are all especially vulnerable to human trafficking.

Children may be at greater risk of trafficking from places where they are less protected. This may be because the law is weak or not properly enforced or because children are less aware of the risks of trafficking and are more easily deceived. Countries are considered:

- 'Sending' or 'origin' - from where children are sent;
- 'Transit' - where the children might be moved through and temporarily kept on the way to their final destination; and
- 'Receiving' or 'destination' - where the children finally end up.

Depending on the reason for trafficking, some countries might only be sending, while others might be both sending and transit. Some countries can be all three. Austria is primarily a destination and transit country.



Who creates demand?

Traffickers prey on children and young people to meet the sexual demands of paedophiles and people who pay for sex. Any person who patronises the commercial sex market may end up sexually exploiting a child. There is no common profile of perpetrators who sexually exploit children – they may be young, old, married, single; they come from all types of socio-economic backgrounds and work in all kinds of professions.

According to estimates by ECPAT Austria, 4,500 Austrians (about 10 per cent of these are women) contribute to the global demand for sex with children in most destinations known for the availability of this type of contact, such as Thailand and the Philippines, but also in more emerging destinations, such as Cambodia and Vietnam, or, closer to home, the Czech Republic and Romania.¹⁰

Who are the traffickers?

Traffickers can be a stranger or someone the child knows, such as a relative or a friend. Traffickers are often part of an organised criminal network that ‘recruits’ children and supplies them with fake identification. They may also pose as boyfriends

or girlfriends in order to convince children to leave for a new life. Data published by the Austrian Criminal Police Office provide separate statistics concerning traffickers of both adults and children, with Austria as the country of origin mostly represented (15%) among them. Other substantial national groups among traffickers are Slovaks (11.4%), Ukrainians (9.9%), Serbs (8.5%), as well as Mongols, Turks and Czechs (all around 7%). More nationalities among traffickers (e.g. Germans, along with local Austrians) are more likely to have a facilitating role in channelling victims from other countries rather than their own. An additional notable aspect regarding traffickers is the representation of women (13%), while for both genders combined, 39 percent of traffickers are under 30 years of age.¹¹

CASE STUDY

Victims of child trafficking identified during the asylum procedure

Two youth were brought to Austria under false premises and they were told that they would have to work off their debts accumulated through the journey – 40,000-45,000 € each. They were forced to engage in prostitution to pay off the debts in a relatively short time period. When they arrived in Austria both women were minors.

During their asylum process, two young Nigerian women became acquainted with Gerhard Wallner, who was appointed as a legal representative for asylum seekers in asylum procedures by the NGO “Exit”.¹² The girls gained confidence in “Exit” as well as in Gerhard Wallner and told their stories and talked about their problems here in Austria and the problems their families face in Nigeria (threats and attacks on family members and on the family’s house). They were intimidated through the use of voodoo and threatened in Austria. Even after being housed by LEFÖ¹³ in a secret flat, the women were found and have been told they will be “left alone” if they pay off their “debt” of 20,000 €. Both women have made complaints to the police with the support of “Exit”. The girls have the telephone number of the responsible police officer of the Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings and can call at any time.

How can we stop the trafficking of children?

In 2004, the Austrian Government established an official National Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings, coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a Working Group on Trafficking in Children, coordinated by the Department for Children and Youth, under the Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth. ECPAT Austria is a member of both. A National Plan of Action was developed in early 2009 and will guide the work of the Task Force and the Working Group for the next three years. As a first measure on increasing awareness among professionals, an information leaflet – Child Trafficking in Austria – was developed under the coordination of ECPAT Austria. The leaflet was distributed to youth welfare authorities, police and to Austrian Embassies and Consulates abroad.

LAW AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

- Strengthen the implementation of the National Plan of Action for Children’s Rights in terms of action points to be determined and necessary resources to be allocated.
- Strengthen the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Combating Human Trafficking, including trafficking of children.
- Amend the existing law on human trafficking to allow for more severe punishment in cases where children are among the victims.

- Provide specific child-protection training for law enforcement and judicial officials, as well as for social workers involved in the rehabilitation of trafficking victims.

International Convention/Law	Date of Ratification by Austria	Date of Reports Submitted	UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Recommendations for Austria
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	6 August 1992	Initial report: 1999; 2005	With a view to providing adequate care for victims, more and better training is recommended for operators in the recovery process, which should in turn be appropriate and guaranteed for any child victim of trafficking.
Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	6 May 2004	2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full implementation (with the necessary resources) of the National Plan of Action against Trafficking. • Establish a comprehensive data collection system on trafficking with disaggregation, among others, by age and sex. • Allocate sufficient resources for a comprehensive response to trafficking. • Develop an effective system of reporting and referral for victims.
The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress & Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women & Children	15 September 2005	N/A	N/A
Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (no. 197)	12 December 2006	N/A	N/A
ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour	4 December 2001	N/A	N/A

PREVENTION OF CHILD TRAFFICKING AND VICTIM PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE

- Develop data collection and management systems to allow for detailed information about trafficking cases to be efficiently stored and easily retrieved, with the added opportunity to identify macro-trends and adopt suitable countermeasures.
- Address the adequate care of victims with the establishment of specialised shelters and specific training for the professionals involved.
- Need for more comprehensive measures addressing all stages in the child-trafficking process (from prevention to rehabilitation and reintegration), with specific attention to the different purposes for which children are trafficked.
- Comply with EU guidelines through, for example, issuing temporary residence permits for child victims, irrespective of their collaboration with law enforcement.

TO REPORT A SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF CHILD TRAFFICKING, CONTACT:

Federal Ministry of the Interior/Federal Criminal
Intelligence Service
Oberst (Colonel) Tatzgern, BK II/BK/3.6
Tel: 0043 (0) 1 24836-85360
Email: gerald.tatzgern@bmi.gv.at

MORE INFORMATION

- ECPAT Austria: www.ecpat.at
- ECPAT International: www.ecpat.net
- The Body Shop and ECPAT Stop Trafficking of Children and Young People Campaign: www.thebodyshop.com/stop

Endnotes

- ¹ UNICEF. *UNICEF calls for increased efforts to prevent trafficking of children*. 16 June 2007. http://www.unicef.org/media/media_40002.html
- ² UNODC. UNODC report on human trafficking exposes modern form of slavery. 12 February 2009. <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html>
- ³ ECPAT International. *Global Monitoring Report on the Status of Action against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: Austria*. Bangkok. 2006. Accessed from: http://www.ecpat.net/A4A_2005/PDF/Europe/Global_Monitoring_Report-AUSTRIA.pdf.
- ⁴ Bundeskriminalamt (Büro 3.6 – ZBS). *Organisierte Schlepperkriminalität – Illegale Migration: Jahresbericht*. 2007. Vienna. 2008.
- ⁵ US Department of State. *Trafficking in Persons Report*. 2008.
- ⁶ ECPAT AUSTRIA and partners. *Alternative Report on the implementation of the optional protocol to the convention of the Rights of the Child on Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography*. 2008
- ⁷ ECPAT Austria. Accessed from: <http://www.ecpat.at/index.php?id=schattenberichtsprs> and Statement by Ambassador Gerhard Pfanzelter, Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations, at the General Assembly Thematic Debate on Human Trafficking. June 2008. New York. Accessed from: <http://www.un.org/ga/president/62/ThematicDebates/humantrafficking/austria.pdf>
- ⁸ UNODC. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*. 2008.
- ⁹ Information accessed from: http://www.ecpat.at/fileadmin/download/Schattenbericht_OPSC_ANNEX_II_Statistiken_Deutsch_01.pdf
- ¹⁰ Sextourismus: Kinderprostitution wird jünger & lukrativer für Zuhälter, in "Die Presse", 6th March 2007, accessible at <http://diepresse.com/home/panorama/welt/288827/index.do>.
- ¹¹ Bundeskriminalamt (Büro 3.6 – ZBS), *Organisierte Schlepperkriminalität – Illegale Migration: Jahresbericht 2007*. Vienna. 2008.
- ¹² Lefö runs several secret flats for the accommodation of trafficked women, see <http://www.lefoe.at>
- ¹³ Information stems inter alia from Gerhard Wallner, Diakonie (Laura Gatner – house), telephone call March 10th 2008. EXIT is a non-profit organization based in Vienna, Austria, aimed at contributing to the eradication of female trafficking and violence against women and children from Africa. See: http://ngo-exit.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=34&Itemid=58, last access 27.03.08

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