Comparative Social Work and Trafficking in Women

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Social work in different states offers professional support, protection as well as control for persons in need. There are presently no uniquely European or international patterns of social work, but rather a need for research as well as comparative work and studies to promote the international dimension and co-operation of social work and social workers — especially in an area like trafficking in women.

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1. Comparative Social Work: How to define the topic?

To develop social work as a profession and discipline, there is a demand for cross-border-research and for comparative social work — to compare, inter alia, the professional knowledge, theoretical models, scientific sources, educational traditions and standards, specific methods, values, the economical, (socio-) political, legal and organisational framework of social work(ers), the main work fields and the professional as well as the specific academic careers of social workers.

International co-operation and networking between Universities and between practitioners and organisations of social work, the increasing mobility of students, lecturers and practitioners, new Master-courses and study programmes with a European dimension are indicators for a new awareness for an international dimension of social work(ers).

"The value of comparative social work studies lies in the opportunity offered for the development of an international and intercultural perspective through which to examine, analyse and interpret social work. The objectives of such studies being those salient similarities and differences within the theoretical foundations, the practice forms and organisational arrangements of social work in different countries. All of these elements require systematic analysis in order to create a wide-scale rather than a purely localised theory of social work. Such a comparative analysis of social work would offer an opportunity for the exchange of experiences and understandings at an international level and release social work from the narrow horizons of national constructions and traditions. As such the development of comparative social work studies offers not only a more comprehensive framework for approaching and conceptualising social work; but also exposes the social conditions and cultural structures within which social work knowledge and action is made possible within different national state welfare regimes."(1)

Social work as a culture-related profession was concentrated on research and activities in the social sector of a region or a state. The effects of globalisation, the changing role of the welfare state and the growing importance of new social actions require to face the international aspect of key topics.

2. Different Welfare State Models: National Diversity and the Conditions for Social Work and Social Workers

Comparative studies deal with the different conditions and the social infrastructure of a welfare state (regime) and its effects for social work(ers). The social work profession as a (public) service is based on the specified welfare regime of a state. The structural and organisational framework is influenced by the politics and policy as well as by the norms and values of a society and the ideological framework of a political landscape. Social work is one of the professions which is responsible for the basic needs and the well-being of human beings in a society which believes in social justice and human rights.

"Social Work, as an institution, profession and form of service, is located, organised and delivered variously within different welfare regimes. The theoretical orientation and organisational arrangements are influenced by national social policies; just as the contents of social work education derive from the social and political norms, values and ideas that prevail in any given society. (...) All national welfare state regimes seek to generate social politics that both reflect a particular ideal model and also accommodate the economic, material, political, administrative and socio-cultural norms and values associated with health and well being pertinent to that particular society."(2)

Every welfare state is organised with a specific logic and by appropriate key-themes; it has to find the right solutions for prevailing social problems. Every state has specific challenges — based on the historical, political, legal and economical preconditions, which have to be reflected in policy. Every state gives different priorities to different target groups, which thus have good or bad chances of receiving support from the (welfare) state. Political values determine e.g. how important citizenship is as a precondition or "gate keeper" to get material resources from the state.(3) On the other hand, one can notice the special barriers for specific target groups if they expect support from the welfare state.

In order to analyse the logic of a welfare state and to gain an understanding of how the state takes responsibility for the disadvantaged and excluded members of society, or to what extent it attributes this responsibility to other persons or groups within society, we must observe the relationship between the state and families, the state and churches or church-related institutions, the state and welfare institutions, the state and the civil society as such, the state and NGOs in the social sector, the state and the voluntary sector in general, the state and social movements, as well as between the state and social work(ers).

Comparative studies deal with the differing conditions in various states and their consequences for social work. They investigate the regional and national logic behind particular actions, consider the distribution of responsibility to different individuals, organisations and institutions, and observe the social discourse of opinion leaders. Possible research topics include: prevailing social infrastructure, legal frameworks, the tradition and appreciation of help and support, historical, cultural and religious traditions and the classification system — knowing when and why a social problem is assessed as such so that social workers have to intervene, either as a preventive measure or for harm- and risk-reduction.

3. Social Work, Postmodernity and Globalisation

Postmodernity and the changes in European societies have an important impact on social work. Social workers need to be familiar with and understand the "winds of (social and political) changes", the relationship between work, unemployment and welfare, new market-led approaches, the phenomenon and the consequences of globalisation in different spheres of life as well as the permanent changes that have taken place in every society.

In particular the political transformation process in Europe after 1989 and the enormous tempo of the internationalisation of economics influenced and undermined working conditions in general, as well as the welfare systems in European countries. The corporatistic tradition of some countries (e.g. Germany or Austria) has been replaced by neo-liberal politics which follow more and more the idea of workfare instead of welfare. This has a special meaning and concrete consequences for social workers and (new) target groups of social work, including the area of migration or trafficked human beings. While social workers have to analyse the conditions of life of people in need or the hurdles of obtaining welfare benefits, they also have to define new tasks and working methods in order to enable political participation (again), to secure living standards, to promote social inclusion and a successful individual life-management.

There are a lot of **questions** which could be posed **to find out the importance and the image of social work in a country or a state** — e.g.:

How do the economical conditions influence social work in general? What possibilities does the prevailing legal framework provide? Who oversees the work of social workers (and with which ideological background)? Which institutions employ social workers — why and for which client groups? What are the main target groups for social workers and how do they change permanently? Which clients do not get in contact with social workers? Why are some client groups more "interesting" than others — for politics, the society and social work? What are important partners in the fight against poverty, for social justice and human rights, for gender-equality and social inclusion? Which topics are often the subject of political conflicts in a state? In which fields are social workers represented, in which are they not represented (and why not)? What is the dominant image that social workers have in a country — compared to other professions or disciplines with a similar level of qualification? What qualifications do social workers need to have to work as a professional? What does the labour market for social workers look like? Is there a lack of social workers in a country (and why)? How is social work as a discipline integrated in the scientific community? How is the cooperation between professionals and academics in social work? How is the relationship to other professionals in the social field? How is the relationship to engaged volunteers? What is the role of professional associations and trade unions in the representation process? Which common traditions (history, culture, religion, stereotypes etc.) are influencing the quality and kind of co-operation between social workers of different regions and countries?

4. The Dilemma of Comparative Studies

Social work as an academically based reflective practice and academic discipline involves research to widen and develop the knowledge base — and not only about social phenomena. Social workers need scientific know-how to cover, observe, describe, understand and interpret the reality of the complex conditions of life of their clients. Social work is a relatively new discipline and generates as such research evidence about the lives and conditions of life of the social work clients.

"The need to understand is the core motivation of the activity that is termed research. As such, research is a process of investigation through which information about the various elements that constitute phenomena are gathered. (…) From this investigation, it is possible to consider the phenomenon in the context of its particular setting or environment in time and place. Moreover, in order to be able to carry out such investigations we need to understand how to identify, recognize, label and classify phenomena. Thus, developing our understanding requires the involvement of our experiences and knowledge of phenomena themselves and the mental process by which we generate theories in the context of social processes by which we attribute a shared meaning and value to what constitutes human knowledge." (4)

Yet we must ask the question: **Research for whom and by whom?** Comparative studies often show that data collection has been done with different research methods and by different researchers with different backgrounds. Frequently, nobody asks critical questions about these facts and nobody doubts the validity of results arrived at using such data.
It is important to make clear the following criteria from the beginning of every project: How is the starting point of the comparative objectives defined? Which partial dimensions are really comparable with each other? How is it possible to present the common criteria by scales, tables or matrices?

Researchers' different priorities concerning the research interest, design and focus are often determined by their country of origin — despite their efforts to fulfil all scientific criteria. It is also important to take into account the language and communication aspects of international co-operation. Having worked in one language, researchers may be prone to

misunderstandings, misinterpretations and mistakes when they work together with foreign colleagues. The same term does not necessarily have the same connotation or meaning in two languages — or even in two dialects of one and the same language. Professional translators or participants of international congresses know this phenomenon and its consequences well. Sometimes, social work practitioners as well as academics need quite a lot of time to make sure that everybody is taking about the same word or technical term.

Social workers therefore need to have intercultural competence as well as the cultural self-reflection to ask the right questions in the right moment in a comparative research project. They also need this professional repertoire and competences in the individual contact to their diverse client groups — e.g. for trafficked women.

5. Trafficking in Women: a phenomenon of modern global slavery

Many people, when they hear the word "slavery", think of buying and selling people, the trade from one continent to another and the abolition of the trade in the early 1800ies. Slavery exists today despite the fact that it is banned in most of the countries where it is practised. It was prohibited by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the UN Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery (1956).

Contemporary slavery takes various forms and affects people of all ages, sex and ethnic origins. Common characteristics distinguish slavery from other human rights violations. A slave is

- forced to work – through mental or physical threat,
- owned or controlled by an 'employer', usually through mental or physical abuse or threatened abuse,
- dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property', and
- physically constrained or has restrictions placed on his/her freedom of movement.(5)

Trafficking is the fastest growing means by which people are forced into slavery. It affects every continent and most countries. Trafficking in Women is not at all a new phenomenon. Different kinds of slavery, forced labour, trafficking and exploitation were quite common in different European countries already more than hundred years ago — not only in countries with colonial past.

Kevin Bales (2005) defines slavery as *"a state marked by the loss of free will, in which a person is forced through violence or the threat of violence to give up the ability to sell freely his or her own labour power. In this definition, slavery has three key dimensions: loss of free will, the appropriation of labour power, and the use or threat of violence. (…) In white slavery, forced labour, debt bondage, child prostitution, forced prostitution, and sexual slavery, all three aspects of our definition are present. Prostitution, forced marriage, and the work demanded of some migrant workers can be manifested as slavery under certain conditions."*(6)

Traditional slavery meant, that "owners" of slaves had to pay a high price to be in permanent possession of a slave and had to guarantee their basic needs. There was a small profit margin. *Modern slavery* is perfectly organised and functions in accordance with the mechanisms of a modern market economy. The price for a "slave" (generally a trafficked women or child) is quite low, there is no duty to look after them, but a high profit margin. The personal or economical relation to a slave (trafficked person) lasts only a short time.

To understand the demand behind human trafficking, Kevin Bales (2005:154 ff) underlined that slavery is a social and economic relationship — marked by extreme differentials of power, by violence and by exploitation and within a context of social, economic and moral

expectations. Traffickers and consumers of trafficked people are not necessarily the same persons. The recruiters, transporters and traffickers who harvest and move people into the trafficking streams convert free people into victims of trafficking by taking control of their lives, brutalising them, taking their passports and personal documents and restricting their movements. These "products" should be gullible, in good physical health and profitable. To be useful and profitable, a trafficked person must be malleable. Their consumers must be able to get the behaviour, services and work that they want. In prostitution and domestic work, there is a special demand for the exotic. It is clear that such attitudes are rooted racist and nationalist notions. The basic relationship of exploitation is an expression of power —through the non-payment of wages, through inadequate subsistence or through the obligation to work extremely long every day. The exercise of power can also carries a violent and sexualised meaning. The trafficked (female) worker — under complete control — can be regularly brutalised and raped.

To measure slavery, it would be important and helpful to have different reports — from government agencies, from international labour organisations, from (academic) experts, from NGOs as well as press reports.

To stop, combat and regulate slavery, forced labour, trafficking and exploitation, many conventions have been adopted since the 1920s, and the worldwide human rights-organisation "Anti Slavery International" was founded even earlier, in 1839. The first *Slavery Convention* of 1926 defined slavery as "the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised. "Forced labour" was also added to the definition. States in this meaning should "prevent compulsory or forced labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery." The *Universal Declaration* of 1948 added "servile status" to the definition: "No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms." The *Rome Final Act* (1998) added "trafficking" to the definition: Slavery was redefined as "the exercise of any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over a person and includes the exercise of such power in the course of trafficking in persons (in particular women and children)". (7)

Migrant women are even more often becoming objects of trafficking in human beings and of human rights violations; gender-segregation and gender-discrimination are facts of socio-economic marginalisation of migrant women.
While poverty creates the large groups of workers who are "willing" or "interested to be exploited", there are many other socio-economic factors and mechanisms that promote trafficking and other forms of exploitation in the (poor) countries of origin as well as in the countries of destination — e.g.:

- a significant scale of the informal, grey and criminal economics, where exploitation and slavery are increasingly commonplace,

- the general weakness of the rule of law and effective law enforcement,

- rudimentary immigration regimes that fail to keep pace with the scale of illegal and unregulated migration,

- the lack of legitimate migration programmes versus extensive illegal organised migration networks,

- the absence of conditions for normal business activities,

- weak and overtaxed businesses must exploit cheap labour in order to survive,

- the absence of corporate social responsibility mechanisms,

- extensive corruption which lets criminal activities flourish (migrant worker registration, construction, prostitution etc.),

- the lack of trust in the authorities shared by migrants and the local population and
- the weakness of civil society, local government and other institutions that could combat exploitation at the local level.(8)

To define human trafficking and to better meet the significant increase in trafficking globally, the United Nations put forward the *Convention on Transnational Organized Crime* ("*Palermo-Protocol*", 2000), along with its *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*. Clause 3 (a) of this "Anti-Trafficking Protocol" defines *Trafficking in persons* as

"(…) the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of the threat or use of force, or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs."

The protocol was intended to prevent and combat trafficking in persons and facilitate international cooperation against such trafficking. It is one very important part of the legal framework around trafficking in human beings and some more activities inside the European Union to combat trafficking in human beings during the last years.

"In 2002, the EU-Council of Ministers adopted a Framework Decision on combating the trafficking of human beings on the basis of UN definitions. In legal terms, a framework decision concerns the field of police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters and is binding on the Member States as the result to be achieved, but leaves the choice of form and methods to the national authorities.(...) In 2004, the Council Framework Decision on combating sexual exploitation of children and child pornography was adopted on the basis of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). This was followed by the Council directive on the short-term residence permits issued to third-country victims of trafficking in human beings, which was designed to encourage illegal migrants to cooperate with the competent authorities. (...) In October 2005, The European Commission published an action plan for the fight against trafficking in human beings. Two months later, the Council (...) adopted an 'EU Plan on best practices, standards and procedures for combating and preventing trafficking in human beings'."(9) In this EU action plan, the problem includes preventive measures against trafficking in the countries of origin as well as the reduction of the demand in the countries of destination.

To understand Trafficking in persons, one should take into account that this phenomenon is not only linked to organised crime, but also for example to poverty, (illegal) migration, prostitution, violence, drug abuse, health risks and human rights. As has already been established, it has a very significant economical importance too.

6. Trafficking in Women and Human Rights

In recent years, a lot of anti-trafficking organisations and human rights-organisations have tried hard to define Trafficking in Women as an issue of human rights, labour rights and women's rights. In particular, the specific situation of trafficked women in different areas of the informal labour market (e.g. domestic labour, prostitution or the entertainment industry) as well as slavery-like practices demonstrate that women are mainly not seen as self responsible subjects with specific rights, such as the right to participation, emancipation and empowerment. Trafficked women frequently have the status of a smuggled person, a victim or of an illegal migrant.

"Human trafficking is an egregious human rights violation and a form of modern slavery and should not be seen merely from a point of view of national protective interests, nor should it be treated simply in the fight against organised crime and illegal migration. Underlying the call for a human rights approach is the recognition that trafficking in human beings constitutes both a cause and a consequence of human rights violations. (...) Trafficking violates fundamental human rights, such as the right to life, the right to dignity and security, the right to just and favourable conditions of work, the right to health, the right to equality and the right to be recognised as a person before the law. (...) Essentially, a human rights-based approach integrates the norms, standards and principles of the international human rights system into legislation, policies, programs and processes. The norms and standards are those enshrined in the range of international treaties and declarations, including the principle of non-discrimination. Important elements are the recognition of human beings as subjects and holders of rights, equality and equity, standard setting and accountability, empowerment and participation." (10)

Representatives of the human rights-based approach to trafficking place more attention on the protection of the human rights of trafficked persons than on prevention. Empowerment and participation are other principles in the work with trafficked persons — mostly NGOs in this area. *Elements of a human rights-based approach* (11) could be:

- Human Rights should inform all phases of policy development (assessment, analysis, planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation).

- Standards and mechanisms shall guarantee the observance of human rights, monitor and evaluate the impact of anti-trafficking laws, policies and programs.

- Minimum standards of treatment to which trafficked persons are entitled — independent of their assistance to the prosecution and their residence status — shall be guaranteed for trafficked persons.

- Gender aspects as well as the ethnic perspective shall be taken into consideration.

- A globalised system of human rights implies that a violation anywhere requires responses from everywhere. If human rights are taken seriously, then their protection cannot begin and end at national borders.

7. New Slavery and the importance of Non Governmental Organisations and Intergovernmental Organisations

After World War II and especially after the political transformation process in Europe in 1989, one could notice a tendency towards issue-based movements — away from nation-state-oriented politics, parties or governments, but interested in "life politics", in which national boundaries are of secondary concern. These NGOs and intergovernmental organisations deal with global social and environmental topics, democratic and human rights issues.

These NGOs and intergovernmental organisations generally have a worldwide network and a great importance for the victims of slavery — especially for trafficked women — as well as for social work(ers) in different countries. They are most effective in contacting governments, in public relation, awareness raising, networking and lobbying. Sometimes, these organisations notice the problem of women's trafficking much more than any government — especially in the countries of origin of the trafficked women. To give some examples:

Amnesty International — founded in 1961 — is a worldwide movement of people who campaign for internationally recognised human rights. Amnesty International's vision is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards. AI's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights

to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights.(12)

Anti Slavery International, founded in 1839, is the world's oldest international human rights NGO and the only charity in the United Kingdom to work exclusively against slavery and related abuses. This NGO works at local, national and international levels to eliminate the system of slavery around the world by urging governments of countries with slavery to develop and implement measures to end it; lobbying governments and intergovernmental agencies to make slavery a priority issue; supporting research to assess the scale of slavery in order to identify measures to end it; working with local organisations to raise public awareness of slavery and educating the public about the realities of slavery and campaigning for its end.(13)

The NGO **La Strada International** is a network of nine independent women's rights NGOs in the Netherlands, Poland, the Czech Republic, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Moldova. It aims to prevent trafficking in human beings, especially women and children in Central and Eastern Europe. La Strada's mission is to make the issue of trafficking in women visible and to influence authorities, the media and the public opinion to address this violation of human rights; to educate women and girls about possible dangers of trafficking and to refer victims to support networks. La Strada has a multi-disciplinary approach program, consisting of information and lobbying, prevention and education and social assistance to victims of trafficking.(14)

IOM, the International Organisation for Migration, exists since 1951 as an inter-governmental organisation. IOM's mandate is to promote orderly and humane migration for the benefit of all by providing services to migrants and governments, to help protect human rights of migrants, and to cooperate with its member states to deal with the problems related to migration. IOM works to promote international cooperation on migrant issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems, to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need (incl. refugees, displaced persons and uprooted persons). One of the core challenges for IOM and its member states is to combat trafficking in human beings. Related activities are: promoting international migration, policy debates, protection of migrant's rights and the gender dimension of migration. IOM undertakes regular consultation with government and regional consultation in the Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia-Pacific region. (15)

The inter-governmental organisation **UNIFEM** is the women's fund at the United Nations (since 1976). It provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies to foster women's empowerment end gender equality. Placing the advancement of women's human rights at the centre of all its efforts, UNIFEM focuses its activities on four strategic areas: a) reducing feminised poverty, b) ending violence against women, c) reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS among women and girls and d) achieving gender equality in democratic governance in times of peace as well as war. Several key documents guide the work of UNIFEM: e.g. *The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) or the Bejing Declaration and Platform for Action (PFA)*.(16)

The inter-governmental organisation **OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe)** was founded in 1972 as the world's largest regional security organisation. The OSCE deals mainly with three dimensions: the politico-military dimension, the economic and environmental dimension and the human dimension. The commitments made by the 56 participating states in the human dimension aim to ensure full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; to abide by the rule of law; to promote the principles of democracy of building, strengthening and protecting democratic institutions and to promote tolerance throughout the OSCE-region. Anti-trafficking is one task of the OSCE — alongside

democratisation, education, elections, gender equality, human rights, media freedom, minority rights, rule of law and tolerance and non-discrimination.(17)

There is a lot of cooperation between other inter-governmental organisations, including: Council of Europe (CoE), International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL), EUROPOL and the European Commission expert group.
The alliance against trafficking in persons also includes the networking between non-governmental organisations such as: ECPAT international (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Puroposes), Terre des Hommes, Save the Children or La Strada International.

8. Comparative Social Work and Trafficked Women

Research on trafficking in persons is difficult. "Effectively responding to trafficking requires a multistage process. (…) There are opportunities for intervention at each stage, from the initial enticement by the recruiter in the source country, to the several stages of transporting a person through transit countries to a destination country, to the crossing of those borders, to the delivery of the trafficked person to an 'employer', to their subsequent exploitation, and, possibly, to the point of contact with official agencies through investigation of outreach." (18)

Research on migration is an interdisciplinary task and the challenge for social workers is to analyse international trends and to come to conclusions for good practice. Comparative Social work looks for the reasons, logic and specific characteristics of migration-flows — from the perspective of the country of origin, transit country or country of destination. At the same time, it is important to explore the different cultures of support for migrants and refugees as well as the criteria or barriers to integration in a country of destination. Social work furthermore has to find out why the communication within the same group (e.g. the Roma) is very different in various states and which role social workers play in this sphere of power. Comparative social work discusses different concepts and methods in culturally sensitive interaction with members of other cultures or ethnic groups. "Cross cultural learning" with colleagues from other regions or countries is possible by means of a balanced exchange, incorporating the prevailing traditions and conditions of all participants, thereby avoiding cultural dominance or the tendency to want to "help" others to "develop". Only such a permanent exchange, free of inhibitions, provides the opportunity for new input and ideas for practice and research in social work. The dominant motive should not be identifying which approach is better, but rather arousing curiosity and interest in new phenomena and in others. Trafficking in women includes many different aspects: forced labour or exploitation in private households and factories as well as forced prostitution. The "feminisation of migration" of the process of globalisation means that women and children are most frequently those affected by human trafficking.

The varying definitions of "trafficking in women" or "trafficked women" present in the discussion about "affected" women or about "victims" show the inconsistent meaning attributed to the phenomenon in different states. Trafficking in human beings and in women is defined in international documents and conventions, which are frequently the basis for national law and measures against it. Yet comparative studies show that the topic is dealt with in different countries in different ways — determined by ideological, religious or economical reasons as well as influenced by the political discourse and the discourse of values in a society. In some countries — mainly in those, which forbid prostitution by law — trafficking in women is seen as one kind of prostitution; sex workers should therefore be penalised. This

approach raises barriers to claiming support from the welfare system as well as from social work(ers).

Social workers get in contact with trafficked women in different ways, but they do so in order to address these women's special needs and to offer medical, legal and psycho-social support which protect the dignity of the affected women. They also frequently have to identify gaps in the social security net or in the legal system. Yet not every state or community feels that social workers should deal with this topic, because it is seen as part of organised crime and as such as an area for the police.

Social work needs specific co-operation and joint proceedings to count the specific needs of trafficked women and to reflect upon models from other regions or countries to give the adequate support to them. This comprises programmes for victims and witness protection, for secure accommodation or telephone-hotlines or preventive and informative campaignes in the countries of origin as well as in the countries of destination. Social workers shall work out — together with other professionals — new methods, tools and quality standards in the "chain of care" for the affected women and also for a coordinated co-operation among professionals. Beside Round Tables or the cross-border exchange of best practice models manuals for the treatment of trafficked women could help in the direct work with clients and could also give other professionals the change to understand the complex and sensitive topic.

Alongside their co-operation and training with other relevant professionals, such as police officers and judges, social workers are often responsible for data collection. Such data regularly include statistics about the different kinds of exploitation and violence of the affected women, about the life conditions in the countries of origin, about the identity of victims and about typical life biographies. They also need to have an extensive data base about the traffickers and the trafficking-routes — for research purposes as well as for politicians and journalists. The data collection has to be carried out in such a way that a comparison between states and regions is possible. Data about the co-operation between the justice sector, the health and security sector, the social security sector, the role of domestic and foreign organisations, the role of NGOs and private organisations as well as about the role of media in a country are all important to social workers.

9. The need of a serious data collection

Trafficking in human beings — as a social work research topic as well as a topic of social work intervention — has to reflect upon a lot of different aspects in comparing like with like. To discuss models or typologies of human trafficking in different European (EU) countries, it is e.g. obvious to stress the possible following problems while generating common databases:

- *"too many diverse authorities collect data;*
- *data stored in databases are not immediately comparable across countries because the relevant criminal offences are sometimes different;*
- *statistics are not always clear and useful;*
- *criteria for the storing of data differ from country to country;*
- *types of data collected may differ;*
- *different variables are used to collect information on offences, perpetrators and victims;*
- *insufficient attention is paid to gathering information on victims;*
- *some countries only maintain confidential databases and occasionally these are the only ones available for information on THB19;*
- *information from NGOs is under-utilised."*(20)

A multi-disciplinary approach as well as the permanent co-operation with different professions as another important demand to guarantee a serious data collection which always leads to last findings in the wide range of social work.

10. Summary

Social work as a human rights profession and as a young discipline has to fulfil a lot of criterias in combating trafficking in women as well as in giving support to trafficked women.

One the one hand, it is important to observe and analyse the permanent global and local changes in the consequences for a peaceful living together. On the other hand new client- and target-groups of social work ask for new concepts and working methods, co-operation, networking and lobbying on the regional, local and international level.

Annotations

(1) Erath, Peter, Hämäläinen, Juha, Sing, Horst, Comparing Social Work from a European Perspective: Towards a Comparative Science of Social Work In: Adams, Adrian, Erath, Peter and Shardlow, Steven M. (Eds.) (2001) Key Themes in European Social Work. Theory, practice, perspectives, Lyme Regis:Russellhouse, p 1

(2) Niemelä, Pauli, Hämäläinen, Juha (2001) The Role of Social Policy in Social Work In: Key Themes in European Social Work. Theory, practice, perspectives, Lyme Regis:Russellhouse, p 6

(3) In Austria there is a significant difference for the guarantee of social welfare benefits between Austrian- and EU-citizens compared to citizens of other states outside of the European Union.

(4) Loučková, Ivana, Adams, Adrian, Research in Social Work In: Adams, Adrian, Erath, Peter and Shardlow, Steven M. (Eds.) (2001) Key Themes in European Social Work. Theory, practice, perspectives, Lyme Regis:Russellhouse, p 27

(5) See http://www.antislavery.org/homepage/antislavery/modern.htm (2006-08-29)

(6) Bales, Kevin (2005) Understanding Globals Slavery. A Reader, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London:University of California Press, p 57

(7) Bales, Kevin (2005), p 51

(8) See Baskakova, Marina, Tiurukanova, Elena and Abdurazakova, Dono (2005) Human Trafficking in the CIS in: Development & Transition, Vol. 2, November 2005, p 5

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