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## **VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING: A STATISTICAL PROFILE – 2009** **IOM MOLDOVA**

### **OVERVIEW:**

Between 2000 and 2009, 2602 VoTs, 1148 children of VoTs, 2283 at-risk persons, 59 stranded migrants, 22 victims of domestic violence and 49 unaccompanied minors were assisted within the IOM Moldova Protection and Assistance Program.

In 2009, IOM Moldova in cooperation with national and international partners identified and provided assistance to 159 Victims of Trafficking (VoTs): 152 adults (132 women and 20 men) and 7 children (6 girls and 1 boy). Most victims were identified at the local level - after they returned home from the country of destination - by the Multidisciplinary Teams of the National Referral System. Many cases were referred from Balti, Causeni, Cimislia, Cahul, Floresti, Hincesti and Anenii Noi. The main destination countries were: Russia (25%), Turkey (17%), UAE (17%) and Ukraine (8.8%). The cases identified in Moldova (6.9%) were cases of local trafficking and foreign citizens trafficked to Moldova.

The operations and intelligence of law enforcement agencies resulted in the identification of 13 persons (8.2%) before they were taken out of Moldova, thus preventing their exploitation in the destination countries (Turkey, Italy, Lebanon). Many of the victims (56.6%) were trafficked for sexual exploitation purposes, 27.7% - for labor exploitation, 5.7% - for begging, 1.2% - combined exploitation and 0.6% - organ removal (past case - the man was trafficked in 1999).

IOM Moldova saw an increase in the number of identified men who were trafficked for labor exploitation purposes; however, they do not identify themselves as victims and thus refusing the psychological and additional types of assistance available to them through the Chisinau Assistance and Protection Center (CAPC). They treat the trafficking experience as failed migration and rush to find a new job in order to provide for their families. Many of the trafficked women were graduates from boarding schools: They do not have families, housing or support; they have low levels of education, are naïve, and thus become easy targets for recruiters. In 2009, 65 beneficiaries from the CAPC received legal assistance. 36 of the total caseload of 159 VoTs testified against traffickers. They received legal assistance and were informed on their rights, as well as risks related to the process.

Compared to recent years, in 2009 IOM Moldova saw an (important) increase in the number of identified beneficiaries who ask for continuous assistance due to social and health problems. Most of them live in extreme poverty as there are no employment opportunities at the local level. We can also note that the number of beneficiaries with diagnosed with schizophrenia increased. These beneficiaries require long term treatment and the rehabilitation process is very challenging. They are not able to successfully acquire new professional skill-sets, can not be employed and thus need continuous assistance.

Additionally, it is important to note that there continues to be good cooperation between the CAPC, the centers for long term placement and the maternity centers “Casa Sperantei”, “Inceputul Vietii” and “Materna” in Chisinau and “Pro Familia” in Causeni.

### **RECENT TRENDS:**

The trends in trafficking are constantly changing. In comparison to previous years, the duration of exploitation for sexual services decreased from 1-2 years to 4 months maximum. The conditions of exploitation are “better,” the victims are paid small amounts of money; they are allowed to contact their parents/children and are allowed partial freedom of movement. These manipulative techniques have caused many victims to fall under an illusion of well-being where they consider their traffickers as friends; causing some to return to their traffickers/pimps after being rescued or arrested by police and deported.

Fewer victims are identified abroad. Most of them are mistaken for prostitutes and deported – it was found that many beneficiaries came into trafficking from prostitution and vice-versa. The level of self-identification is also low. Many victims do not know their basic human rights and do not realize they were actually sold and exploited. They do not know they can ask for assistance and have the right to be protected. Others do not ask for assistance as do not have the same acute medical and psychological needs as victims in previous years. In regards to recruitment, most of the victims knew or suspected, what would happen to them abroad; however, the promises they were given upon recruitment were immediately broken upon entry into the countries of destination.

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