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Empowering Men Affected by Trafficking in Human Beings through Adult Education

Guidelines and Recommendations developed by Victim Support Organizations



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SAPE

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SAPE - Adult Education in Victim Support: Empowering Men affected by Human Trafficking and Severe Exploitation. Exchange of Experience & Developing Recommendations



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Index

INTRODUCTION	3
I. CONCEPTS AND BACKGROUND	6
VULNERABILITIES OF TRAFFICKED MEN	6
SPECIFICITY OF TRAUMA EXPERIENCES BY TRAFFICKED MEN	7
IMPLEMENTATION OF VICTIMS' RIGHTS AS PRECONDITIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION WITH TRAFFICKED MEN	10
II. ADULT EDUCATION IN OUR PRACTICE	12
INDIVIDUAL SKILLS: SELF-CARE, SELF ORGANISATION AND DAILY ROUTINES	12
TRANSVERSAL AND PRACTICAL SKILLS TO BE AUTONOMOUS	14
HEALTH-COMPETENCE AND SOCIAL COMPETENCE IN RELATION TO MALE SOCIALISATION PATTERNS	16
MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION AS PART OF ADULT EDUCATION FOR MEN	17
EDUCATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND VICTIM RIGHTS	19
ADULT EDUCATION ON LABOUR RIGHTS TO PREVENT LABOUR TRAFFICKING AND RE-TRAFFICKING	23
INTEGRATION INTO THE LABOUR MARKET	25
III. A CRITICAL NOTE: IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT ADULT EDUCATION	26
IV. CASE EXAMPLES	28
THE CASE OF ANDREI	28
THE CASE OF RADU	30
THE CASE OF SIMON	31
V. RECOMMENDATIONS	33
IMPORTANT CONTACTS	35
AUSTRIA	35
BULGARIA	35
GERMANY	36
PORTUGAL	36
ROMANIA	37
REFERENCES	38

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Introduction

Human trafficking is one of the most severe crimes in the modern globalised world and a serious violation of human rights. The forms of this crime are subject to constant change. Combating it poses major challenges to today's societies, constantly requiring new strategies for action and ongoing critical reflections on our patterns of perception. Instruments for combating human trafficking have been further developed in recent years, but often lag far behind the reality.

In recent years, the theoretical understanding of human trafficking has developed beyond the singular focus on women as victims of sexual exploitation, which is still one of the predominant forms. The focus has been widened to include additional forms of exploitation and trafficked men as well. However the reality is that **awareness, especially for trafficked men, remains low. Support structures for men are either nonexistent or are only just starting to emerge.**

In fact, **men and also boys are victims of human trafficking**, even within the European Union. This alarming phenomenon exists in the midst of our societies, and it is growing along with the multifold crisis situations of recent years. Not surprisingly, NGOs and other stakeholders have observed a growing number of men who are vulnerable to and affected by human trafficking.

Regardless of age and gender: **Human trafficking has dramatic consequences for its victims** and has significant negative effects on victims' economic, social, legal, emotional, physical and health-related life-situations.

Gender stereotypes are deeply rooted in our societies and reflect power relations. Men thus often are not "allowed" to be seen as victims. As a consequence, men and boys face many obstacles in becoming visible and claiming their rights when they have been subjected to violence and exploitation. Nevertheless, solidarity with trafficked men, support and cooperation are crucial for developing frameworks within our societies that enable us to develop positive and non-violent models of masculinity, which make harmful and toxic masculinities less influential. Human trafficking and exploitative practices affect us all, inflicting numerous damages on our societies and undermining social security and fair conditions for each of us.

For these reasons, the partners of the EU-funded project SAPE came together to **promote visibility and the needs of trafficked men**, to **build up networks** and to make the

dimension of trafficked men more visible. Furthermore, we want to show how **professional victim support structures for trafficked men should to be set up and equipped in order to enable effective assistance and protection**. These are necessary preconditions for successful adult education activities, empowerment and the reduction of vulnerabilities. Unfortunately, such support structures for affected men often still do not yet exist or are just in their beginnings.

In the course of the SAPE project, we were able to gain a **systematic overview of the needs and vulnerabilities of trafficked men** and of ways to support them to regain a position of empowerment and dignity. The innovative approach of SAPE is to combine this with **specific measures of adult education for trafficked men**. These are seen as practical and effective tools in order to strengthen trafficked men, to accompany them while overcoming situations of exploitation and to build future perspectives for a life without exploitation and violence together.

This publication provides a **systematic overview of requirements for adult education**, which **need to be covered in victims support services addressing trafficked men**. This overview will lead to a practical tool for adult education in victim support: A **list of recommendations** will systematically help to **identify areas of priorities and most urgent needs** when supporting trafficked men, in order to not overlook important aspects during the complex process of victim support.

This publication thus has **two main goals**: It gives practical guidance for educational and empowering interventions when working with trafficked men, and also lays out the necessary resources, structures and standards, with which victim support services must be equipped, to meet the multifold needs of affected men. In accordance with international standards, this has to include the prevention of re-trafficking and re-victimization, empowering men to build up positive, non-exploitative and non-violent life-perspectives for the future.

Promoting the visibility of trafficked men, their needs and requirements for adult education, should not be understood as a contradiction to promoting the needs and rights of trafficked women. On the contrary, our concept of working with men is embedded in the promotion of gender equality and its goals, which include the perspectives of women and their rights. Therefore, women's organizations in general and support services for trafficked women in particular are seen as crucial cooperation partners in order to reach these goals together.

This publication is one of the major outcomes of the "SAPE" project, which brought together partners from Austrian, Bulgaria, Germany, Portugal and Romania:

[Animus Association Foundation](#) is the Bulgarian member organisation of the NGO Platform La Strada International and has been working on the issues of trafficking in human beings and domestic violence since 1994. Animus works in three main areas: provision of psychological and social support, advocacy and prevention activities, and training of different professionals on identifying and protecting victims of violence.

[Saúde em Português](#), an NGO established in Coimbra in 1993, is dedicated to promoting human rights, social integration and providing humanitarian aid. Since 2010, the organisation has been actively raising awareness about human trafficking through various projects. In 2013, they initiated a long-term national shelter for male human trafficking victims, providing confidential and secure accommodation, while ensuring the safeguarding of victims' rights, prioritising their protection, and facilitating their integration into society.

ADPARE is the Romanian member the NGO Platform La Strada and works exclusively in the the fight against human trafficking. Since 2003 ADPARE has developed projects and programmes to protect and promote the rights of victims of trafficking in persons/ minors and child pornography. Primarily, ADPARE provides victim coordination activities within legal proceedings, protection, and promotion of victims' rights, but also research, training, and prevention.

Arbeit und Leben Berlin-Brandenburg DGB/VHS e. V. is the joint educational organisation of the German Trade Union Confederation and the adult education centers. The founding idea was to support the new democratic beginning after 1945 through political education. Decades later, this mission has still not been completed. Active participation in shaping social cohesion and solidarity-based education is more necessary than ever.

The **Migration and Decent Work Department (FB MIGA)** fights against discrimination, exploitation and any other violation of the rights of migrant workers. FB MIGA provides advice and support to migrant workers on social, labour and residence law in many languages, supporting those affected by labour exploitation and forced labour, and creating support networks at the regional, national and transnational levels to assist people in their migration projects.

As part of the **FB MIGA**, the **Berlin Advice Centre for Migration and Good Work (BEMA)** supports migrant workers in exercising their labour and social rights. Our goal is the equal treatment of all persons living in Berlin, regardless of their origin and residence status, especially regarding their rights on the labour market and in the area of social security. We share our practical experience with trade unions, academics, public authorities and politicians in order to identify and remedy structural deficits. BEMA is funded by the Senate Department for Labour, Social Affairs, Equality, Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination (SenASGIVA).

MEN VIA, founded in 2013 as a department of the Vienna-based Men's Health Center, provides victim support services for men affected by human trafficking in Austria, on behalf of the Federal Ministries for Justice, for Social Affairs and for the Interior. MEN VIA offers comprehensive support to trafficked men with the aim of developing perspectives for a future life without exploitation and violence.

I. Concepts and background

Vulnerabilities of trafficked men

This publication addresses men as victims of **all forms of exploitation** within the framework of human trafficking. This includes labour exploitation, sexual exploitation, forced begging, forced criminality and the removal of organs. They lead to a broad variety of stressful situations in which an affected man might find himself.

It is important to keep in mind that the **following factors put men in a vulnerable position**: poverty, economic and social deprivation, (ethnic) discrimination, lack of social networks and social services, lack of access to health care, reduced access to the labour market, physical/mental handicaps, a biography of violence or neglect, lack of access to formal education, illiteracy etc.

Being a victim of human trafficking also has wide range of **negative, dramatic and stressful effects regardless of the victims gender**: Immense financial losses (unpaid wages), debts, often being left with "less than nothing", left alone undocumented in the country of exploitation, robbed of documents (such as the passport), threats of being arrested and deported, left alone in a poor health condition without secure place to stay and social stigmatisation. In addition, the negative emotional and psychological effects are numerous as victims has often endured situations of desperation and extensive control by perpetrators, with few perspectives that it will ever change, suffering threats, bad treatment, humiliation and often physical violence. Trafficked men are thus likely to go through times of despair, heavy stress, fear, helplessness, panic and traumatisation. All these factors and negative effects create a **dramatic life-situation**, which **often makes it impossible for trafficked persons to free themselves** on their own.

In addition, looking at **gender stereotypes about how** a "real man" should be, it becomes clear that there are hindering patterns of perception that, do not allow for a man to be seen as a victim of human trafficking and/or of violence. The situation described above strongly contradicts the unrealistic but nevertheless strong clichés that a man always has to be strong, in control, active, independent, etc. This particularly compounds the **vulnerability of trafficked men**, since such problematic patterns of perceptions make it less likely for others to identify a potential victim, and even for the man to identify himself as such. Moreover, such patterns hinder us to recognise the needs that affected men might have. **We thus remain blind to the activities and support structures of support trafficked men might need.**

Against this backdrop, the promotion of adult education for and with affected men has three directions of impact:

It contributes to drawing a realistic picture of the situations trafficked men find themselves in , of the needs they are confronted with as well as of the main challenges for action

It illustrates ways in which we can concretely work with men, how we can empower and strengthen them so that they can overcome the experience and consequences of exploitation, how to overcome the preexisting situations of vulnerability, to prevent re-trafficking and to rediscover positive life-perspectives.

Finally, it provides insights about which resources victim support organisations need to be equipped with in order to adequately support affected men and how the circumstances must be organized in order to enable (re-) integration of trafficked men.

To make this picture complete, we must be aware of a) the diversity of men in general who might find themselves in trafficking situations that b) can be different from case to case. For these reasons, all victim support measures need to be based on an individual assessment of risks and be tailored to the needs of the individual affected man. Adult education for trafficked men must therefore be flexible, adaptable to individual situations and focus on the most urgent needs and priorities.

In this context, trafficked men's specific reactions to trauma-evoking situations are often not taken into account. This is an issue of high concern that must be reflected in adult education efforts aimed at addressing the needs of affected men.

Specificity of trauma experienced by trafficked men

How do men experience psychological trauma?

Mental health professionals describe trauma as a paradoxical event that is unexpected, and for which the victim's defence mechanisms are ineffective to cope. Regardless of gender, trauma caused by human trafficking produces profound psychological distress that can have lifelong consequences for survivors and negatively affects how they view and relate to themselves and to everything else in their world. The contemporary view is that trauma is not just an event that took place sometime in the past. Rather, it is the imprint left on a person's mind, brain, and body and has ongoing consequences for how they manage to survive in the present.^[1] The lack of predictability and control over the events is a key factor for the development of psychological trauma in the context of human trafficking^[2]. While in situations of exploitation, trafficked persons are repeatedly subjected to humiliating treatment, acts of violence and deprivation of basic needs (sleep, food, and rest), which have a long-term impact on their physical and emotional health. Exploitation triggers two types of experiences: 1) that of being objectified and losing the freedom of using one's own body and self at one's own will; and 2) that of being in an unequal power relationship where the person has no real possibility to change their position in order to improve their condition.

Although traumatic symptoms are the same for everyone, individual differences, social and cultural contexts and the support opportunities available determine the impact of psychological trauma (and post-traumatic stress disorder - PTSD). One of the factors that determines how trauma will manifest itself in a person's life is gender, the social norms and roles and the emotional, behavioural and social expressions associated with it.

Cultural norms and stereotypes can further traumatise trafficked men. For example, men are underestimated and neglected as victims of sexual abuse, rape and exploitation. There are attitudes that only gay and trans men are affected by sexual exploitation. This leads to men's isolation and alienation and prevents them from seeking help.

In one of the most comprehensive studies of psychological trauma *Trauma and Recovery*, Judith Herman describes a variety of symptoms that often include **emotional numbness**, helplessness, **hypervigilance** and disproportionately reaction to minor stimuli, **intrusion** of

the traumatic event in life, and fear.^[3] Limited functioning and diminished capacity for joy and connectedness with themselves and others is common as well.

Gender creates expectations to behave consistent with its norms and stereotypes and this inevitably determines how trauma symptoms are manifested. It is not unusual for women to express fears and anxieties, to suffer from depressive states, to feel vulnerable and dependent. Women generally speak more easily about their feelings and possess greater awareness and vocabulary regarding their emotions. Women are more likely to reach out for help, both to professionals and to their close social circles.^[4] Gender specific programmes and services for women who experienced violence, including trafficking, are far more common than those for men.

Internalised individual and social gender norms of masculinity predispose boys and men to use other mechanisms to deal with their traumatic experiences. It is believed that male coping strategies are generally less effective and healthy.^[5] However, the authors hold that, they should not be underestimated just because they are different. While women are more likely to develop internalising psychopathology after trauma exposure, men are predisposed towards externalised expressions of distress.^[6] Evidence shows that on average men experience more traumatic events than women, yet fewer of them meet the diagnostic criteria of PTSD.^[7] One reason for this may be that because of social pressure, men display different symptoms, which are not always considered traumatic. For example, studies indicate that abused men and boys tend to identify with the aggressor and later victimise others (and therefore considered perpetrators) while abused women are more likely to become attached to the abusers and allow being further victimised (and therefore considered to be compulsively repeating the trauma).^[8] Social expectations do not allow men to be vulnerable or seen as victims, both by themselves and by their communities. They may find it difficult to admit feeling afraid, anxious or depressed. As these kinds of emotions are considered unacceptable and shameful, they remain denied, non-mentalized and repressed. Instead, they are manifested in behaviour or in various symptoms, including somatic ones. As a result, men are often not identified as persons who have experienced human trafficking.

The following trauma coping strategies are typical for trafficked men:

Denial or underestimation of the trafficking situation. Men try to convince themselves and others that nothing happened, they have not lost control and it was not that bad. They create a new reality to deal with feelings of shame and guilt.

Avoidance of memories of the traumatic event, which are re-traumatizing and bring back unbearable and not acceptable feelings of helplessness and loss of control and freedom.

Most men are unwilling to explore their emotions. Instead, they cope by focussing on problems from external reality. They refuse to receive psychological trauma treatment because they believe that seeking help will make them look 'weak'. They need to sustain a self-image of a 'strong man'.

Aggression – anger is the easiest emotion for men to express since it is associated with strength, dominance, control and fighting – all qualities attributed to masculinity.^[9] Traumatized men's aggression is often disguised as externalised depression. It is usually not displayed towards the perpetrators but towards those close to the victim and serves to reassert the sense of dominance and control.

Increased control over other people in their environment.
Shutting down and numbing feelings with alcohol or drugs to cope with overwhelming tensions related to the trauma. This can develop into dependence.
Withdrawal. Men isolate themselves from people close to them, as they feel ashamed of being victimised and not being able to fulfil expectations to be strong and to provide for their families. They feel embarrassed about having failed and been deceived.
Men often overcome their shame of being passive victims by becoming active and engaging in risky and reckless activities (e.g. provoking physical confrontations, anti-social behaviour, drunk driving).
Psychosomatic disorder, developing chronic psychiatric and physical illnesses

How can adult education contribute to the recovery of men experiencing psychological trauma as a result of trafficking?

In his famous book *The Body Keeps the Score*, Bessel van der Kolk^[10] offers a comprehensive description of the neurobiology of trauma. He explains why traditional treatment approaches that aim at returning to understanding and making sense of the traumatic experience and feelings and integrating them rationally into personal history are ineffective if they are applied alone. Understanding why you feel a certain way does not change how you feel, because your body keeps the score of the unpleasant feeling. In this sense recovery from trauma means bringing together all parts, re-establishing the connections between the emotional and the rational, between the mind and the body and regaining control over oneself ("self-leadership").^[11]

Adult education is an important element in trauma recovery. It is particularly appropriate for men because it takes into account their concerns and fears and their gender specific ways of coping with psychological trauma. It does not require sharing and revisiting the traumatic event. Instead of addressing the inner reality, it focusses on the outer reality and real life. Often it is linked not to verbal activities, but to physical ones and helps trafficked men to be active again. Moreover, actions and thoughts are directed towards specific creative and useful activities, which relieves the physical tension of the trauma. The body recalls and learns to act again in a non-threatening environment. Thanks to adult education, a sense of handling particular tasks and challenges and competence is restored. It provides opportunities for trafficked men to experience achievements and successes and to rebuild their self-esteem. It helps them to overcome the feeling that nothing can be done and that they are helpless. Adult education is an occasion to create new relationships and connections, to rebuild social bonds and communication, to be part of a group. It is an opportunity for trafficked men to be active and feel productive, effective and successful. Last but not least, adult education like any other education brings a sense of happiness, pleasure and authorship over life.

Implementation of victims' rights a precondition for adult education with trafficked men

The sections above, provide a picture of the vulnerabilities of trafficked men and their needs with a special focus on trauma-related issues in adult education with trafficked men.

This section takes a step back and examines the implementation and practical realisation of victims' rights for trafficked men. This has practical implications for the development of reliable structures of support and protection. It describes necessary preconditions for effective adult education with this target group.

In fact, the implementation of victims' rights of affected men is an essential precondition for effective adult education. The following elements are especially important, as defined by victims' rights standards: Immediate provision of safe housing; social assistance; safe residence status; medical and psychological health care; social and legal aid as well as consultation in the first mother language.

It is crucial to implement educational programmes to assess the educational backgrounds, language proficiency, and any special needs or requirements of affected men. The first diagnostic assessment is particularly important to understand their psychological and emotional states. The trafficked men might have experienced significant trauma, which can affect their ability to engage in educational activities effectively. Therefore, providing initial or simultaneous psychological support should be fundamental to future assistance.

To address the needs of trafficked men we must take into account their specific needs, acknowledge the challenges of working with men and establish the necessary resources and structural changes to facilitate their recovery and reintegration into society. To effectively engage men in rehabilitation and education, it is essential to create a **safe and non-judgmental environment** where they can express their needs and fears, without shame and without suffering secondary victimisation.

Ensuring **secure and appropriate housing** is a fundamental need for trafficked men and women as it forms the basis to support their recovery and lead an independent life. Article 9 of Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council establishes minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, to develop and provide "shelters and any other appropriate interim accommodation for victims in need of a safe place due to an imminent risk of secondary and repeat victimisation, of intimidation and of retaliation."^[12]

The Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against THB (GRETA) highlighted the fact that while the number of identified male victims of trafficking is increasing, assistance programmes tailored to the needs of male victims are rare. GRETA also reflects on the fact that most assistance services, including specialised shelters, are designed to meet the needs of trafficked women, lacking specialised assistance structures tailored to men affected by human trafficking. (GRETA, 2019; GRETA, 2020)^[13]

Social and governmental systems often fail to provide adequate support for men. In many reports, GRETA calls attention to the fact that "while most evaluated countries take due account of the needs of female victims of trafficking, a number of countries still fail to offer assistance services, including accommodation, to male victims of trafficking." (GRETA, 2018)^[14]

It is particularly important to have specialised shelters for trafficked men. Shelters are places that offer security, allowing the affected men to stabilise emotion ally and psychologically in a

safe environment. They help them to familiarise themselves with norms and values that are common in our society offering an individual guidance programme with focus to social, professional, practical everyday skills, as well as practical strategies for self-organisation, self-care, reflecting the importance of structure and routine in promoting stability. Shelters are also important to provide in the short-term **basic needs** all trafficked men: housing, food, clothing, other personal needs, **medical care** and safety (Davy, 2015).^[15] After these needs are fulfilled, the focus can shift to **long-term needs** connected to the process of recovery and desire to build an independent life. (Caliber, 2007; Davy, 2015) ^[16] Maslow's hierarchy is mentioned in this context. He organises human needs hierarchically. At the base of the pyramid are the most urgent needs, related to our physiological needs. At the top are personal achievements. According to Maslow, people will only pursue their personal achievements after addressing the needs related to physiology, safety, love/relationships, and esteem. This is exactly what needs to happen in the work carried out with men affected by human trafficking. Shelters with their specialised teams are essential.

II. Adult education in our practice

Before starting this chapter, it should be very clear that it is not possible to draw a single profile of trafficked men. Each case must be analysed individually with great care so that the assistance provided is adjusted. Each man has different particularities, different experiences and different backgrounds. The phenomenon of human trafficking does not choose people, it can happen to anyone. In this sense, there may be affected men who need support and assistance in educational terms even to carry out the most basic day-to-day tasks aiming the (re)integration.

In the sections above, we provided some theoretical and conceptual frameworks for Adult Education in Victim support for trafficked men. Now as a next step, we want to make this more practical and link it to everyday-activities when supporting trafficked men. Also, we want to give an overview on typical practical issues and necessities that Adult Education for trafficked men needs to cover.

The sections above show that this encompasses a wide range of educational needs. This whole range must be the focus of adult education measures so as not to overlook important aspects and leave men vulnerable to risks of being re-trafficked and/or becoming a victim of violence again.

Specifically, we first will look at the variety of individual and practical skills that are required to lead an autonomous self-determined life. It is of utmost importance to be aware that every man and every trafficking situation is different. Therefore, tailor-made adult education measures must be based on an individual case-related assessment of educational needs. The same is true for essential knowledge on health issues, social competences and education on mental health, including a focus on the specificity of masculinities and male socialisation patterns. Adult education in victim support must include education on rights, especially on human rights, victims' rights and labour rights. Finally, we examine the necessary skills for (re-) integration into the labour market, which is a key aspect in long-term stabilisation.

Individual Skills: self-care, self organisation and daily routines

It is often assumed in adults that self-care skills are natural, acquired during upbringing and societal norms. However, for affected men, their experiences usually differ from these norms; therefore, they lack the basic knowledge of self-care, which should have been taught to them since childhood. This reveals a huge disparity between societal expectations and actual experiences of those who have suffered such trauma. This underscores the need for supporting affected men to develop self-care abilities that they may not have had or missed when they were young.

The first diagnostic assessment is particularly important as it helps to understand an individual's situation and determines appropriate interventions for support and assistance. The assessment can focus on physical well-being, emotional health, basic needs or social well-being. By acknowledging that each man has unique experiences and backgrounds, this kind of assessment helps to decide what particular skills should be developed.

Many challenges are faced by trafficked men on their journey toward recovery and independence. Empowering them through acquiring skills to care for themselves, is vital in ensuring that they regain control over their lives.

Below is a list of significant self-care skills.

Dressing: Know how to choose the right clothes and understand why it's important to change them.
Bathing: Regular bathing or showering routines are very important for cleanliness.
Eating/Nutrition: To ensure that men remain healthy, it is important that an individual's diet includes regular meals, balancing the nutritional needs.
Cooking and Cleaning: It's important to have skills to cook without help and take the responsibility for washing the dishes or other utensils used.
Brushing Teeth: Brushing teeth is part of oral hygiene habits which are crucial in maintaining general health.
Health: Learn about the importance of scheduling routine medical appointments, and the importance of seeking assistance when needed.
Regular Exercise: Physical activities play a vital role in ensuring that men remain healthy physically and mentally.
Sleep: It is best to have a night time schedule that helps to get enough sleep.
Stress Management: Daily life can be rather stressful and it is important to have methods to cope with these feelings. These may include mindfulness practices, seeking social support, or taking part in other activities aimed at promoting emotional wellness such as exercise.

It is crucial to understand the link between self-care skills and self-organisation as the key to establishing balanced **daily routines**. Self-organisation offers affected men a sense of routine in their day-to-day lives and should thus be promoted in the support and assistance programmes for these men. It is important to establish daily routines, such as like fixed waking and sleeping times, engaging in personal hygiene practices, such as bathing and dressing, and using a schedule for taking meals and exercising. It is evident that self-organisation allows the constant integration of periods dedicated to self-care in daily practices. This prevents trafficked men from being emotionally unstable and gives them an opportunity to recover from traumatic events.

Some key skills are:

Time Management: Affected men can learn to distribute their time effectively by setting specific periods for tasks they need to complete attending a meeting, daily activities, job searching, or self-care routines. Also very important to plan these daily routines, such as by making lists of tasks and thoughts.

Communication: Developing communication skills enables trafficked men to express their needs clearly, better interact with everyone around them, and understand how they can handle conflicts in a positive way. It also helps them to make informed decisions regarding their future plans.

Problem Solving: Developing communication skills facilitates problem solving in daily life.

Transversal and practical skills to be autonomous

There is a strong relation between individual skills and transversal skills, as they often complement each other in various ways. The transversal skills also known as "soft skills" includes important skills required for affected men that should be recognized in adult education. These skills are not limited to school but are relevant in day-to-day and all other aspects of life and work. We already noted that it is essential for trafficked men to **communicate** and maintain proper interpersonal interactions in order to establish positive interpersonal connections and achieve different personal, social, and professional goals. **Language classes** are thus of great importance, as languages are crucial for interaction, social relationship and cultural integration. Training and awareness about **digital skills**, are also key in the modern world to obtain information and support allowing the access to job opportunities, based on the affected men's needs and learning outcomes, this can include **basic computer usage, online safety, and digital communication**. Imparting knowledge on the basics of handling personal finance, such as, **budgeting, saving, and paying debt**, helps affected men make constructive decisions in the financial aspects of their lives.

Reintegration and autonomy for trafficked men is crucial so that they are transformed and become able to live safely and independently. In this regard, it is important to provide them with practical skills that are useful for independent living. Such skills enhance the ability of trafficked men with the knowledge that is needed on a daily basis to take care of legal issues, budgets and problem-solving.

Here are some of the main categories that should be addressed with trafficked men:

Rental Obligations: Trafficked men must be aware of their legal rights when renting a house to prevent future problems.

Bills and Suppliers: They must know how to manage household costs involving choosing essential services such as water, gas, electricity, TV, and Internet. It is important to understand how these companies operate, compare offers, and be aware of legal policies, such as loyalty periods.

Common problem solving: They need to know what to do when everyday problems appear, such as lost keys, wallets, or emergency home situations like water leaks or gas smells.

Emergency Numbers: Know and understand how to contact emergency services such as ambulances, police, and fire departments.

Healthcare Services: They must be aware of healthcare services in the community, including hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies.

Supermarkets: They need to learn how to shop in supermarkets, understanding prices, making choices and managing budgets.

Bank Management: Opening and managing a bank account is essential for receiving payments, financial transactions, and savings, keeping the money secure. It's very important for these men to understand how to use bank cards, ATMs, and protect personal information such as passwords.

Public Transportation: Understanding how to use public transportation, including schedules, routes, and prices, is important for getting around efficiently and economically.

Income/Expenses: Being aware how much money comes in and goes out, and how to manage monthly expenses such as rent, utility bills, food, transportation, and leisure, is essential in order to have a balanced budget.

Internet Security: Living in a digital era, staying safe online is very important. This includes being careful about the information shared on social media platforms to avoid overexposure and potential risks. Affected men should also be cautious of connecting with strangers online and should decide carefully who they accept as friends on social media and pay close attention when starting conversations with unknown persons. Additionally, knowing how to identify and block suspicious messages or accounts can help prevent scams or possible human trafficking situations. In addition, it is essential to be cautious when making online payments, ensuring that websites are secure before entering any personal or financial information. Through awareness of all this situations, affected men can protect themselves from various online threats.

This comprehensive approach is necessary for affected men involving holistic education programmes aiming at successful reintegration. It is crucial to provide the tools not only for recovering from their experiences but also for improvement in various aspects of life.

Health-competence and social competence in relation to male socialisation patterns

Issues of masculinity and gender stereotypes have been described already above. This section, addresses putting this into place in, practice and how to work on these issues together with trafficked men by applying adult education methods.

As one thematic block we recommend directly addressing “masculinity” and gender stereotypes e.g. in workshops, group discussions and/or during one-to-one counselling sessions to raise awareness of such patterns, to reflect on them and to perhaps overcome problematic aspects. The issues addressed should include caring masculinities, equal share of care as well as a clear positioning against violence in any form. Knowledge on gender equality and on how to have non-violent friendships and relationships contributes to the long-term stability of affected men.

Training must also include the topics of aggression and violence. Often this is a field of everyday learning, for example when men are living together in a shelter. It is essential, that men receive information and instructions on how to deal with interpersonal conflicts, how to talk with others about needs, wishes and anger, how to find good compromises, how to understand the dynamics of an interpersonal conflict, how to stay calm in situations of stress, how not to use violence and how to avoid and deal with situations of interpersonal escalation. This includes **training social competences** and prosocial behaviour as important soft skills, which contribute to long-term stability.

Another issue of concern to reduce vulnerabilities is the field of health, health-related behaviour and the relation of men to their own body. Due to male socialisation patterns, men tend to neglect the needs of their own body and to neglect their health as well. This goes hand in hand with risky health behaviour patterns, like unhealthy nutrition, not going to the doctor, ignoring initial signs of sicknesses or misuse of alcohol and drugs. It is recommended that health competence and “health literacy” be seen as part of basic education for men in general which also applies to men in victim support programmes. Existing materials and guidelines for trainings, workshops and teaching can be used for this goal.[17] Sexuality and sexual education, including issues like safer sex, contraception, sexual orientation, etc, should be part of trainings sessions as well.

The structure of the local health care system, available services and conditions of access are other relevant aspects of health literacy, that are an issue of adult education for trafficked men. This applies for countries of destination in particular, where access to medical treatment may be hampered by lack of insurance, lack of knowledge and the language barrier, assistance and information are essential. However, trafficked men might also face a changed situation and need help in the country of origin: the violence and exploitation which they went through can evoke ongoing health consequences or lead to longer lasting handicaps. In such cases, affected men need to orient themselves in this new situation, get practical and emotional support and learn about accessible services that earlier were irrelevant to them. In such a situation, masculinity can be an obstacle in the search for appropriate treatment and support.

Knowledge on access to medical services are crucial not only in cases of urgent treatment, but also preventive care. Adult education measures can also empower men to make use of checkups and strengthen their overall health consciousness.

Mental health promotion as part of adult education for men

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health. Mental health is an integral component of health - there is no health without mental health. WHO defines mental health as a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn and work well, and contribute to their community.

The most long-term consequences of trafficking are on mental health. Quite often, the effects on victims' psychological wellbeing are underestimated and priority is given to more urgent problems like physical health, criminal proceedings and social integration. Issues related to mental health are postponed to a later stage and often remain unresolved. At the same time the emotional state of people who have experienced trafficking has an impact on their behaviour and their ability to make decisions and plans and to build relationships. Mental health is a key factor to the successful implementation of all other support activities and should be a priority.[18]

As part of adult education, mental health promotion supports trafficked men to gain more control over their emotional/internal life. It increases their skills to recognise and manage their feelings, cope with life's challenges and have fulfilling relationships. This includes on the one hand understanding and managing the symptoms of psychological trauma, caused by the trafficking situation. On the other hand, it may involve developing 'life skills' that men did not have the chance to acquire earlier in their lives. This may include obtaining competences in the following specific areas and topics:

1. Psychological trauma

- What is the traumatic event?
- What is the short term and long-term impact of trauma?
- Physical emotional, behavioural, cognitive, spiritual, intergenerational and relational consequences of trauma.
- Types of trauma
 - developmental, interpersonal, external, historic
- What is traumatic stress, PTSD and complex PTSD?
- What are the symptoms of psychological trauma? - flashbacks, reliving of memories, avoidance of reminders, increased arousal, numbing, hyper-vigilance, dissociations
- How trauma affects human relationships
- How trauma affect communities; trauma and migration
- Trafficking and trauma
- Male victims of violence and abuse, including sexual; common myths about men as victims of violence

- Coping with psychological trauma
- Recovery
- safety and stabilisation, remembrance and mourning, reconnection

2. Skills for life

- Feelings – detecting, recognizing, understanding and naming one's own feelings and the feelings of others
- Regulating one's emotions, coping with difficult feelings like anger, envy, irritation and loss
- Communicating with others, listening, being tolerant, respecting personal boundaries, sharing, asking and giving help and support;
- Closeness, friendship, loneliness, rejection
- Empathy, compassion, openness
- Bullying, violence, abuse, harassment
- Gender issues
- Conflict resolution, interpersonal problem solving
- Self-awareness, self-care, mindfulness
- Resilience, flexibility, tolerating unknown and uncertainty, management of change and risk
- What does it mean to cope

As part of adult education mental health promotion can be implemented in many different ways - in individual counselling sessions, victims' support groups, through different participatory and interactive activities, through lectures, presentations and training seminars, through dissemination of information materials and film discussions, through meetings with professionals or with the help of survivors who share their coping experiences.

WHO's Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2030 states that determinants of mental health include not only individual attributes such as the ability to manage one's thoughts, emotions, behaviours and interactions with others, but also social, cultural, economic, political and environmental factors such as national policies, social protection, living standards, working conditions, and community social supports.^[19] In this regard, developing mental health literacy is only one part of mental health promotion. It is a building block of the overall care for trafficked person's, which includes social support, providing a safe environment, addressing vulnerabilities, ensuring a secure and decent income, reducing discrimination and inequality in society.

Education on Human Rights and Victim Rights

The **difficulties in identifying male victims** are given both by the fact that many of them do not self-identify as victims, and by the fact that those involved in the detection and identification of trafficking victims do not have a proactive approach, but wait for trafficked men to come and ask for help or to say that they are victims. Furthermore, most people associate male victims with exploitation through forced labour, minimising the importance of the other forms of exploitation: forced begging, criminal activities and sexual exploitation. The sexual exploitation of men is a subject treated with superficiality. It is taboo and full of myths and prejudices. These factors have a negative impact on the correct identification of male victims, including self-identification. Part of these difficulties can be overcome through education, both of specialists and of men in a situation of vulnerability and trafficking. Therefore, to talk about the rights of trafficked men, we can start very simply, with their right to be detected and identified.

Human trafficking in all its forms is an extreme **violation of human rights**. Several human rights are relevant at different points in the trafficking cycle. Some are especially relevant to the causes of trafficking. This is when a violation of human rights, for instance the violation of the right to an adequate standard of living, leads to increased vulnerability of a person. Other human rights are relevant to the actual process of trafficking. Trafficking and associated practices such as slavery, sexual exploitation, forced labour are themselves violations of basic human rights and are prohibited under international human rights law. Certain human rights concern the response to trafficking, such as the right to access to justice, the right to effective remedies, and the right to a fair trial. While the link between human rights and trafficking in persons is clear, it does not necessarily follow that human rights will be at the centre of responses to trafficking.

The **human rights-based approach** places the victim at the centre of any effective and credible action. It also extends the focus to the root causes that underlie trafficking, maintain impunity for traffickers, and deny justice to victims, such as patterns of discrimination, unjust distribution of power, demand for goods and services derived from exploitation, and complicity of the public sector.

The human rights-based approach also acknowledges that governments are responsible for protecting and promoting the rights of all persons within their jurisdiction, including non-citizens, and therefore have a legal obligation to work towards eliminating trafficking and related exploitation. ^[20]

As a next step, we also need to look at **victims' rights** that are associated with human trafficking as defined in national as well as in international standards, such as the EU Anti-Trafficking Directive 2011/36/EU or the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings of the Council of Europe.

It is a specific element of adult education with trafficked persons to inform them about their rights, to give information, to explain how legal frameworks are set up and how victims can claim their rights.

One of the victims' rights is to receive assistance during legal procedures and be represented by a lawyer. During this process, trafficked men (and of course women as well) gain practical knowledge on how legal systems work, what steps they can take, which actor has which role, etc. This empowers the supported men and makes them less vulnerable for the future.

Therefore, information and training on their rights is an indispensable specific element of adult education in victim support activities.

In the following paragraphs, we list some of the victims' rights and show the practical relevance in victim support and adult education for trafficked men. However, these are just examples of victims' rights and are not exhaustive.

Right to assistance and protection

All trafficked persons are entitled to immediate and unconditional assistance and protection regardless of their decision to cooperate with law enforcement. Men need to be aware of this right, as they do not always have access to it, because there are not enough specialized protection services available for them.

Right to information

Trafficked persons have the right to information about their status, their rights and the relevant judicial and administrative procedures, including information on available remedies. Information and informed decisions restore the sense of agency over one's own life, which is important for men because it corresponds to social demands upon them to be competent and in control.

Right not to cooperate with law enforcement

Trafficked persons have the right to refuse to cooperate with the prosecution authorities. Men are usually brave and more willing to participate in criminal proceedings than women. Some, however, have good reasons for not doing so. Men who were engaged in criminal activities during trafficking fear that they will not be identified as victims and prefer not to pursue justice. Other men worry about exposing their families to intimidation, reprisals and risk without being able to protect them. Trafficked men experience shame for having been deceived and exploited (especially if sexual exploitation is involved). They also have resistances to participate in criminal proceedings, especially if a successful outcome is not certain. Men should know that their decision not to press charges or act as a witness should be respected.

Avoidance of secondary victimisation

Key factors for preventing secondary victimisation are proper information so the victim knows what to expect and can make informed decisions, avoidance of unnecessary repetition of interviews during investigation, prosecution and trial, protection against unnecessary confrontation with the suspect or family members of the suspect, avoidance of visual contact between the victim and the suspect during the giving of evidence such as interviews and cross-examination, e.g. by the use of communication technologies. Since men often have difficulties in admitting that they are afraid, it is important to actively inform them on these measures and point out that by this they can get protection at court hearings.

Right to compensation

Trafficked persons have a right to adequate and effective remedies. This includes the right to compensation for damage suffered. Since “getting money” is something that goes well with typical socialisation patterns of masculinity, it is helpful to address this issue with trafficked men. However, realistic expectations need to be prevented, as the efforts to get compensation unfortunately are often not successful. This is a good occasion for men to gain basic knowledge on civil law issues. Overall, the right to compensation is an important element of access to justice for trafficked persons. Victims of trafficking generally have suffered serious damages, both material damages (financial and pecuniary losses: unpaid wages, medical, funeral or hospital and other costs, costs of relocation, loss of future earnings, costs of damage to property etc.) and immaterial or moral damages (psychological and emotional suffering and injury, loss of reputation, pain and suffering, loss of society and companionship).

Non-prosecution and non-punishment of trafficked persons

Victims of trafficking should not be charged or prosecuted for any illegal acts they were compelled to commit. It is crucial, to inform male victims about this specific right. In many cases, affected men are first seen as perpetrators in conflict with the law, and only later it becomes clear that they were victims. It can also be the case that the trafficker purposefully used false information on the juridical system and the legal situation of the victim, and then threatens him or her with the alleged consequences. This knowledge can thus be crucial for trafficked men to free themselves and stabilise.

Recovery and reflection period

Article 13 of the Council of Europe’s Anti-Trafficking Convention states that the recovery and reflection period is a fixed time interval of at least 30 days, meant to enable trafficked persons to recover. They need sufficient time and space to begin the recovery both physically and mentally, regaining some stability. The response to their immediate needs, assistance and protection is very important in terms of the rehabilitation process as well as supporting them to feel secure enough to decide whether or not they wish to cooperate with the authorities. This is particularly important for trafficked men, whose acceptance of help may be more complicated. They may find it difficult to trust support teams, fearing stigmatisation or the appearance of being weak, so it is very important that the recovery and reflection period for trafficked men takes into account the challenges faced by trafficked men, building trust gradually in order to help them.

Residence permit

Issuing trafficked persons resident permits meets their needs and also fights against human trafficking. For both trafficked persons as well as law enforcement trying to fight human trafficking, the immediate return of victims to their countries is not what is desired. It would mean that the trafficked persons have to start their life again and, in most cases, they would keep quiet about what happened to them. For law enforcement, having victims stay in the country is vital, since it provides the opportunity to gather information and build the cases.

The availability of residence permits encourages trafficked persons to cooperate in the investigations. This is relevant in relation to affected men who often face many barriers when seeking and accepting assistance as they may face more difficulty acknowledging victimisation. They are less likely to come forward or cooperate with authorities if they believe they will be deported immediately or after reporting his story. This may also lead trafficked men to repress what they went through which will interfere with their ability to provide useful information. Issuing a resident permit gives confidence to the trafficked men that they can tell their story without fear or any kind of punishment. In this way they can feel safer and less stigmatised knowing that their rights are respected.

Voluntary assisted return and risk assessment

In order to ensure that trafficked men are returned home safely and with dignity, voluntary assisted return is very important. It is worth pointing out that this process needs to be voluntary, meaning that the trafficked men need to be informed freely. Information about the situation in the country of return should be presented, enabling affected men to make their decisions. The risk assessment in this process involves an individual assessment on particular risks that trafficked men face. In addition, consideration must also be given to the risk of victimisation such as: reprisals by traffickers against the man or his family which may lead into life-threatening situations. Furthermore, any assessment must consider the risk of arrest, detention or prosecution by local authorities. This assessment has to take into account if there are available local assisting programmes that could facilitate reintegration. Finally, the assessment must be done focusing on the risk of re-victimization, specifically re-trafficking, which is an important aspect of a secure return.

Right to legal aid and representation

Victims have the right to a lawyer to protect their rights, to inform them about their role in the proceedings, to defend their interests and to have their views heard and considered in the criminal proceedings. This includes civil or other proceedings to claim compensation for damage suffered. Informing trafficked men about their rights and organising a lawyer can be also a way of building trust when working with affected men. However, it is also important to work on realistic expectations regarding possible outcomes at court. Some men try to compensate for their feelings of shame and helplessness by having high expectations in the legal procedures.

Right to protection of privacy and safety

Victims have the right to protection of their private life and identity. They have the right to request that their life and identity are protected during criminal proceedings and that the press and public are excluded from the courtroom. It is important the men know about these rights and the possibilities they have to claim the protection needed.

Adult education on labour rights to prevent labour trafficking and re-trafficking

The knowledge of essential national labour rights is crucial for workers to prevent labour exploitation. It empowers workers to recognise exploitative situations and demand fair treatment. When workers understand their fundamental rights, such as minimum wage, maximum working hours, safe working conditions, freedom from discrimination:

- they can better identify violations and seek redress.
- it reduces vulnerability to trafficking and forced labour.
- it enables workers to access complaint mechanisms and seek legal assistance when their rights are violated, rather than remaining trapped in exploitative situations
- it supports freedom of association, allowing workers to organise and collectively bargain for better conditions, which is a key safeguard against exploitation.
- it prompts governments and businesses to uphold labour standards and extend legal protections to vulnerable groups like domestic workers, migrants, and informal sector workers.

Putting Labour Rights in Practice

The labour approach to trafficking is a simple yet powerful concept. Migrant workers are less vulnerable to exploitation and coercion at work when they are aware of their labour rights and know how to assert them. It is important to discuss their rights in the present rather than future dangers. There are several approaches to reach migrant workers and migrant communities:

In **dissemination of information material**, it is important to use native speakers and low-threshold language. The material should include compact information about counselling services in native language and the accessibility of local counsellors.

The other possibility is **outreach counselling** in front of or in accommodation centres, shelters, or workplaces. Beyond individual case counselling, it might be possible to find out about housing conditions, background information on recruitment and exploitation structures, overcrowding, structural condition, pay slips and employment contracts.

Access might also be reached through **digital counselling and networking**. For example, the social media project "accompanying labour migration fairly" provides information and support to protect jobseekers from Romania from exploitation and show them fair access to the German labour market.

Moreover, a **training module for migrant workers on labour rights** can be part of an anti-trafficking approach. In Germany, Arbeit und Leben has developed a module mainly in the context of language and integration courses for migrants and refugees. In the context of adult education for individuals who have been trafficked, it is crucial to enhance their resilience to exploitation in future employment. Therefore, it is important to ensure that these individuals are aware of their rights and entitlements. This module aims to inform workers of their labour rights and provide guidance on how to exercise them. It covers topics such as joining forces

with colleagues, identifying support structures, documenting work to ensure correct wages, and acting against employers who violate labour laws.

What are essential labour rights in the European Union?

Labour rights in Europe cover a wide range of protections and benefits designed to ensure fair treatment and working conditions for employees. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ^[21] enshrines in primary EU law a wide range of fundamental rights enjoyed by EU citizens and residents, including workers' rights. Here are some key aspects of workers' rights in the EU:

Fair pay

The right to fair pay includes the right to a minimum wage set by law, as well as the right to overtime pay for hours worked over and above the standard working week. For example, from 1 January 2024 on, Germany will have a minimum wage of 12.41 euros per hour, rising to 12.82 euros per hour on 1 January 2025.

Working hours

The working time law regulates the maximum number of working hours per week and prescribes breaks and rest periods. Workers in Europe also have the right to paid holidays, maternity and paternity leave and protection against unfair dismissal.

Safe working conditions

Employers are required to provide a safe and healthy working environment for their employees, including proper training on health and safety procedures. In Germany, for example, the Occupational Health and Safety Act sets out the requirements for health and safety at work.

Equal treatment and non-discrimination

Employees have the right to fair and equal treatment regardless of their sex, race, religion or other personal characteristics. For example, the EU's Equal Treatment Directive 2000/78/EC ^[22] prohibits discrimination on a number of grounds, including age, disability, sexual orientation and religion. It also requires equal treatment between men and women in the workplace (Charter of Fundamental Rights, Article 23).

Free movement of workers

EU citizens have the right to move freely between Member States to seek work, without discrimination on grounds of nationality. This is enshrined in EU regulations such as 492/2011 and the founding treaties.

Right to information and consultation

The Charter gives workers the right to information and consultation within companies. Everyone is equal before the law.

Right of collective bargaining and action

Workers and employers, or their respective organizations, have the right to negotiate and conclude collective agreements at the appropriate levels and to take collective action to defend their interests, including strike action.

Protection against dismissal

Every worker has the right to protection against unjustified dismissal. As a rule, notice of termination must be given in writing. There is special protection against dismissal for certain particularly vulnerable groups of people (e.g. pregnant women or severely disabled persons).

Prohibition of child labour and protection of young people in the workplace

The employment of children is prohibited. Young people admitted to work must have working conditions appropriate to their age and be protected from economic exploitation and from any work that could be harmful to their safety, health or physical, mental, moral or social development.

Social security and social assistance

In order to combat social exclusion and poverty, the Union recognises and respects the right to social and housing assistance so as to ensure a decent existence for all those who lack sufficient resources, in accordance with the rules laid down by Union law and national laws and practices.

Integration into the labour market

For trafficked men, integration into the labour market is a critical passage point in their lives, a bridge to getting a job. This stage represents their first steps toward independence and self-sufficiency as well as toward their full recovery and reintegration in society.

In the initial phase, **individual assessments** should be done to identify the skills and interests, and the past experiences of each man affected by human trafficking. These profiles should serve as a basis to come up with a joint career plan, taking strengths to market. Formulating an **organised CV** is a vital step highlighting strengths for the job, until the next phase when they are contacted for interviews. Trying to explain to them the necessity of adapting their CV to the job to which they are applying in order to better correlate with the specific requirements of the job is also very important.

It is also important to teach how to **search for job opportunities online** and **offline** such as newspapers. **Networking skills** are also very important in order to create a professional network through attending industry events, joining relevant groups online, and establishing personal relationships. Internships and other forms of experiential learning can help trafficked men to be more competitive in terms of the employment market. In this regard, providing affected men with access to online platforms, helping them to develop profiles, guiding them towards finding the right opportunities is very important.

Another key role is **establishing partnerships** with local companies that provide jobs matching these men's particular needs. **Raising awareness** about possible challenges faced by these affected men **within society and the business world in general** may help integrate them into the labour market. On the same note, **cooperating with local employment agencies** so that these affected men are placed in appropriate employment opportunities is vital. Public training and employment entities are also indispensable.

One of the most important aspects of the process of (re)integration into the labour market is **job interview training**. This involves role playing job interviews to allow affected men to practice, get feedback and improve their self-esteem. This also covers discussing common interview questions and providing advice on how to answer them.

Vocational training is an important part of labour market (re)integration as well. It can be included in a life plan for reintegrating trafficked men but it must be voluntary and be decided individually depending on the skills they have and education level. Vocational training englobe employable skills in popular jobs, making it easier and increasing chances of employment. They can acquire practical skills like plumbing, carpentry or electrical work That enables them to secure steady jobs.

After entering the job market, continuous monitoring makes it possible to evaluate, support and adjust according to the needs and/preferences of affected men. These aspects could be integrated into an adult education programme, where they can be better prepared for integration into the labour market.

In conclusion, the main purpose is the preparation of affected men with competencies/ and awareness required for acquiring new jobs.

III. A critical note: It's not all about adult education

Addressing the educational needs of male victims of trafficking is crucial for their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. However, it's essential to acknowledge that adult education may not be the sole solution for every individual and a comprehensive approach should be adopted. Therefore, along with creating holistic and trauma-informed guidelines for adult education for male victims of trafficking, it is important to be aware of its limitations.

The absence of support structures and insufficient political priority pose significant obstacles to the implementation of effective and sustainable programmes for adult education.

Comprehensive systems of support that encompass mental health services, housing assistance, and employment training are required to tackle the complex challenges experienced by trafficked persons. Many programs established by governments and service providers aim to assist women and girls, potentially leaving male victims neglected and at greater risk of being

penalised or fined for offences. Male survivors of trafficking require access to comprehensive and culturally appropriate support.

It is important to recognise that there is no one-size-fits-all solution, and that education alone may not address all the complex needs of trafficking victims. Social, psychological, and economic factors also play pivotal roles.

Rehabilitation is a long-term process and a sustained commitment to support is required beyond the duration of an educational programme. There will be no immediately visible or measurable effect of adult education that will completely change the situation of the individual in a short period of time. Patience and a long-term perspective are needed to put a person in a sustainable position.

Community involvement in rehabilitation is essential for a long-term process to reduce stigma and create a supportive environment for victims.

Advocacy for policy changes to address systemic issues that contribute to trafficking are also key, recognising that individual rehabilitation efforts should be complemented by broader societal changes.

Flexible learning opportunities are needed to adapt to the individual's skills, character and daily circumstances. It is important to recognise that victims may face challenges such as irregular schedules or legal proceedings.

A critical perspective on adult education in a neoliberal system aims to avoid exploitation by examining the effects of neoliberal education policies and practices. Neoliberal education systems often emphasise competition, individual responsibility and the commercialisation of education. These systems can also maintain and reinforce existing power structures rather than promoting equal opportunities and social justice. Therefore, alternative approaches to education based on cooperative principles, social inclusion and critical thinking could be helpful.

In conclusion, although adult education is a beneficial element of the rehabilitation process for male victims of trafficking, it should form part of a wider, all-encompassing approach that tackles the many and varied needs and challenges that trafficked men encounter. It is vital to acknowledge and advance an individual's unique and personal capabilities. Not all individuals possess the capacity or inclination to adjust to the neoliberal economic and demographic structure and prosper in a conventional labour market. Society ought to provide chances for individuals with unique talents, challenges, and trying life experiences to locate a position beyond the conventional employment sector and still belong to society. Critical perspectives on the socio-economic and political facets of education enhance our grasp of the effects of neoliberal education systems and ways to combat exploitation.

IV. Case Examples

The section links adult education issues to concrete examples of human trafficking and victim support. This sheds realistic insights into existing cases of trafficked men and demonstrates the role and importance of adult education.

The case of Andrei



Andrei is from Romania and lived in a single-parent family, composed of a mother and an older sister. To support her children, his mother worked as a caregiver in Italy. While his mother worked abroad, Andrei stayed at home with his sister, also a minor, and their grandmother. Andrei's sister joined a dance club's performance group and started working at the club's reception at the age of 16. Soon Andrei joined the club as well. The club owner convinced the young dancers that the club was like their family and he is the only one who will take care of them as everyone else wished to harm them. He limited their communication with other people and forbade them to socialise with anyone. The owner of the club exploited the young people by making them do various jobs, including giving dance lessons to younger children. Above all, he

took them, by rotation, to a "bunker" where he forced them to do hard and exhausting work and pushed them to the point of starvation. If they did not obey, they were physically, mentally and sexually abused.

By the age of 15 Andrei was already working as an instructor at the dance club, leading groups of younger children. For 3 years, Andrei was not paid for his work as the owner of the club convinced him that it was normal to give the money to his new "family".

The lack of a father figure led Andrei to develop a traumatic attachment to the owner of the club. Besides the fact that he became a very good dancer, the owner of the club "taught" him how to recruit girls for the club's performance group, by the "lover boy" method.

Six victims, including Andrei, were identified after an anonymous signal from a shepherd who witnessed the hard work the young people were doing in an isolated area in where the parents believed the club was camping.

All six trafficked young people were referred to ADPARE: one man and five women (adults at the date of referral). The investigation started at the end of 2017 and the indictment was issued in September 2019. The final appeal decision was issued in 2022 – the owner of the club received a sentence of 9 years and 4 months with prison execution

As far as Andrei was involved in the recruitment of other people, he was suspected of being part of the trafficking network, and was not considered as a victim. He experienced great feelings of guilt because he was involved in the recruitment of girls. He used soft drugs and attempted suicide (he tried to jump off a block). He lived in isolation and felt strong anger, and lack of trust in himself and others. Andrei also was not identifying himself as a victim of human trafficking or any other abuse. In addition, his health was shaken, his immune system collapsed due to the exhaustion and malnutrition he was subjected to. He also suffered multiple physical injuries from dancing that were left untreated. He was unable to continue his education at the Sports Academy because of his difficulty passing exams and because of his many absences.



Andrei received holistic support, based on his needs. First of all, he was represented in all criminal procedures (investigation, trial and appeal) by a specialized lawyer. He received special protection measures in court and his hearing was conducted by video connection. He received information on his rights as a victim of crime and trafficking in human beings and about the upcoming legal procedures. Each time he was accompanied and supported during the court proceedings; he received individual psychotherapy. He underwent medical tests and treatment to repair his knee. He received help and the taxes were paid, so he could continue his university education until graduation. He was trained and consulted on how to open his own company - a new sports dance club. He received financial support to buy the equipment of the club. Last but not least his rent was paid for the first two months.

To continue his life, Andrei learned a lot thanks to various forms of formal and informal adult education that were included in the recovery process. Andrei first became aware of his status as a trafficked person, not as a perpetrator. He learned about the non-punishment principle and the right to a period of recovery and reflection, as well as about his right to moral and material compensation (he decided not to apply for it). He learned how to protect himself from the trafficker who threatened him (no exposure on social media, no discussions/interviews with journalists and no physical presence in the courtroom). He learned how to set his own priorities and solve his own problems - medical issues, training and business. He continued his studies in the same area where he was exploited, and he learned to gain economic independence by transforming the bad experience of exploitation into a positive resource for his future. For this purpose, he had to learn how to set up and manage his own company.



Andrei is currently 24 years old and is the manager of the most famous sports dance club in his city in Romania and also a professional dancer who has won several prestigious awards and medals at various national and international competitions.

The case of Radu



Radu was abandoned by his family and grew up in a foster care centre in Romania. Until the age of 18, he sporadically had meetings with his mother, but without developing a relationship based on love and emotional support. His father was an alcoholic and died when Radu was 5 years old. At the age of 19, with the exit from the social protection system, Radu received the proposal to work at a construction site in the UK. Once he arrived at his destination, Radu's documents were confiscated and for 3 months he was forced to work undocumented on various construction sites in Liverpool, but also to steal food, clothes and shoes from stores. He got out of the exploitative situation, managing to run away and request help from the authorities.

This is what Radu told us: „I had to leave Liverpool. I had to go to a police station where I was fingerprinted, photographed, and banned - I am prohibited from going back to Liverpool for two years. And I took it as something bad. I mean, I'm a victim, I was trafficked, they said I was trafficked, they gave me the decision, and at the same time they fingerprinted me, they forbade me to enter for two more years! The reason - for my safety! That's what they told me! That made me want even more to leave as soon as possible. After my experience in Liverpool, especially with the institutions themselves, I was placed in I didn't know what an NGO is, why it would be different from state institutions, and I was quite distrustful. I thought I was entering a new prison, something like that, an institution that offers services but restricts your freedom and you can't move freely.

At the same time, they increase the distrust in the authorities, deepen victims' confusion who anyway consider themselves guilty of what happened to them.”^[23]

Radu was assisted to return by the International Organization for Migration, with the status of presumed victims of human trafficking, but no feedback was received from the authorities in the destination country.

When he entered the protection and assistance programme, he had no place to live, no relatives to offer support, no medical evaluation and treatment and did not trust anybody. He was angry and he refused psychotherapy. He decided that he wanted to go to the university and live in the student camp. Right from the first year of studies, Radu started consuming alcohol and soft drugs. Unable to cope with the exams, Radu decided to start psychotherapy so that he could control his addiction. With the completion of his studies, Radu got married and became the father of a little girl and also got a job in an NGO that works with abandoned children. However, he stopped psychotherapy. A few months after gaining employment, he started drinking alcohol again and left his family. He had several hospitalizations in a psychiatric hospital and was diagnosed with chronic depression.

Abandoned by family and authorities, and with his personal beliefs that as a man he should cope alone, be strong and support his new family, Radu was under constant stress

Currently, Radu has returned to the assistance and protection programme, resumed psychiatric treatment and psychotherapy and restored the relationship with his new family. Moreover, he expressed his desire to get



involved as a volunteer in offering support to other victims and also contribute to the prevention of human trafficking.

The Case of Simon



Simon was born in Ethiopia in a large family. He remembers that over time, both he and his family members were subjected to violence and discrimination because of their religious affiliation. He suffered a great deal and these events had a negative impact on him. In Ethiopia Simon graduated high school and was very happy to continue his studies. His dream was to attend a university, but due to limited financial resources Simon could not continue his studies. At the age of 24 he received a job offer in Romania, in the field of construction, which included three meals a day, accommodation, and a salary of USD 500 a month. To get to Romania, Simon borrowed 7,000 EUR, to pay the recruitment agency for processing his file, obtaining a work permit and other fees. When accepting the job, Simon was convinced that he would soon be able to pay off his debt in his home country and save the money

needed to continue his studies. After arriving in Romania, he found out that the job offer had changed and that he would be working in a hotel and not in construction as he had originally applied.

As soon as he arrived in Romania, Simon was transported to a hotel where he was forced to sign a contract for \$350-a-month in Romanian as an unskilled worker. The working conditions were not as promised in Ethiopia - he received only one meal a day, was accommodated in a small room with other people and forced to pay rent.

For 6 months he worked in a hotel in Bucharest and was forced to perform various tasks, from cleaning the kitchen to interior renovations of the hotel rooms, never knowing what his next task would be. He was never paid his salary on time, nor was he paid overtime. When he had health problems, he was not allowed to rest, and if he did not show up for work, the amount for that day was withheld from his paycheck.

The working hours were very long, the rest time was limited and the food insufficient. Simon was physically and mentally exhausted and could not cope with the demands of the job.

For 6 months Simon was physically and emotionally abused, threatened and constantly controlled by restricting his freedom of movement. As a result, he accumulated more debts and could not send enough money to cover his loan, and the debts increased with each month's delay.

Physically and mentally exhausted, Simon decided to run away and asked for support from the Ethiopian community in Bucharest. This is how he came to the ADPARE programme.

At the time he entered the ADPARE protection and assistance programme, Simon was in the asylum application procedure. He was determined to find a job. The first thing he requested was to be supported in finding another job, considering that this is the only way he can pay

his debts accumulated in his country of origin. Following the discussions with the team members, he accepted to have medical tests as a first step.

Medical examinations revealed that Simon was suffering from malnutrition. He realised that he was not in good health and would not be able to work. He benefited from consultations with a nutritionist and soon his health improved thanks to medication and proper nutrition.

In addition to medical examinations and medication, Simon was supported with more nutritional counselling, and was helped to purchase food and hygiene products. Once his health condition improved, a detailed assessment of Simon's needs and an individual action plan were made. Simon decided to make a complaint against his employer. He received legal support during the proceedings, as well as emotional support and safe accommodation.

Simon was supported to find a suitable job. He benefited from employment rights counselling and was referred to vocational coaching services. He was supported emotionally in finding and keeping a job. Simon changed several job places and was able to cope with different situations because he was aware of his rights and responsibilities as a worker. Simultaneously, Simon was supported and encouraged to learn Romanian, complete his studies and enroll in college. Transport and communication costs were paid by ADPARE. Simon's individual program was completed in three years.

In connection with the criminal proceedings, Simon filed a preliminary complaint in 2020. Although there have been several complaints filed against the same employer, the criminal investigation has not commenced to date. During this period Simon was educated about his rights and was emotionally supported.







Simon now speaks Romanian and has been granted refugee status due to religious persecution. He is a second-year student at the National University of Science and Technology in Bucharest, Faculty of Electronic Engineering.

He is an active member of the community, and since March 2023 he has been a volunteer and translator with ADPARE and involved in activities to support victims of human trafficking third country nationals speaking Amharic and Tigrinya dialects.



V. Recommendations

The Final point of this publication summarises the aspects discussed above and provides an overview of recommendations. These can guide the implementations of adult education measures into the activities of victim support service providers for trafficked men. The following condensed bullet points therefore can be used as orientation and guidelines for the further promotion and implementation of Adult Education activities addressing trafficked men on the regional, national and European level:

-  Adult education is an important and innovative component in the holistic support of men affected by human trafficking. It creates possibilities for their empowerment, long-term protection and stabilisation as well as for their (re-) integration into society.
-  The implementation of victims' rights for affected men is an indispensable precondition for successfully integrating adult education measures into victim support services in this field.
-  These rights include safe housing, medical and psychological care, a safe residence status, social and legal aid. Without these preconditions, due to the very vulnerable situation of the target group, adult Education measures have no foundation to stand on.
-  The overall goal of adult education for trafficked men is the prevention of re-trafficking and re-victimization as well as their sustainable stabilisation. Adult education in this field aims at reducing vulnerabilities and at empowering trafficked men by identifying their most urgent educational needs, responding to them with educational measures.
-  Adult education for trafficked men must be ready to cover a wide range of educational needs that might exist. It must also define areas of priorities of educational interventions.
-  Before being able to start effective educational interventions, initial assessments of individual risks & needs, including psychological diagnostic efforts, need to be carried out.
-  On these grounds, educational programmes individually tailored to the needs of affected men can be developed and implemented.
-  Specialised shelters providing secure accommodation for trafficked men including ongoing assistance go hand in hand with concrete adult educational measures.
-  Adult education for trafficked men must include training of self-care and self-organisation skills, of transversal and practical skills, in order to become autonomous and be empowered in regaining control over their lives.

- 👉 Adult education for trafficked men also needs to address health issues, the development of social competencies and non-violent conflict resolution
- 👉 Adult education measures must include knowledge on gender roles, masculinity and problematic aspects in male socialisation
- 👉 Mental health promotion as part of adult education is an opportunity to develop "life skills" that are important for the successful (re)integration of trafficked men into the communities they wish to belong to.
- 👉 Adult education activities need to integrate trauma-informed, victim-centred and gender-sensitive approaches into all taken steps.
- 👉 Adult education is particularly appropriate for men because it corresponds to their gender specific ways of coping with psychological trauma.
- 👉 Adult education in this field also strongly needs to focus on the practical, behavioural, and social educational needs of trafficked men aiming at integrating into the labour market.
- 👉 Adult education in victim support always needs to include education on rights, especially on human, victims and labour rights.
- 👉 Adult education on labour rights is a crucial tool for workers to prevent labour trafficking and re-trafficking. It empowers workers to recognize exploitative situations and demand fair treatment, hence it reduces vulnerability to trafficking and forced labour.
- 👉 Adult education is not only a task of the victim support organisations, but needs to be seen within the framework of cooperation and strategies at the national level aiming at the fight against human trafficking and the support of its victims. General access to public services and institutions, such as to vocational trainings provided by labour market agencies, mainstreaming victims of trafficking and their inclusion into all aspects of our societies, must be a common goal of all involved actors and of all responsible authorities.

Important contacts

Austria

HELPLINES

+43 (0) 677 61343434	National Anti-trafficking helpline
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NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING SERVICES FOR TRAFFICKED PERSONS

MEN VIA Support for Men as Victims of Human Trafficking Kundratstraße 3 - 1100 Vienna https://men-center.at/via +43 (0) 699 17482186 Email: kfn.via@gesundheitsverbund.at	LEFÖ-IBF Intervention Centre for Trafficked Women* Lederergasse 35/12-15 - 1080 Vienna https://lefoe.at/en/ibf-intervention-center/ +43 1 7969298 Email: ibf@lefoe.at
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Bulgaria

HELPLINES

0800 20 100	National Anti-trafficking helpline
nrm.bg	Platform for prevention of trafficking in human beings and support to the victims

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS Sofia 1797, 52 A, G.M. Dimitrov Blvd. www.antitraffic.government.bg +359 2 807 80 50 / +359 2 807 80 59 Email: office@antitraffic.government.bg	ANIMUS ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION Sofia 1000, 85 Ekzarh Yossif Str. www.animusassociation.org + 359 2 983 52 05 / +359 2 983 53 05 Email: animus@animusassociation.org National hotline for victims of violence + 359 (0)800 1 8676 or + 359 2 981 7686
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Germany

HELPLINES

08000 116 016	Support helpline for violence against women. www.hilfetelefon.de .
+49 116 006	WEISSER RING Helpline for victims of crime

<p>Service Centre against Labour Exploitation, Forced Labour and Human Trafficking (www.servicestelle-gegen-zwangsarbeit.de), is part of Arbeit und Leben Berlin-Brandenburg DGB/VHS e.V. (www.berlin.arbeitundleben.de/)</p>	<p>KOK (www.kok-gegen-menschenhandel.de) is a German NGO Network against Trafficking in Human Beings. KOK advocates for the rights of trafficked persons and female migrants facing violence.</p>
<p>Advise Network Decent Work (www.arbeitundleben.de/arbeitsfelder/beratungsnetzwerk) is a federal network over Germany</p>	

Portugal

HELPLINES

+351 964 608 288	National Anti-trafficking helpline
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<p>Saúde em Português – Support for male victims of THB Avenida Elísio de Moura nº417 R/C Loja 3 3030-183 Coimbra E-Mail: info@saudeportugues.org</p>	<p>CAP – Shelter for Reception and Protection for male THB victims and their minor children (Saúde em Português) – available 24 hours a day +351 961 674 745 E-Mail: cap@saudeportugues.org</p>
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Romania

HELPLINES

0800 800 678

Telverde – National Anti-Trafficking helpline

ADPARE

Bucharest

www.adpare.eu

E-Mail: adpare@adpare.eu

+40212532904 (09 AM to 05 PM)

National Agency against Trafficking in Persons

Bucharest, 20 Ion Câmpineanu street

+ 4021 311 89 82, +4 021 313 31 00

E-Mail: anitp@mai.gov.ro

<https://anitp.mai.gov.ro/>

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