



AN ALLIANCE AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR LABOUR EXPLOITATION

Forced labour and human trafficking are major challenges to human rights that affect every country – irrespective of whether they are countries of destination, transit or origin. Sixty-eight per cent of the 20.9 million forced labourers around the world are victims of labour exploitation. Migrant workers are especially affected in economic sectors such as agriculture, construction, hotels, restaurants, and domestic work. In cases of human trafficking for labour exploitation, common indicators are non-compliance with

the agreed wage, the confiscation of passports, or the threat and use of physical or psychological violence. Reliable data on human trafficking for labour exploitation is virtually non-existent in Germany. Although the number of detected cases is slowly growing in the country, experts estimate that the number of unreported cases is significantly higher.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Partners:

Arbeit und Leben Berlin e.V.; German Confederation of Trade Unions Berlin/Brandenburg (DGB); Social Welfare Organization of the Protestant Church in Germany (Diakonie); Ministry of Integration, Family, Children, Youth and Women Rhineland-Palatinate; International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Beneficiary country:
Germany

Timeframe:
2012 – 2015

Budget:
In-kind

THE RESPONSE

Faced with the growing challenge of human trafficking for labour exploitation, Germany established a multi-stakeholder alliance. This alliance aims to combat human trafficking for labour exploitation and to support the affected population – particularly migrant workers – by implementing state-specific structures (in the Länder) and establishing well-organized networks. This goal is directly linked to reducing discrimination and exploitation in the labour market.

The alliance sensitizes and provides advice to organizations and institutions working with victims and potential victims, such as counselling centres, public authorities, the police, labour inspectors, public prosecution services and trade unions. Training seminars and workshops serve as the major tool for sensitization, and networking and cooperation between those involved is also crucial in providing substantial assistance to the victims.

An online resource centre, which offers specific information on human trafficking for labour exploitation targeting different groups, has been created in Germany. General information in English can be found at: www.buendnis-gegen-menschenhandel.de/en.

To foster the political debate and enhance cooperation with political actors, the alliance has established an advisory board that holds regular meetings and public information sessions on the issue of human trafficking for labour exploitation.

Our partners, the German Confederation of Trade Unions Berlin/Brandenburg and the Social Welfare Organization of the Protestant Church in Germany, also offer counselling to victims of human trafficking for labour exploitation.

Both national and international networks are crucial for the alliance. Two conferences with national and international actors have been organized in cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Berlin.



"Without your help we would not have been paid and would have ended up at the next fraudster."

A Bulgarian
bottler sorter



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RESULTS

The alliance carried out over 34 training seminars and workshops for various institutions and organizations – such as trade unions, counselling centres, labour inspectors and the police. It was thus able to inform the participants of the risks of human trafficking for labour exploitation, and to build networks between different institutions and organizations to better assist the victims.

Faced with the lack of reliable data on human trafficking for labour exploitation, the alliance conducted baseline analyses in the three federal States of Brandenburg, North-Rhine Westphalia and Rhineland-Palatinate. The reports reveal cases of human trafficking and labour exploitation, providing an inventory of support structures and recommendations for action by each federal State.

To enhance cooperation between the various actors to offer better assistance for the victims, the alliance has set up advisory offices at both federal State and municipal levels. These provide a meeting place for organizations and institutions, where they can provide effective and rapid assistance to victims of labour trafficking.

The alliance has also developed a working time calendar to inform those at risk of their labour rights in Germany, which enables workers to record their working hours and conditions. It is available in Arabic, Bulgarian, Croatian, English, French, German, Hungarian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese. Counselling centres and trade unions frequently use this calendar as a useful tool to build mutual trust. There are several requests to produce the calendar in additional languages.

The alliance teaching module serves as a prevention tool that can be included in language and integration courses. The participants receive information on labour rights and the risks of human trafficking, and are encouraged to document their working hours and to reflect on their working conditions. According to various surveys, the training has been very useful for the participants and has contributed to a better understanding of human trafficking for labour exploitation.

BENEFITS OF PARTNERING

Partnering with the ILO brings together existing expertise, culminating in a multi-stakeholder alliance that is more convincing to the general public, as well as to administrations and political leaders. It increases access to Government and to employers' and workers' representatives, thereby enhancing efficiency in eliminating human trafficking for labour exploitation.