

**TRAFFICKING AND LABOUR EXPLOITATION  
OF ARMENIAN MIGRANTS**  
*A Sociological Survey*

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The views, findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the US Embassy or the OSCE Office in Yerevan.





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## ***ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS***

AMD	Armenian drams
ARS	Armenian Relief Society
ASA	Armenian Sociological Association
GoA	Government of Armenia
HRDF	Human Resource Development Foundation
IDI	In-depth interview
IOM	International Organization for Migration
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
RA	Republic of Armenia
SAM	Samardan - Center for Sociological Surveys in Istanbul
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

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## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

### **Overview of the Study**

The Armenian Sociological Association (ASA) has implemented this survey in 2004-2005. The objectives of the survey were to assess the level of awareness among different social groups in Armenian society about the phenomenon of trafficking in persons, to understand how widespread it is in Armenia and to establish which social groups are likely to become potential victims of trafficking.

In order to address the mentioned objectives, the ASA has carried out a quantitative survey of 2500 randomly selected respondents from all regions of Armenia and a qualitative survey of 132 presumed victims of labor exploitation and/or trafficking identified through employment of the “snowball method”.

### **Main Findings**

#### ***Public Awareness Survey***

- This survey shows that many Armenians are familiar with going and working abroad and aware of the potential dangers of labor migration outside of the law. Half of the respondents have been abroad themselves, a third know migrants who found jobs abroad illegally, and more than 40 % personally knew someone who experienced some form of exploitation in the context of labor migration, be it that they were paid too little or not at all, or had to work in a different job than recruited for.
- Respondents felt that Russia was the country with the highest risk potential for labor exploitation, whereas Turkey was considered the main destination country in terms of exploitation for commercial sex. Based on the assumption that labor exploitation mostly concerns men, while commercial sexual exploitation mostly concerns women, Turkey can be considered as potential risk country for migrant Armenian women and Russia for migrant Armenian men.
- At the same time, people seemed notably ignorant about the conditions and procedures for legal migration and were surprisingly eager to engage in illegal migration: 90 % of the respondents didn't seem to have a problem with engaging in it, irrespective of age, gender and education.
- According to the respondents' opinion, individual middlemen, tour agencies and recruitment agencies are the main agents involved in the illegal transfer of persons. Moreover, about 10% of the survey participants personally knew someone facilitating illegal migration and 55 respondents themselves have used the services of such mediators.
- Somewhat in contrast to the willingness to engage in illegal migration stands the resentment of the mediators by two thirds of the respondents and the suggestion that their activities should be prohibited. This statement was expressed particularly

among older people, who probably feel that mediators are specifically targeting the young generation.

- Only a quarter of respondents were familiar with the term “trafficking”. Those who were had mainly learned about it from television, which enabled them to roughly associate it with illegal transfers or persons, the forced involvement in the sex industry and other forms of exploitation. Yet, more than half also expressed eagerness to learn more about migration, which appears to be a good entry point to raise levels of awareness about the dangers of illegal migrations and trafficking in human beings.
- With insufficient information regarding trafficking as such it was not surprising that only one out of ten respondents was aware about organizations working in Armenia to protect the rights of victims of trafficking. Even less people (5,5%) were aware about organizations working in Armenia and abroad to protect the rights of women involved in prostitution. Among 26 different organizations mentioned by the respondents, the NGO Women’s Union and the State Department for Migration and Refugees were referred to most frequently.
- 48 of the 2,500 respondents have found themselves in a situation of exploitation in the process of migration, some of which may be considered as trafficking, depending on the exact circumstances of their transfer, which this study could not establish in the detailed required. Based on estimate that one million Armenians having migrated abroad in search of jobs over the past 12-14 years, it might be extrapolated that up to 20,000 persons could have faced similar problems during that period.

### ***In-depth Interviews with Presumed Victims***

- The group of in-depth interview participants mostly consisted of middle-aged men who faced various manifestations of labor exploitation while working abroad. The majority of identified victims were from Yerevan, Lori and Shirak regions.
- The United Arab Emirates and Turkey top the list of destination countries for the commercial exploitation of women, while Russia is by far the primary destination country for labor exploitation, confirming the views held by public opinion.
- The in-depth interviews show that almost a third of the respondents entered the destination countries without a valid visa. Interestingly, two thirds of them did not have a job lined up or promised in the destination countries. Almost 10% of the respondents – all women – said they were re-sold to other people
- The majority of respondents organized their trip abroad themselves or with the help of relatives, fiends and people already in the destination countries. One third had to pay for services of the mediators. Equally, a third felt deceived by the middlemen, mostly by receiving wrong information. Some of the respondents claimed the mediators have been exploiting them as workers, have offered them a different, hard job or incurred higher travel expenses than planned. About half of

these respondents were deceived by individual middle-men, others by recruitment agencies, tour agencies or marriage agencies.

- More than two thirds of the respondents experienced labor exploitation, 15% were forced into prostitution, and some 5 % suffered other kinds of bondage or abuses. While non- or underpayment appears to be widespread, half of the respondents also mentioned inhuman and degrading treatment and some 60% claim to have suffered physical or mental harm. In particular, women report to have their movement restricted and their passports taken away.
- However, interestingly, almost half of the respondents said that their rights as migrants have not been violated. Furthermore, a number of respondents said that they would be willing to return to the destination countries, indicating that they perceive their present situation worse than the previous exploitation suffered abroad. While the first statement, in fact, speaks for the lack of awareness of the migrants' rights, the second can hardly find any rational explanation.
- The vast majority (75%) of the respondents returned home without any assistance and very few (20,8%) were aware of non-governmental and international organizations who assisted victims, despite the fact that there are a number of organizations that could have support them.

#### ***Feasibility study on survey in key destination countries***

- Feasibility study on surveys in key destination countries reports on field visits assessing the options for further research on illegal migrants from Armenia (as potential victims of trafficking) in three destination countries: United Arab Emirates, Turkey and Greece. This study showed that the situation of Armenian illegal migrants including trafficked women was significantly improved from the last IOM report in 2001.
- Prostitution is a legal business in Greece and trafficking is a problem because there are victims of trafficking for the purpose of prostitution from Moldova, Russia and Belarus. But Greece does not seem to be a major sex-trafficking destination country for Armenians. Labor exploitation of Armenians does seem to be a problem in Greece.
- In the opinion of some Armenian Government officials, most of the Armenian trafficking victims are taken to the United Arab Emirates. Many of them want to go to Greece to get jobs, but in fact they end up being exploited in the UAE. There are many Armenian young women illegally engaged in prostitution in the clubs and hotels of Dubai.
- Despite the fact that Armenian sources, and the current public awareness survey, identify Turkey as one of the main destination countries for victims trafficked from Armenia, Turkish sources claim that no Armenians are among victims trafficked to Turkey. This difference challenges the accuracy of the research results. Unfortunately we can only make assumptions based on the indirect facts. The lack

of diplomatic relations between Armenia and Turkey complicates any such survey initiative. Special research under the aegis of international organizations and local research centers in Turkey is needed to make more definite conclusions.

- As a whole we can say that the attitude towards trafficking both of the authorities and of the Armenian communities of UAE, Greece and Turkey has become significantly sharpened during the last years. Armenian diplomatic missions also started exercising stricter control measures in the countries where they exist. As a result, trafficking cases have become not only hard to reveal for the investigators (as it is said - they went to a deeper “cellar”), but we believe that they also tend to decrease. At least the authorities of both Armenia and those countries are taking apparent steps towards the fight against trafficking. Public opinion from force of inertia still records high anxiety and concern about this matter.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the research, the following recommendations are made with a view to raise public awareness of the problems of trafficking and prevent illegal migration that often results in violation of the migrants’ rights in the destination countries:

- Broadcasting special weekly programs on Public TV (H1) and Public Radio to voice the issues of illegal migration and trafficking, discuss the preventative measures, and inform the audience about the entities supporting people who have found themselves in similar situations.
- The extensive use of middlemen indicates that there is a need to better regulate labor migration, and to provide more information to potential migrants on how to go and work abroad legally. In this sense, it is deemed necessary to establish a network of information centers providing employment-related information in the capital and remote regions, where citizens can receive necessary official information about work possibilities abroad.

## ***INTRODUCTION AND STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT***

This survey was implemented by the Armenian Sociological Association with the financial support of the US Embassy in Armenia and technical support from experts of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Armenia. The main aims of the survey were to assess the level of awareness among different social groups in Armenian society about the phenomenon of trafficking in persons, to understand how widespread it is in Armenia and to establish, which social groups are likely to become potential victims of trafficking. Starting in November 2004, the ASA began to survey the phenomenon of trafficking through various means.

Already in 2001, the ASA through the initiative of the International Organization for Migration in Armenia had conducted a survey aiming to reveal cases of trafficking in women and children from Armenia<sup>1</sup>. However, this was a small qualitative survey among 59 women who had returned from abroad. The survey documented the existence of trafficking as a phenomenon, but gave no indication about its scope, or the awareness about the issue among the general population. Still, thanks to this study, both Armenian society and the Government of Armenia paid more attention to the problem and began to identify solutions for combating it. Two years later, in 2003, the GoA established an Inter-Agency Commission, which initiated steps to improve the legislative framework, resulting in the inclusion of an article into the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia that provides for a stricter punishment for the organization and facilitation of trafficking in persons.

The present survey focuses on three main goals:

1. Collecting and analyzing information related to general knowledge of and awareness about exploitation of migrants and trafficking in human beings in Armenia;
2. Collecting and analyzing information about migrants who suffered exploitation and victims of trafficking who returned or were returning to Armenia.
3. Collecting and analyzing information about migration from Armenia to third countries and about the situation of Armenian illegal migrants abroad, particularly in the UAE, Turkey and Greece.

To achieve these goals, three different instruments were utilized, as described in the following three chapters:

***Chapter 1: Public Awareness Survey*** describes the findings of a sociological survey in all regions (“marzes”) of the RA among the adult population, with a total of 2,500 respondents, to collect information regarding attitudes towards migration and to assess the knowledge of the general public about the scope of this phenomenon, as well as

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<sup>1</sup> Trafficking in Women and Children from the Republic of Armenia: A Study. IOM, September 2001.

ascertaining the level of awareness and understanding of the issue of trafficking in human beings.

**Chapter 2: In-depth interviews with presumed victims** presents the results of an additional survey with 132 persons who have experienced exploitation in the process of migration or/and were trafficked. These persons were identified using the “snowball” method, whereby 48 presumed victims identified among the 2,500 strong sample group of the public awareness survey were asked to identify persons with similar experiences.

**Chapter 3: Feasibility study on surveys in key destination countries** reports on field visits assessing the options for further research on illegal migrants from Armenia (as potential victims of trafficking) in three destination countries the United Arab Emirates, Turkey and Greece.

**Concluding recommendations** are based on the findings and the conclusions made in chapters one, two and three. Each Chapter begins with an overview on the **Methodology**, followed by a compilation of the **Main Findings** and ends with a summary **Analysis and Conclusion**.

**Annex 1** and **Annex 2** contain tables referred to in Chapters 1 and 2 respectively. **Annex 3** features more detailed trip reports for the research feasibility study in Chapter 3.

The ASA carried out the fieldwork between 2 December 2004 and 31 January 2005. The interviews were conducted face-to-face in the places of residence of the respondents. The total sample size was 2,500 interviews. The interviews were conducted by experienced and well-trained interviewers and a team of supervisors. 36 interviewers were employed to conduct the field work. A total of 15% of each interviewers’ work was cross-checked. All collected questionnaires were kept on file and handed over to the US Embassy in Yerevan following the analysis of the data.

The issue of trafficking in persons is relatively new in Armenia and there are many misconceptions about the nature of the phenomenon, in particular concerning the common lack of distinction between trafficking and prostitution. Therefore, it was important to the ASA that everyone participating in the research project fully understood both the definition of trafficking in human beings according to the Palermo Protocol (see text box below) and the human rights approach to anti-trafficking work to enable the interviewers to answer questions by those interviewed. To this end, the ASA and the OSCE in Armenia organized a 2-days training, facilitated by an international OSCE Expert, during which the main issues relevant to the research were reviewed and discussed. The topics included the specific application of the trafficking definition in relation to children below the age of 18; issues pertaining to victim protection, such as the entitlement to special protection and special consideration for the rights and the dignity of victims, the principle that presumed victims should be accorded all protections until their actual status is determined, and the fact that persons may be considered trafficking victims according to the Palermo Protocol definition, regardless of whether they identify themselves as victims of trafficking or are perceived by others (including authorities).

**The Palermo Protocol** (*UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*) was adopted by the UN General Assembly in November 2000. It defines "Trafficking in persons" in its **Article 3** as follows:

( a ) "Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring 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 of 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 or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;

( b ) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph ( a ) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph ( a ) have been used;

( c ) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in persons" even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph ( a ) of this article;

( d ) "Child" shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

(See: [www.ohchr.org/english/law/protocoltraffic.htm](http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/protocoltraffic.htm))

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## ***CHAPTER 1: PUBLIC AWARENESS SURVEY***

### **1.1 Methodology**

#### ***1.1.1 Survey design***

To conduct the sociological survey, a specific questionnaire was developed by ASA experts on the basis of the results from previous similar surveys, including:

- Trafficking in Women and Children from the Republic of Armenia: A Study. IOM, September 2001.
- Victims of Trafficking in the Balkans. A study of trafficking in women and children for sexual exploitation to, through and from Balkan Region. IOM, 2001;
- Irregular Migration in Turkey. IOM, No.12, 2003;
- Who is the Next Victim? Vulnerability of Young Romanian Women to Trafficking in Human Beings. IOM, 2003.

The methodology and questionnaires for conducting the sociological survey were adopted following discussions with OSCE experts, and taking into consideration their comments and recommendations. A basic description of the survey was presented to the Inter-Agency Commission of RA on anti-trafficking, as well the NGO trafficking core group established by UNDP Armenia, during a working meeting of that group.

The questionnaire for the sociological survey reflects the broad scope of the project and consisted of two sections: The first and main section aimed at revealing levels of awareness among the general population in Armenia; the second section with additional questions aimed at obtaining more information from those interviewees, who – based on the first part of the interview – were considered by the interviewers to be potential victims of labour exploitation and/or trafficking (for details on the methodology for the in-depth interviews, **See Chapter 2, 2.1**).

#### ***1.1.2 Sampling design and description of the surveyed population***

According to the 2001 Census *de facto* population of RA is 3 002 594<sup>2</sup>, of which 66% is urban population and 34% rural population. The nationwide sociological survey was conducted among the adult population (15 - 60) which is 1 999 076 residents. For conducting the representative sociological survey ASA designed a randomized multi-stage sample with 99% confidence level and a margin of error of 1% ( $\Delta = 0.01$ ). The calculated sample size was 2,500 respondents.

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<sup>2</sup> The Results of 2001 Census of the Republic of Armenia (Figures of the Republic of Armenia). National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia. Yerevan, 2003, p. 143.

The national sample for Armenia included Yerevan and all 10 marzes (regions) of Armenia according to the administrative-territorial division. The 2,500 interviews were proportionally distributed among the 11 Primary Sampling Units based on the population of each region as shown in Table 1.

The country was then stratified according to urban/rural residence. The Republic has 914 localities: 48 urban and 867 rural settlements.

Interviews were conducted at a total of 195 sampling points in the 84 localities (20 urban and 64 rural) on the proportional basis in all 11 Marzes of RA. In every marz sampling

Marz	Number of settlements		Number of sampling points		Number of interviews		Total
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	
Yerevan	1	0	84	0	908	0	908
Aragatsotn	1	6	2	6	25	80	105
Ararat	2	10	4	10	61	149	210
Armavir	2	10	5	10	75	138	213
Gegharkunik	2	9	4	9	58	122	180
Lori	3	6	8	6	123	87	210
Kotayk	2	7	7	7	108	92	200
Shirak	2	6	9	6	135	80	215
Syunik	2	3	5	3	73	39	112
Vayots Dzor	1	2	1	2	15	30	45
Tavush	2	5	2	5	38	64	102
<b>Total</b>	20	64	131	64	1619	881	2500

points were selected randomly, with probability proportional to the size of each marzs. In each marz different types of settlements were selected, both large and medium in size, including urban and rural settlements.

The interviews were conducted face-to-face in the respondent's households. Only one member of any household was interviewed, employing a similar to “Kish grid” device

(closest future birthday) which ensures equal probability of selection for all adults in a household.

In every settlement the interviewers worked with a route selection method according to agreed starting points: in 1 point in villages and in 1-84 points in the cities (depending on the size of the city). Starting points in the villages were village council buildings, schools, ambulance or bus stops. In cities the starting points were public squares, buildings of regional administration, cinemas, and monuments. From the starting point the interviewer made his way to the nearest street (or moved according to the “star principle” in case if the starting point was a public square).

The selection of households was made in the following way: moving down the street, the interviewer selected houses in turn from the right and left side varying the floors in the building.

Within each household only one adult respondent (15–60 years of age) was selected at random. All adult members of the household were listed according to their birth dates and the person with the next birthday became the designated respondent. In case if the selected respondent was not at home, the interviewers were instructed to make two callbacks (at different times of day and different days of week) in order to complete the interview with the designated respondent.

If the respondent was not home on the interviewer's third visit (second call-back), the interviewer received appropriate follow-up instructions from the field supervisor. These instructions were not given until the call-back procedures were exhausted. Under no circumstances could the interviewer substitute the respondent with another member of the same household. If the designated respondent refused to give an interview the interviewer proceeded to the next household on the route.

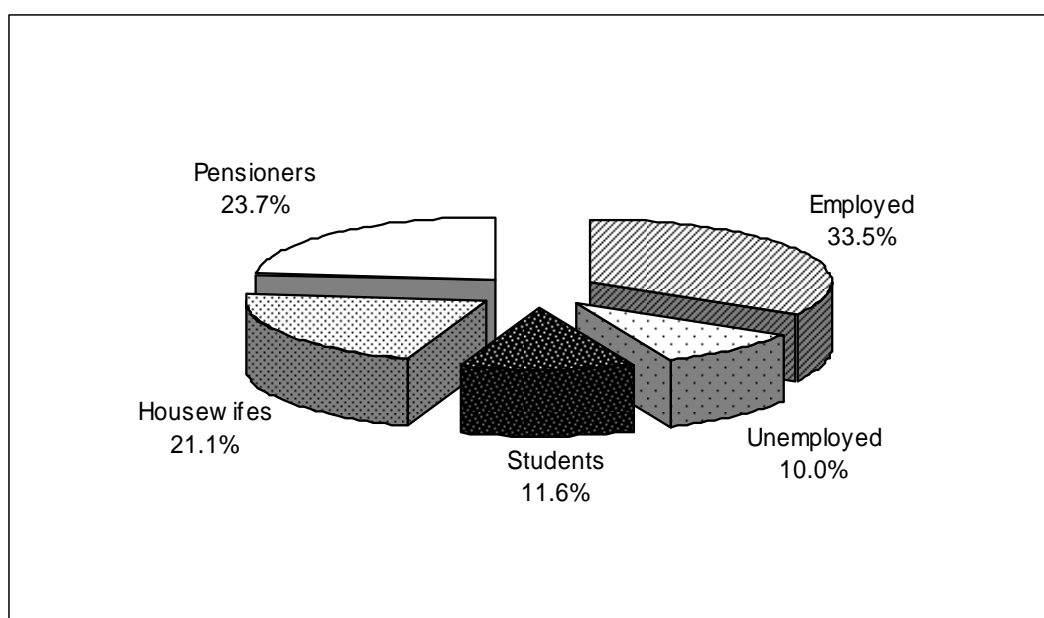
Control check on the interviewer's work were conducted randomly based on respondents' addresses and phones (if they had one) which interviewers wrote down after completing the interview. The maximum number of interviews per day was 5 for each interviewer.

Of the surveyed 2,500 respondents, 47.3% were male and 52.7% were female. 5.1% had primary, 69.1% had secondary, and 25.9% had graduate or post graduate level education.

Table 2: Age of respondents	
Age	%
15-17 years	6.4%
18-20 years	7.7%
21-25 years	14.3%
26-30 years	16.2%
31 and more years	55.4%
	100.00%

The majority of respondents were born in Armenia. Less than 5% were born in Georgia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Russia and several other countries (See Annex 1, Table 6, *Place of Origin*).

**Figure 1: Employment Status**



37.1% of respondents were employed, 22.4% were unemployed, 11 % were students, 20% - housewives, and 9.5% - pensioners. (See Annex 1, Table 7 *Current Occupation* and **Error! Reference source not found.**). It is noteworthy that three interviewed women answered that they were sex workers.

As far as the marital status of respondents is concerned the majority of them were married (62.8%), while 28% were single, 4.4% were divorced and 4.8% were widowed (See Annex 1, Table 8, *Marital Status*).

The average family income among the surveyed population was very low, with 10.7% earning less than 10,000 drams per month, 47.6% between 10,000 and 50,000 drams, 26.4% between 50,000 and 150,000 drams and 1.8% earning 150,000 and more (See Annex 1, Table 9). 58.3% of respondents have an average family income of no more than 50,000 drams (100 USD). These are certainly families below the poverty line, who could be considered as a risk group.

## Main Findings

### 1.1.3 Awareness on Migration Issues

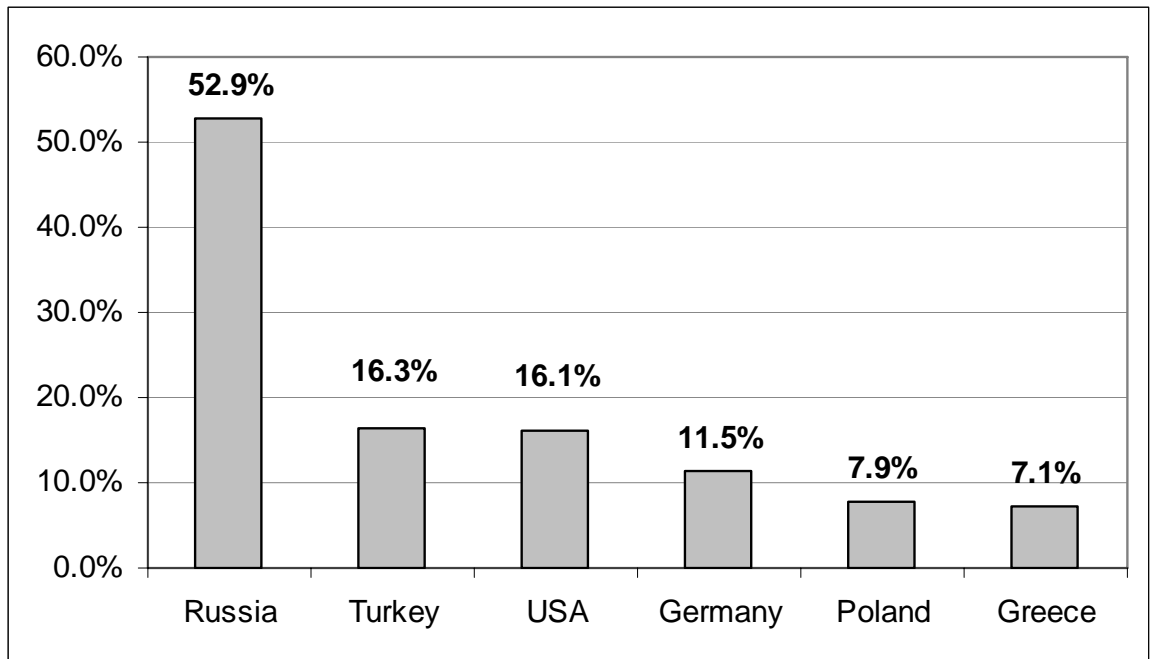
41,7% of respondents had been abroad (**See Annex 1**, Table 10). The majority of them went there as tourists (42,1%), looking for a job (34,3%) or for business (16,3%) (**See Annex 1**, Table 11). Two third of the respondents (71,1%) didn't know that to secure a job in Europe, Russia or the Middle East, it is necessary to have official documents/permits from the authorities of the respective countries (**See Annex 1**, Table 12). Information received from various sources indicates that while such documents and permits are officially required, it is possible to find a job without them. Only 44,4% of those who traveled abroad to find a job knew that an official permit is needed. Moreover, only 18,1% of the respondents knew about the procedure of getting a working visa (**See Annex 1**, Table 13) and only 45,3 % of those who had earlier gone abroad for work knew about this procedure.

The sociological survey “The Awareness of Population about Migration Related Issues” implemented by the ASA for IOM in February 2002 showed that 37.3% of the population was unaware of the fact that RA citizens could not go to any European country without a visa. It is worrying that only 10% of the respondents of our current survey think that they should travel to a foreign country legally, obtaining official documentation. The rest think that any way is possible and acceptable, including illegal ways (**See Annex 1**, Table 14). The same opinion was expressed by respondents irrespective of age, gender and education.

One third of the respondents (34,2%) know migrants, who found jobs abroad illegally (**See Annex 1**, Table 15). At the same time they are well aware that illegal migrants often have to work overtime (24,9%), are underpaid (38%), exploited by employers (17,1%), have their movement restricted (21,1%), or even have their passports taken away from them (9,2%) (**See Annex 1**, Table 16). People in such conditions, who have left for a foreign country and found a job illegally, are a risk group and could become victims of labour trafficking.

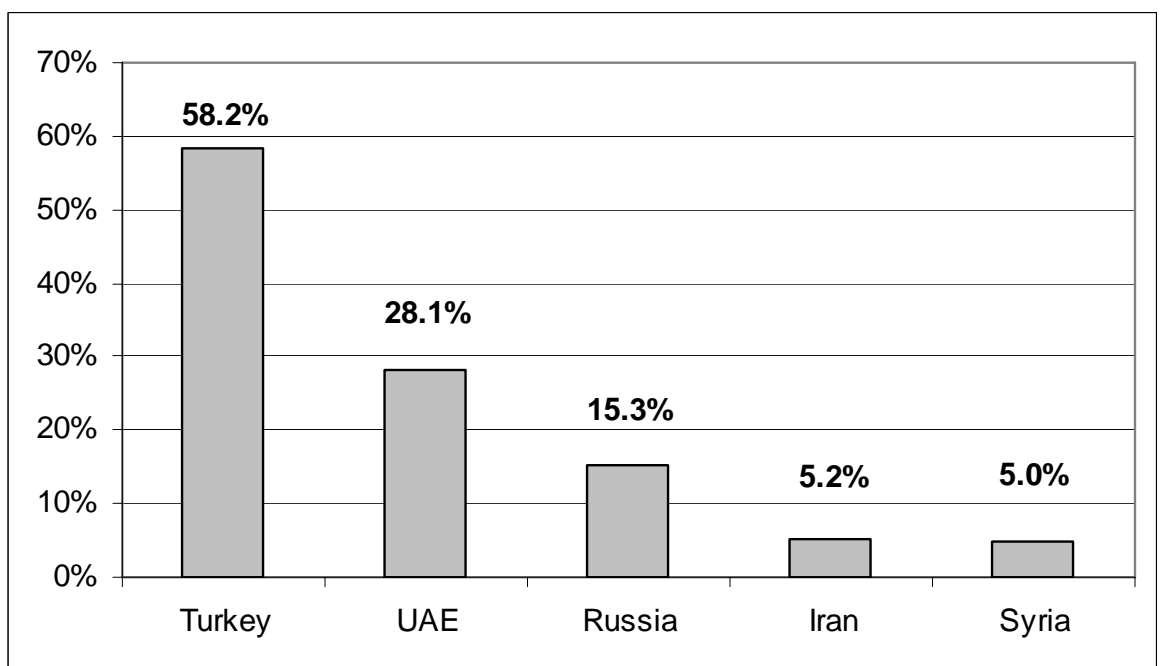
When asked in which countries Armenians would most likely face the risk of being exploited, respondents mentioned 30 countries, with Russia, Turkey, the USA, Germany, Poland and Greece referred to most often (**See Annex 1**, Table 17 and *Figure 2: Countries associated with the highest risk of labour exploitation*).

**Figure 2: Countries associated with the highest risk of labour exploitation**



The majority of respondents were aware that some Armenian Migrants were involved in the sex industry (61,8%) (See Annex 1, Table 18). The list of countries changes when respondents were asked about the main destination countries for migrants involved in the sex industry. Here, Turkey, the UAE, Russia, Iran and Syria are referred to most often of a total of 24 countries. (See Annex 1, Table 19).

**Figure 3: Countries associated with the highest risk of sexual exploitation**



A substantial number of respondents (40,9%) personally knew people who had to work without salary, or whose passports were taken away, or who were paid an amount just sufficient to cover the travel cost. Half of the respondents personally knew of people who worked abroad and who came back without money because the employer didn't pay them or paid a very small salary (50%) or were invited for a specific job, but after arrival it turned out to be a completely different job (47%) (**See Annex 1, Table 20: Personal awareness of anyone who has ever been in exploitative labour situations**)

#### ***1.1.4 Respondents directly affected by exploitation in the context of migration***

Among the 2,500 participants of the survey, 48 respondents (1,9%) stated that they had found themselves in situations of exploitation in the context of migration. (**See Annex 1, Table 21: Respondents personally affected by exploitation in the context of migration**).

All of these cases happened in the period between 1991 and 2004; a third, or 16 cases, happened between 2001 and 2004. Among the destination countries were Russia (23 respondents), Turkey (4 respondents), Iran and Ukraine (2 respondents each), and Germany, Holland, Greece and Poland (1 respondent each; 13 respondents didn't mention any country). The 48 respondents came from different regions of Armenia: Yerevan, Shirak, Kotayk and Gegharkunik (for details on locations see **See Annex 1, Table 35: Home towns and villages of respondents who identified themselves as exploited in the context of migration**)

Of the 33 of these respondents stated to have been subjected to labour exploitation, four claimed they had been forced into prostitution, and eleven others claimed to have been subjected to other kind of bondage or abuse (**See Annex 1, Table 21: Respondents personally affected by exploitation in the context of migration**). 23 of them were working without being paid. One respondent had the passport taken away. Three people were promised one job before leaving for the host country, and were forced to do a completely different job upon arrival (**See Annex 1, Table 22: Details of experienced exploitation in the context of migration**). Eleven of them returned home without money, because the employers failed to pay them.

#### ***1.1.5 Mediators***

Transfers abroad are often organized by private mediators or organizations. According to the respondents individual middle men (23,3%), tour agencies (20%) and recruitment agencies (15,8%) are the main agents involved in the illegal transfer of persons, followed by relatives, acquaintances, and friends (12%) and people who are already working abroad (9,8%) (**See Annex 1, Table 23: Middle-men or mediators helping people to migrate illegally from the country for details**).

261 respondents (10,4%) mentioned that they personally knew such mediators (**See Annex 1, Table 24: Personal awareness of such mediators**), and 55 of them used the services of mediators (**See Annex 1, Table 25: Use of such mediators**), across age groups, gender and levels of education. Those who had been abroad knew mediators more often (18,3%) than those

who had not been abroad (4,8%). Furthermore, 25,1% of those who knew mediators and had been abroad had actually used their services.

### **1.1.6 Attitudes**

The attitude towards mediators organizing illegal migration from Armenia is generally negative. 73,5% of the respondents think that the mediators' illegal activities should be prohibited (See Annex 1, Table 26: *Perception of mediators (organizations and individuals) organizing illegal migration from Armenia*). Women judge them slightly more negatively (75,6%) than men (71,2%), and more adults think negatively about them (77,2%) than do young people in the age group 15-17 (64,8%). This is because men and young people as respondents who are the principal labor force, consider themselves as potential clients of mediators.

68,5% of women returning to Armenia from foreign countries where they were involved in the so-called "sex industry" blame mediators for their fate. (See Annex 1, Table 27: *Perception of women returning to Armenia who worked in the sex industry*). The attitude towards them is slightly less negative among respondents with higher education (62,7%) than respondents with secondary education (70,2%) as well as among women (66,7%) in comparison to men (70,4%).

### **1.1.7 Protection organizations**

A very small percentage of respondents (10%) was aware about organizations working in Armenia to protect the rights of victims of trafficking (See Annex 1, Table 28: *Awareness of any organizations in Armenia (governmental or non-governmental) protecting basic human rights*). Even less people (5,5%) were aware about organizations working in Armenia and abroad to protect the rights of women involved in prostitution. The respondents mentioned 26 different organizations dealing with such issues. Among the organizations mentioned most often were the NGO Women's Union (13,5%), the State Department for Migration and Refugees (12,5%), Armenian Embassies (7,0%), the Police (6,3%), and Human Rights protection organizations (6,3%) (See Annex 1, Table 29: *Known Organizations*).

If we group the mentioned 26 organizations by sectors, State bodies (42,1%) and NGOs (32,5%) are mentioned most, followed by UN and international organizations (13,7%), political parties (4,4%), the Office of the Ombudsmen of the RA (2,6%) and the church (0,9%).

### **1.1.8 Sources of Information**

About one fourth of the respondents (23,3%) were familiar with the term "trafficking" (See Annex 1, Table 30: *Familiarity with the term "trafficking"*). The majority of them learned about the term from television (74,9%) or newspapers (20,4%) (See Annex 1, Table 31: *The source of knowledge of the term "trafficking"*).

Respondents associated the term “trafficking” with the illegal transfer of persons (61,2%), the forced involvement in the sex industry (44,5%) or other forms of exploitation (20,6%). (See Annex 1, Table 32: Definition of “Trafficking”).

The majority of respondents (56,1%) wanted to receive more information about migration processes (See Annex 1, Table 33: *Wish to receive more information about legal labour migration or other types of migration*), with a particular interest in employment in foreign countries (67,3%), visa regimes (38,2%), living conditions in foreign countries (36,2%), conditions of return (18,4%), and crossing of borders (14,0%) (See Annex 1, Table 34: *Kind of information that is needed on migration*).

## Analysis and Conclusions

The survey shows that many Armenians are familiar with traveling and working abroad and are aware of the potential dangers of labour migration outside the law. Half of the respondents have been abroad themselves, a third know migrants who found jobs abroad illegally, and more than 40 % personally knew someone who experienced some form of exploitation in the context of labour migration, be it that they were paid too little or not at all, or had to work in a different job than recruited for.

Respondents felt that Russia was the country with the highest risk potential for labour exploitation, whereas Turkey was considered the main destination country of exploitation for commercial sex. Based on the assumption that labour exploitation mostly concerns men, while commercial sexual exploitation mostly concerns women, Turkey can be considered as a potential risk country for migrant Armenian women and Russia for migrant Armenian men.

At the same time, people seem remarkably ignorant about the conditions and procedures of legal migration and they are surprisingly eager to engage in illegal migration: 90 % of the respondents don't seem to have a problem with engaging in it, irrespective of age, gender and education. And, more than 10% personally knew someone who is facilitating illegal migration – slightly more than those aware of organizations who assist victims of exploitation.

Somewhat in contrast to the willingness to engage in illegal migration stands the resentment toward the mediators by two thirds of the respondents and the suggestion that their activities should be prohibited, particularly among older people, who probably feel that mediators are specifically targeting the young generation. On the other hand the figures also tell us that more than a third of young people between the ages of 15 and 17 seem to have no problem with mediators and their business. Also, respondents are well aware that some Armenian women are working in the sex industry, but in the majority do not perceive them as victims.

Only a quarter of the respondents were familiar with the term “trafficking”. Those who were had mainly learned about it from television, which enabled them to roughly associate it with illegal transfers or persons, the forced involvement in the sex industry and other forms of exploitation. Yet, more than half also expressed eagerness to learn more about

migration, which appears to be a good entry point to raise levels of awareness about the dangers of illegal migration and trafficking in human beings.

Illegal employment abroad appears to be the norm, rather than the exception. It seems that people don't like the terms and conditions under which migration takes place, but they have learned to accept them. People prepared to live and work in such conditions in a foreign country, in a sphere not governed by the rule of law, are for obvious reasons at risk to become victims of exploitation and trafficking.

48 of the 2,500 respondents have found themselves in situations of exploitation in the process of migration, some of which may be considered as trafficking depending on the exact circumstances of their transfer, which this study could not establish in the detailed required. If we can extrapolate on the bases of number of adult population (approximately 2 million people), the ratio of 1.9% would mean 38,000 people. From the another hand on the basis of the figure of one million Armenians having migrated abroad in search of jobs over the past 12-14 years<sup>3</sup>, this ratio could be calculated of the identified 48 victims to the total number of respondents who have worked abroad. As per the results of the survey (see **Annex 1, Table 11**), 358 out of 2500 respondents have been abroad with an intention to work. 48 of them being subjected to various types of exploitation that means 13% of this group. This means that about 130,000 from 1 million Armenian labor migrants, who have emigrated in the past 10-15 years and have either returned to Armenia or are still abroad, could have encountered similar problems. This is a very substantial number, which warrants the attention and action of both civil society and the government in Armenia.

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<sup>3</sup> Poghosyan G. Migration Processes in Armenia. Second edition, Yerevan, 2003.

## **CHAPTER 2: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH PRESUMED VICTIMS**

### **2.1 Methodology**

To obtain a better understanding about the conditions faced by Armenians who were exploited as migrants or have been trafficked, the ASA conducted the in-depth interviews with a total of 132 presumed victims of exploitation and trafficking. The main objective of the IDI survey was to collect information about victims of trafficking. However, when designing the questionnaire, the ASA was aware of the difficulties that interviewers would likely encounter when trying to reach victims of trafficking. We were also aware that the main goal of the project itself, to find out more about the scope and prevalence of trafficking in human beings in and from Armenia, might be difficult to achieve. It was likely that establishing direct contact and conducting interviews with victims of trafficking on the scale required for the project might be almost impossible. Problems with accessing victims willing to take part in the survey were two fold. Firstly, the organizations dealing with anti-trafficking are not in direct contact with many victims and can not easily access them; and, secondly, even those trafficked persons who are found and approached might be unwilling to take part in the survey.

To access the additional interviewees for these in-depth interviews, the so called “snowball” sampling method was used. The starting point was the initial sample of 48 respondents identified in the course of the Public Awareness Survey described in Chapter 1, who had considered themselves to be victims of labour exploitation and/or trafficking. Each of them was asked to name all persons they knew who had similar experiences as victims of exploitation while being a migrant labourer, or as victims of trafficking. The named presumed victims were then asked to name individuals with similar experiences, and so on. In total, 132 additional presumed victims of exploitative labour migration and trafficking were identified and subsequently interviewed this way. For conducting these interviews experienced members of several NGOs were selected, including “Hope and Help”, “UMCOR” and “Human Rights Protection Fund after Sakharov”.

In total the ASA conducted in-depth interviews in 9 cities and 4 villages. The majority of respondents were from Yerevan, Lori and Shirak regions. Of the 132 participants in the in-depth interviews, 58 were in Yerevan, 27 in Vanadzor, 18 in Gyumri, 10 in Abovyan and the remaining 19 in Etchmiadzin, Stepanavan, Spitak and Ijevan, as well as 4 villages, Shirakamut, Margahovit, Tchotchkan and Bazum (See Annex 2, *Table 36: Locations of in-depth interviews*). They all had been abroad, most of them (86,3%) in the period between 1999 and 2004. The vast majority of them (92,4%) had gone abroad in search of employment.

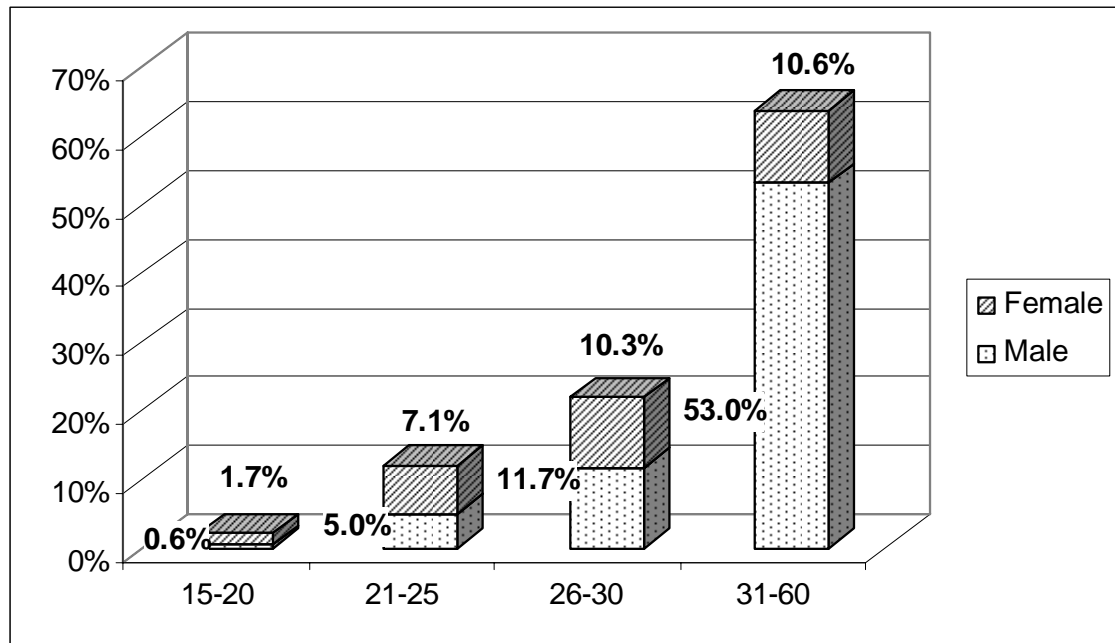
Of the 48 respondents identified as victims in the course of the Public Awareness Survey, 10 were from Yerevan, 7 from Gyumri, 6 from Hrazdan, 4 from Vanadzor, 4 from Vardenis, 2 from Abovyan, 2 from village Litcq and one each from the 13 other locations (for details on locations **See Annex 1, Table 35: Home towns and villages of respondents who identified themselves as exploited in the context of migration**)

## 2.2 Main findings

### 2.2.1 Gender and age

Of the 132 respondents, 66,7 % were men, 33,3 % were women. As figure 5 shows, more than half of the respondents were middle aged men, while the majority of women were under 30.

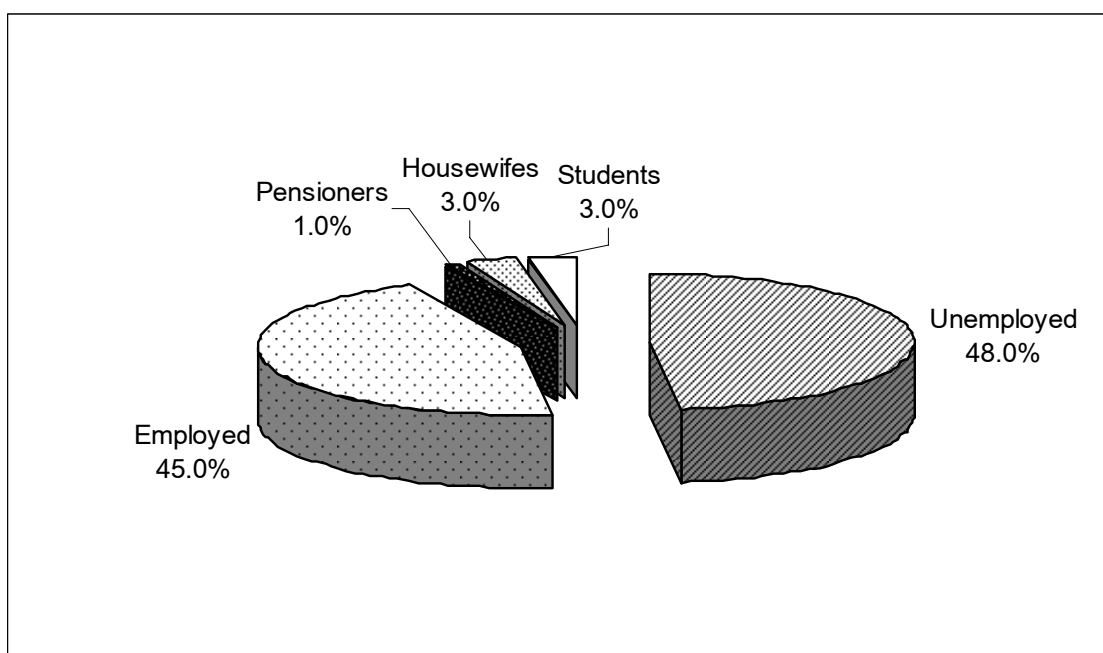
**Figure 4: Gender and age ratio of participants in the in-depth interviews**



### 2.2.2 Education and employment status

Two third of respondents had secondary education, and one third had higher or incomplete higher education; among women, 80% had secondary education and only 16,4% had higher education. Almost half of the respondents (47,0%) were unemployed at the time of the interview, 12,1% were white collar workers, 15,9% had their own business and 12,1% were blue collars workers (See Annex 2, Table 39: Current occupation).

**Figure 5: Structure of employment among respondents in the in-depth interviews**



The percentage of unemployed among IDI respondents (48,0%) as shown on Figure 5, Structure of employment among respondents in the in depth-interview, is two times higher than among surveyed general population (22,4%). The percentage of housewives, students and pensioners is several times less (Compare with **Error! Reference source not found.**). Many respondents of this group have their own business (15,9%). The percentage of respondents who had their own business in the survey of general population did not exceed 5%. It is clear that among IDI respondents there are more unemployed and those who have their own business or, in other words, people who do not have a regular job in Armenia and who are going abroad looking for a job or for doing business and who face risky situations there.

The comparison of the average monthly income of the surveyed general population and IDI respondents is presented in the table below.

Income in AMD	General population survey	IDI
Less than 10 000 drams	10,7 %	7,6 %
10 000 – 50 000 drams	47,6 %	53,7 %
50 000 – 150 000 drams	26,4 %	15,1 %
150 000 drams and more	1,8 %	3,1 %
No answer	13,5 %	20,5 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100,0 %</b>	<b>100,0 %</b>

Table 3 shows that in the group of IDI respondents the percentage of people with low (up to 10 000 drams) income is less than among the surveyed general population, and the percentage of people with income of 150 000 drams and more is somewhat higher.

### 2.2.3 *Marriage status and health*

It is worth mentioning that 62,9% of IDI respondents were married and this number is the same as it was in the sample of surveyed general population (62,8%), but the number of divorced (11,4%) is about three times more than in the sample for the general population (4,2%).

The majority of men (85,2%) were married and only 24,3% of women were married. The majority of women were divorced (41%), or single (26,1%). Among men only one person was divorced (0,8%). This suggests that men are looking for jobs abroad to earn money for their families. Single and divorced women need to earn income take care of themselves by going abroad.

There were also differences in the health condition. In the survey of the general population, about 96,8 % mentioned that they were healthy and had no health problems at the moment. In the IDI survey 84,1% mentioned that they were healthy. The number of healthy people in this group is 12,7% less.

### 2.2.4 *Destination countries*

The primary destination countries for commercial sexual exploitation of Armenian women were in the United Arab Emirates and Turkey. 40,7% of women who were forced into prostitution (according to the interview), had been in Turkey, and 44,4% in the United Arab Emirates (**See below**).

The primary destination country for labour exploitation was Russia. 58,1% of all respondents had been in Russia and most were middle aged men.

	<b>Country</b>	<b>Labour exploitation</b>	<b>Prostitution</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Russia	68	---	68
2	Iran	1	1	2
3	Turkey	7	9	16
4	Germany	2	---	2
5	Greece	2	---	2
6	Poland	3	---	3
7	Ukraine	3	---	3
8	Turkmenistan	1	---	1

<b>Table 4: Occurrence of labour exploitation and prostitution according to respondents, by country</b>				
	<b>Country</b>	<b>Labour exploitation</b>	<b>Prostitution</b>	<b>Total</b>
9	Syria	---	1	1
10	Kazakhstan	2	---	2
11	Thailand	1	---	1
12	Belgium	1	---	1
13	USA	1	---	1
14	UAE	2	12	14
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>11717</b>

### ***2.2.5 Modalities of transfers, smuggling and migration***

Prior to departure to the destination countries, 31 people (23,4%) didn't have entry visas to those countries and 8 people (6,1%) didn't know about the visa requirement (**See Annex 2** , *Table 40: Did you have a valid visa for the country of destination?*). The majority of them (96 people, 72,6%), didn't have any written or verbal preliminary agreement for working in that particular country (**See Annex 2** , *Table 41: Did you have an arrangement in the destination country?*). 19,7% of them left for the destination country not directly, but through a transit country (usually through Russia) (**See Annex 2** , *Table 42: Did you go there directly, or via another country?*). Fifteen of those interviewed were re-sold to other people (**See Annex 2** , *Table 43: Were you sold to another person?*).

Two respondents expressed their willingness to return to the same country, while three others said they would consider it at a later stage. In general 42 (31,8%) of those interviewed expressed willingness to go again to the same country (**See Annex 2** , *Table 45: Will you go again to the same country that you were in?*). Out of 23 women involved in prostitution, two expressed willingness to return and three of them said that they would think about it.

### ***2.2.6 Mediators and deception***

66 (50,0%) of the 132 respondents knew mediators and used their services for traveling to the foreign country (**See Annex 2** , *Table 51: If you know such mediators, have you ever used their services?*).

When asked who had organized the trip, respondents mentioned tour agencies (6,8%), private mediators (12,1%), recruitment and marriage agencies (4,6%), relatives, friends (26,5%), or people who were already working abroad (6,1%). The remaining 46,2% had organized the trips on their own (**See Annex 2** , *Table 52: Who organized your trip?*).

About the third of respondents (32,6%) paid money to the mediators for travel (See Annex 2 , Table 53: *Did you have to pay the recruiter to go abroad?*). 32 people borrowed money and were subsequently put in debt, 11 respondents, according to their accounts were sold (See Annex 2 , Table 54: *Did it put you in debt or make you sell assets?*).

35,6% of the respondents mentioned that they were deceived by middlemen who arranged their trip abroad (See Annex 2 , Table 55: *Have you been deceived by middlemen who arranged for your trip abroad?*). Some of them were deceived by individual middle-men (50,5%), others by recruitment agencies (21,3%), tour agencies (14,1%) or marriage agencies (14,1%).

Respondents said that mediators deceived them by giving wrong information (61,7%), exploiting them as workers (8,5%), offering a different, hard job (2,1%) and underpaying (12,8%) (See Annex 2, Table 56: *If you have been deceived by middlemen, in what way?*)

According to the respondents, wrong information was usually provided by tour agencies (38,4%), individual middle-men (36,1%) or recruitment agencies (26,2%). Cases of labour exploitation usually occurred when the travel was organized by individual middle-men (51,4%), recruitment agencies (32,8%) or marriage agencies (15,3%). On the other hand, respondents faced exploitative situations more often when they organized their trip on their own or with the support of friends, relatives and people already working abroad. This means that people lack enough and satisfactory information about living and working conditions abroad.

### ***2.2.7 Exploitation and abuse respondents were subjected to***

Of the 132 respondents, two thirds (71,2% or 94 respondents) experienced labour exploitation, 17,4% (23 respondents) were subjected to prostitution, 5.3% (7 respondents) suffered other kinds of bondage or abuses and 6% (8 respondents) did not answered (See Annex 2 , Table 37: *In practice (if you found yourself in trouble) did it subject you to*). 56,1% of respondents mentioned that employers did not pay for the job or paid only part of what was owed. (See Annex 2 , Table 38: *Have you been deceived by employers or a spouse (if married abroad)? In what way?* ).

The majority of respondents complained about bad living and working conditions. 63,6% of the survey participants were underpaid, 43,9% were required to work overtime. 34,1% mentioned physical and psychological abuse as common practice. 22,7% of them stated their movement was restricted, 20,5% said that passport was taken away and 15,9% had no freedom to refuse the clients.<sup>4</sup> (See Annex 2 , Table 38: *Have you been deceived by employers or a spouse (if married abroad)? In what way?* ).

The answers to this question differ depending on the respondents' gender.

<b>Table 5: Satisfaction of respondents with labour conditions</b>
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<sup>4</sup> Multiple responses were allowed to this question.

	<b>Working conditions</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
1	Satisfactory	20,8	9,1
2	Passport was taken away	4,8	54,5
3	Restricted movement	9,6	52,7
4	Long working day	41,6	34,5
5	Physical and psychological abuse	23,2	36,4
6	Underpayment	69,6	40,0
7	No freedom to refuse clients	0,8	38,2

Half the respondents said that their rights as migrants had been violated, with 31,1% saying they had been violated often and 14,4% saying they had been violated sometimes. (See Annex 2 , Table 57: Have your rights as a migrant ever been violated?). Some referred to being forced to have unprotected sex (30,0% or 18 female respondents of the 60 whose rights were violated), while others felt that the conditions under which they were forced to work were similar to slavery (38,3%). More than half of the respondents (58,3%) mentioned inhuman and degrading treatment (See Annex 2,) As a result of this, 72, 0% of them suffered physical or mental harm (See Annex 2 , Table 59: Have you suffered any physical or mental harm as a result from mistreatment?)

### ***2.2.8 Involvement in commercial sex***

Half of the respondents (53,8%) knew cases when women invited to work in foreign countries were finally involved in commercial sex (See Annex 2 , Table 46: Do you know any cases when women were invited to work as dancers, waitresses, babysitters, nurses etc., but finally were forced to engage in commercial sex?).

18,2% of them mentioned that they knew cases when teenagers or men (12,1 %) were involved in forced prostitution (See Annex 2 , Table 47: Do you know any cases when men were forced and exploited, or were engaged in commercial sex? and Table 48: Do you know any cases when children were forced and exploited, or were engaged in commercial sex?).

### ***2.2.9 Familiarity with “trafficking”***

31,8% of respondents said they were familiar with the term “trafficking” (See Annex 2 , Table 49: Are you familiar with the term “Trafficking”?). More women were familiar with it (50,9%) than men (34,4%) and more young people (18-25 age group, 66,7%) than middle aged people (35,3%).

### **2.2.10 Return home**

The majority of the respondents returned home by their own means (77,3%). Others returned with the support of the local police (7,6%), by the assistance of organizers (4,4%) or Embassies (1,5%) (See Annex 2 , Table 60: *How did you return to homeland?*). Out of 132 respondents only 12 applied to Armenian missions abroad for support and only 7 of these received any support (See Annex 2 , Table 61: *Have you ever personally sought the help of an Armenian mission abroad?* and Table 62: *If you have sought the help of an Armenian mission abroad, did you receive help?*). Others refused assistance from the Armenian missions or did not have the opportunity to contact them (See Annex 2 , Table 63: *If you did not receive help from an Armenian mission abroad, why not?*).

Only a small minority of respondents (12,1%) was aware of the existence of non-governmental and international organizations abroad with a mission to help persons who suffered violence (See Annex 2 , Table 64: *Do you know any organization abroad with the mission to help persons who suffered violence?*).

## **2.3 Analysis and Conclusions**

The results of the in-depth interviews indicate that men are more concerned about exploitation in the context of migration than women, with middle aged men representing the biggest group. The general education background of the 132 respondents was relatively high. The proportion of unemployed was relatively high with almost half the respondents being without a job at the time of the interview.

The United Arab Emirates and Turkey top the list of destination countries for the commercial exploitation of women, while Russia is by far the primary destination country for labour exploitation, confirming the views held by public opinion as described in Chapter 1.

The in-depth interviews show that almost a third of the respondents entered the destination countries without a valid visa. Interestingly, two thirds of them did not have a job lined up or promised in the destination countries. Almost 18% of the respondents (all of them women for a total of 25% percent of the female respondents) said they were re-sold to other people

The majority of respondents organized their trip aboard themselves or with the help of relatives, fiends and people already in the destination countries, a third had to pay to mediators. A third felt deceived by the middlemen, mostly by receiving wrong information. The extensive use of middlemen indicates that there is a need to better regulate labour migration, and to provide more information to potential migrants on how to travel and work abroad legally.

More than two thirds of the respondents experienced labour exploitation, 17,4% were forced into prostitution, and 5,3 % suffered other kinds of bondage or abuses. While non- or underpayment appears to be widespread, half of the respondents also mentioned inhuman and degrading treatment and some 72,0% claim to have suffered physical or

mental harm. In particular, women reported having their movement restricted and their passports taken away.

Interestingly, a number of respondents (15 from 48) said that they would be willing return to the destination countries, indicating that they perceive their present situation as worse than the previous exploitation suffered aboard.

While more than half the respondents said that their rights as migrants were violated, almost half said that that had not been the case. This could be interpreted as unawareness of their rights.

The majority of respondents knew cases in which women invited to work in foreign countries became involved in commercial sex. Some respondents also knew of teenagers or men so involved. Almost 31,8% were familiar with the term “trafficking”, with women and younger people being generally better informed, perhaps because of better access to television, which was shown to be the primary source of information on the issue.

The vast majority of the respondents returned home without any assistance and only very few were aware of non-governmental and international organizations who assisted victims, despite the fact that there are a number of organizations that could have supported them.

Overall, the 132 in-depth interviews were not set up in a way that would determine if an individual respondent qualifies as a trafficking victim. Given the complexity of the trafficking definition and the importance of the individual circumstances, such a status determination can not be expected from this type of research. However, the research does document that migrants from Armenia are being deceived about opportunities by middlemen on a substantial scale, that migrants have their freedom restricted and their passports taken away, and that many suffer physical and mental abuse. On this background some of the interviewed victims would certainly qualify as trafficking victims.

## ***CHAPTER 3: FEASIBILITY STUDY ON SURVEYS IN KEY DESTINATION COUNTRIES***

### **3.1 Methodology**

In order to assess the feasibility of further research in three key destination countries, the United Arab Emirates, Greece and Turkey, three groups of two members each traveled to these countries. In each group one of the group members was a representative of the Armenian Sociological Association, and the other a representative of IOM or OSCE in Armenia. The main task of these missions was to prepare for case studies to be conducted and to obtain updated information on the situation of illegal migration of Armenians to these countries, concentrating on cases of trafficking. Each of the three missions had meetings with state officials, international organizations, members of the Armenian community abroad and local organizations. With the help of local NGOs involved in anti-trafficking, migration and human rights-related activities, as well as organizations and representatives of the Armenian community, the three missions identified options for conducting interviews with presumed and/or potential victims of trafficking from Armenia.

Interviews in the United Arab Emirates were to be conducted jointly by the management of the Department of Sociological Surveys of Sharja American University and a number of Armenian students. In Greece the survey was conducted with the support of the Armenian Embassy and a representative of the Armenian community in Athens. In Turkey the survey was to be conducted by the SAM - Center for Sociological Surveys, in cooperation with “Human Recourse Development Foundation” NGO and local Armenians from Istanbul.

### **3.2 Main findings**

#### ***3.2.1 The United Arab Emirates***

On April 16 to 22, 2005, two members of the ASA visited the UAE to identify the existing research capacities and establish grounds for conducting the research on the situation of victims of trafficking from Armenia. As a result of negotiations with the officials and NGO representatives, the Department of Graduate Studies and Research of the American University in Sharjah (AUS) was identified as the institution which could conduct the research. The AUS agreed to identify a small group of graduate students to conduct the research. However, while looking for people to support the survey, the visitors surprisingly discovered that the leaders of the Armenian community were the most reluctant party to appreciate the ASA’s undertaking and contribute to it. Although the visitors were able to identify the counterpart institutional capacity to conduct the research, the outreach and translation support to the research team still had to be negotiated with the Armenian community.

According to information from the Consul of the RA in the UAE years ago there were many cases of trafficking known and discussed among the Armenians living in the UAE.

But now the situation of trafficked women has changed significantly, law enforcement is becoming increasingly vigilant, more checks are conducted and less cases are being reported and discussed. Khaled Qadir, the Representative of the International Organization for Migration in the UAE, mentioned that the sex business is thriving in Dubai and the traffickers are becoming more sophisticated in their methods and ways of luring people into the sex slavery.

During the conversations in the Cyclone Club (one of the notorious places of sex industry in Dubai) with several Russian and Armenian women, it was learned that in order to renew their visas, the migrant women usually travel to Iran and come back in a small airplane. It was not easy to find out more, as the women were instructed not to maintain any unusual conversation with visitors.

Mushegh Bedirian the Deputy Chairman of the Armenian Community Council informed us that a decision was made by the Council not to support the ASA in conducting the survey and he stated that this was a political decision made by the Council as the elected self-governing body and nobody from the community was allowed to take part in the research and help ASA in any way. He mentioned that there was research conducted recently by two journalists from Armenia, and that their community was disappointed by the resulting disrespectful and inadequate publications. Arshak Poladian, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Armenia to the United Arab Emirates confirmed that the community was really discontented with the recent publications and it would be difficult to get their support at least at the moment.

### ***3.2.2 Greece***

On April 29 to May 6, 2005, two specialists of the ASA went to Athens to identify the existing research capacities and establish grounds for studying the trafficking-related situation of the Armenian citizens in the Greece.

As a result of negotiations with the officials, universities and NGO representatives, the three potential contact or “implementing” points for conducting the local survey were identified:

1. The Armenian Relief Society (ARS) office in Athens
2. Armenian students in Athens
3. The Armenian Embassy staff members

Upon return the ASA’s visitors contacted both the ARS office and the Armenian Embassy in Greece, thanking them for the meetings and reiterating the willingness for and terms of further cooperation.

The ARS Yerevan office will be contacted again, mainly for discussing the possibility of involving the ARS Greece office in the North of the country (where the majority of Armenian emigrants reside) in interviewing Armenians and filling out the ASA questionnaire.

of the ASA realize the productivity of the trip depends a lot on the follow-up activities in Greece, regular and continuous contacts should be made with the potential contact points, to ensure a successful outcome. None of the contacted organizations, and not even IOM, knew about any local NGOs dealing with trafficking in Greece. This narrows the circle of the potential counterparts and requires ASA to mobilize at least one or two of the potential implementing points mentioned above.

The ASA team saw many Georgian and Russian women in Athens. The Georgians were involved mostly in trade, while Russians seemed to make money taking care of the elderly and cleaning houses. There was a special place not far from one of the central squares of the city where several notices in Russian informed about job opportunities for Russian speaking women.

The Consul of the Armenian Embassy in Greece briefed on the current immigration situation in Greece. There are about 45 thousand Armenian citizens in Greece, about 6 thousand of them in Athens. There are many illegal Armenian migrants in Greece who agree to do anything for very low payment. Armenian citizens approach the Embassy for lost documents or other related issues, but more often the Greek Police contact the Embassy for deportation cases. There are 1-2 deportation cases per week. Almost all the deported Armenians are men. They do either construction or other casual work, mostly in Saloniki and in other Northern areas of Greece. When Police find them, they are taken to the Armenian Embassy for the arrangement of the necessary documentation for deportation. According to the Armenian Embassy, there have not been any complaints to the Embassy from Armenians residing in Greece. The number of Armenian migrants in Greece has gone down recently, so emigration of Armenians to this country is not as active as it used to be years ago. That's because many of them realize it's not worth coming here as the chances for finding jobs are minimal. Every Friday (Yerevan - Athens flight days) 1-2 Armenians are returned from the Athens Airport, without even entering the country.

As for trafficking cases, there are many victims from Moldova, Russia, Belarus, but the Consul hadn't heard of any Armenians. To his knowledge, most of the Armenian trafficking victims are taken to the United Arab Emirates. Many of them are cheated and told that they will go to Greece to get jobs, but in fact they end up being exploited in the UAE. Prostitution is legal in Greece, but given the current picture with foreign sex-workers in this country, trafficking is a problem here.

Mr. Daniel Esdras, Head of IOM Mission in Greece also mentioned that labour exploitation of Armenians seemed to be more of a problem in Greece than sex trafficking. He has interviewed and talked to more than 300 victims of trafficking in Greece but none of them were Armenians.

ARS in Athens acts as a "recruitment office" for Armenians and many Armenians are assisted in finding jobs through the ARS. The ARS staff informed us that they had assisted many Armenian women in finding jobs in Greece and had never received any complaints of exploitation. They agreed that there definitely were cases of exploitation but not involving those who got jobs through the ARS office. Some Armenian women assisted by the ARS have re-approached the office asking to find them another job, as the current one was very difficult and/or underpaid.

### **3.2.3 Turkey**

The objective of the visit of two members of ASA from April 8 to 14, 2005 to Turkey was to ensure establishment of all necessary conditions for implementation of research in Istanbul for the purpose of evaluating the situation of Armenian illegal migrants/victims of trafficking.

As an outcome of the visit the following results were achieved:

- Contacts and working relations established with IOM Istanbul, an NGO, the University community, the Armenian community of Istanbul and a Sociological agency, which can be used beyond the present project.
- Support of all the mentioned institutions and agencies obtained for the successful completion of the project.
- A coordinating agency (HRDF), interviewers and supporting parties (SAM, Dr. Ferhat Kentel, IOM, Armenian newspaper “Marmar” in Istanbul) identified for implementation of the research.
- Support of the Armenian community obtained in helping interviewers to locate Armenian victims.
- Names and phone numbers of five suspected victims of trafficking obtained.

Notwithstanding all the efforts of the Armenian visitors, it was hard to find Armenian-speaking interviewers willing to participate in the research. Those found are young and lack experience. The security of the interviewers is another concern given the hidden character of the phenomenon and its presumed organized character which means that victims may be under vigilant control and attempts at reaching out to them was dangerous for interviewers.

Budgetary limitation was another serious concern. SAM is currently conducting a research for IOM Ankara and charging USD 100 for each interview. Nonetheless, they expressed readiness to provide tapes, recorders, and help finding interviewers and in training them. It was felt that the success of the research would be guaranteed if a professional sociological agency like SAM were subcontracted to conduct the interviews.

It was pointed out that the “snowball” methodology would be utilized to interview respondents. Each interview would be last an hour or an hour and a half. Interviewers would be Armenians from the local Armenian community (students, journalists, sociologists). Interviews would be conducted in Armenian.

It was decided that there would be one coordinating agency, ideally an NGO, responsible for supervising the interviewers, coordinating the process and sending the questionnaires and/or tapes to ASA and about five interviewers who would be responsible for interviewing about 10 respondents each. It was acknowledged by all parties that it may be

difficult to find respondents, especially taking into account that no Turkish trafficking-related report mentions Armenians among victims trafficked to Turkey.

Ms. Berna Eren the head of HRDF presented the counter-trafficking activities implemented by her organization. HRDF closely cooperates with the police and conducts training courses for the police, gendarmes, district attorneys, and judges. Ms. Eren stated that it will be difficult to find victims, especially Armenian victims. Nevertheless she was very positive and agreed to act as coordinator for the research work.

IOM Istanbul has funding from USAID to organize return of identified victims of trafficking. According to IOM Ankara, Moldova is the main source country for victims trafficked to Turkey. No Armenians have been identified in the 2003 IOM Turkey report, nor have there been any Armenian victims among the 55 victims returned to their home countries since January 2005 and before.

Russian Consul Mr. Yurovski stated that although there is no official agreement between the Russian and Armenian governments, the Russian Consulate in Istanbul assists the Armenian citizens when they apply to the Consulate. Forty Armenian citizens applied for assistance in 2004 and 36 in 2003 mainly with lost passports and were issued laissez-passers by the Consulate after getting in touch with the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and verifying identities.

The Armenian community in general and the Armenian newspaper *Marmara* in particular, were responsive and supportive to the whole initiative. According to their data, there are about 3000 persons from Armenia in Istanbul, most of them without legal status. This does not necessarily mean that they entered the country illegally (almost everybody enters the country legally, because of the simple entry regime), or have not extended their entry visas, but rather that they have no legal right to work and their children, not being Turkish citizens, cannot go to school. In Mr. Hattechian's opinion (editor in chief of *Marmara*), Armenians in Istanbul may be less vulnerable than those in Trabson region for example (where to his knowledge, many Armenian women are being forced into sex work against their will), because the Armenian community is very strong in Istanbul and can provide protection to Armenians from Armenia.

### **3.3 Analysis and Conclusions**

Feasibility study on surveys in the three destination countries showed that the situation of Armenian illegal migrants including the trafficked woman was significantly changed from the last IOM report in 2001.

Summarizing the results of visit to Dubai, it should be noted that contacts with the Graduate Studies and Research Department of the American University of Sharjah as the organization with the main (and perhaps only) institutional capacity to conduct the research in the UAE were established. A follow-up inquiry was made and we tried to develop further cooperation with Dr. Killen and her colleagues by telephone and e-mail. But unfortunately all our efforts to develop survey cooperation with the Graduate Studies and Research Department of the American University of Sharjah and with Dr. Killen were

unsuccessful. The proposed efforts to secure the outreach and translation assistance from the Armenian community with support of the Embassy of the RA in the UAE also were not explored. As was already mentioned, the local Armenian community was disappointed by the publications of articles about trafficking in Dubai recently done by two Armenian journalists. As a result, the decision was made by the Council of Armenian Community not to support ASA in conducting the survey. Following this decision nobody from the Armenian community was allowed to take part in the research and help ASA in any way. The Ambassador of the RA in the UAE confirmed that the community was really disturbed by the content with these publications and it is difficult to get their support at the moment. However, as the Consul of the Armenian Embassy in Greece mentioned, most of the Armenian trafficking victims are taken to the United Arab Emirates. Many of them are cheated and told that they will go to Greece to get jobs, but in fact they end up being exploited in the UAE. The ASA team saw many Armenian young women engaged in prostitution in the Cyclone Club and hotels of Dubai.

Prostitution is a legal business in Greece but there are many victims of trafficking especially from Moldova, Russia and Belarus. Greece does not seem to be a major sex-trafficking destination country for Armenians. Labour exploitation of Armenians seems to be a problem in Greece. Evidence for this includes statements made by the Armenian Embassy on the Armenian construction workers, some of whom are deported, as well as statements made by the ARS Athens office on the many Armenian women applying to them for help in finding any kind of job. ARS also mentioned that there definitely were cases of labour exploitation in Greece, particularly given that many of these Armenians stayed in Greece without proper work permits or other related documentation. As most of our irregular labour migrants avoid approaching the Armenian Embassy or any NGO or other organization with complaints concerning their exploitation, it was not easy to find these people and interview them.

Although we managed to find potential partners in all three countries for the conduct of interviews with the victims of trafficking and sexual or labor exploitation it was possible to conduct in-depth interviews only in Greece with 20 illegal migrants from Armenia. A woman, who is a resident of Greece and Armenian by birth, and in the recent past a citizen of Armenia, agreed to conduct the interviews in Athens. She received training provided by the specialists from ASA and OSCE during their business trip to Greece. In the two months after their visit, the woman (who asked us not to publish her name) met 20 illegal Armenian migrants in Athens and conducted interviews with them. The analysis of the 20 interviews showed that practically all of them (10 male and 10 female) had moved to Greece to earn money and had stayed there illegally for a long period of time.

The lack of diplomatic relations between Armenia and Turkey complicates any such survey initiative. Despite the fact that Armenian sources, namely the 2001 IOM Trafficking Report (*Trafficking in Women and Children from the Republic of Armenia: A Study. IOM, September 2001*) and the current public awareness survey, identify Turkey as one of the main destination countries for victims trafficked from Armenia, Turkish sources, including the 2003 IOM Trafficking report (*Irregular Migration in Turkey. IOM, No.12, 2003*), indicate no Armenians among victims trafficked to Turkey. The ASA team have witnessed that the local Armenians were aware of the places in Istanbul where the prostitutes that have been taken from Armenia can be seen. And there are a lot of such places. Illegal prostitution is a

major nourishing environment for the spreading of human trafficking. Unfortunately we can only make assumptions based on the indirect facts. One needs the specific research under the aegis of the international organizations and local research centers in order to make more definitive conclusions.

On the whole we can say that the attitude towards trafficking both of the authorities and of the local communities has become significantly sharpened during the last years. Armenian diplomatic missions also started exercising stricter control in the countries where they exist. As a result, trafficking cases have become not only harder to reveal for the investigators (as it is said – they went to a deeper “cellar”), but we believe that they also tend to decrease. At least the authorities of both Armenia and those countries are taking apparent steps towards the fight against trafficking. Public opinion from force of inertia still records high anxiety and concern about this matter.

## ***CHAPTER 4: CONCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS***

These surveys showed that public awareness about illegal migration and the trafficking phenomenon has relatively increased. We found that 48 out of 2500 respondents, i.e. 1,9%, had been in situations, which can be labeled as trafficking or labour exploitation. Extrapolating this data to the general population suggests that as many as 20 000 people (during the last 10 years) could have been in similar situations. This number of potential victims should be of interest to the Government and society.

The majority of such victims are victims of labour exploitation. Most went to Russia for seeking a job and some have been subjected to exploitation, abuse or bondage and even faced slavery conditions. This indicate that the Armenian Government still does not have an effective policy to facilitate and monitor the process of legal emigration of workers from Armenia. In fact, the Government of Armenia does not seem to be fully responsible for the rights of its citizens who have gone to other countries in search of jobs. The lack of strategic efforts by the government agencies can be explained by poor management, lack of professionalism and unwillingness of the officials to address this issue.

Some of the trafficking victims are young women who were forced into prostitution in the UAE, Turkey, Greece and other countries. The majority of these people leave Armenia in hope of finding jobs, but very often get involved in the sex industry, where the risk of becoming a victim of trafficking is very high.

The in-depth interviews of 132 people showed that the majority of them became victims through their dealings with illegal mediators who are not controlled by the government and are involved in illegal activities. As a result, Armenians who try to find jobs abroad without proper documentation often are subjected to labour exploitation and forced prostitution, their rights are violated and sometimes they find themselves in slavery conditions.

The level of anonymity of the survey did not establish a secure enough environment for victims of trafficking to name those authorities who might be complicit with traffickers. But we assume that without high ranked “protectors” and interested officials, this international trade of people would be much more difficult both in Armenia and abroad.

In order to reduce the causes of human trafficking and combat the problem, the Armenian Government should establish a network of officially licensed agencies under the umbrella of the State Employment Agency in the capital and in the remote regions, to offer services to the population and provide reliable information on legal ways of finding jobs abroad. This would make it possible to get a job including the signing of necessary documents related to the job that will be done abroad. This can be one of the ways to decrease illegal migration and trafficking from Armenia, as a country with a labour force surplus and big migration flows

Finally, the survey shows that the Armenian population wants more and detailed information on legal ways of finding jobs abroad, receiving working visas, and other related issues. The government hasn't responded to this public demand and people have thus been susceptible to illegal mediators. As a first step for raising public awareness, the following activities can be suggested: special weekly programs on Public TV (H1) and Public Radio

should be aired for people to receive accurate information about labour migration issues. For the persons who are looking for jobs in foreign countries the level of awareness on supporting organizations should be increased.

**ANNEX – TABLES FOR CHAPTER 1 AND 2**

<b>Table 6: Place of Origin</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yerevan	673	26.9
Aragatsotn	110	4.4
Ararat	178	7.1
Lori	222	8.9
Shirak	239	9.6
Vayots Dzor	59	2.4
Syunik	109	4.3
Gegarkunik	241	9.6
Kotaik	216	8.6
Tavush	115	4.6
Armavir	207	8.2
Karabakh	17	0.7
Ukraine	2	0.1
Moldova	2	0.1
Georgia	24	1
Azerbaijan	48	1.9
Kazakhstan	2	0.1
Uzbekistan	2	0.1
Russia	6	0.2
Abkhazia	1	0.04
Iran	10	0.4
Greece	1	0.04
India	1	0.04
Turkey	1	0.04
Lebanon	1	0.04
Djavakh	4	0.2
Syria	9	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 7: Current occupation</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Blue collar employee	358	14.4
White collar employee	294	11.8
Own business	126	5.0
Farmer	146	5.8
Housewife	501	20.0
Student	170	6.8
Commercial sex	3	0.1
Unemployed	559	22.4
Pensioner	237	9.5
School Student	106	4.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 8: Marital Status</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Single	701	28.0
Married	1571	62.8
Divorced	87	3.6
Separated	20	0.8
Widowed	121	4.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 9: Average monthly household income</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Up to 5000 Dram	103	4.1
5.001 – 10.000 Dram	164	6.6
10.001 – 15.000 Dram	224	9.0
15.001 – 30.000 Dram	418	16.6
30.001 – 50.000 Dram	549	22.0
50.001 – 100.000 Dram	517	20.7
100.001 – 150.000 Dram	143	5.7
150.001 – 200.000 Dram	30	1.2
200.000 and more Dram	14	0.6
Do not know/Diff. to answer	338	13.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 10: Respondents that have been abroad</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Respondents that have been abroad	1043	41.7
Respondents that have not been abroad	1457	58.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 11: Purpose of your intention to go abroad</b>		
(Multiply response)	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
For studying	35	3.4
For working (both legal or illegal employment)	358	34.3
Tourist, holiday	439	42.1
Business	170	16.3
Marriage	18	1.7
To live there	22	2.1
For medical treatment	6	0.6
To participate in international youth camp	1	0.1
To visit relatives	7	0.7
To visit my children	5	0.5
For military service	8	0.8
To participate in school Olympic competition	1	0.1
Evacuated after 1988 earthquake	2	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1072</b>	<b>102.9</b>

<b>Table 12: Attitude towards official permission for RA citizens to work in Europe, Russia and countries of the Middle East</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Positive	723	28.9
Negative	793	31.7
Do not know	984	39.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 13: Familiarity with the requirements necessary for receiving a work visa</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Familiar	452	18.1
Not familiar	2048	81.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 14: Ways of leaving for foreign countries</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Only legal	246	9.8
Both legal and illegal	1856	74.2
Only illegal	108	4.4
Don't know	290	11.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 15: Awareness of a person who used to work abroad</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Awareness	856	34.2
Unawareness	1644	65.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 16: Kinds of problems persons working abroad have faced</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
They were required to work overtime	213	24.9
They were underpaid	325	38.0
They were exploited by employer	146	17.1
Passports were taken away	79	9.2
Restricted movement	181	21.1
Physical and psychological abuse	67	7.8
Problems with registration and citizenship	12	1.4
Social issues	1	0.1
Deportation	4	0.5
Had to live hidden	1	0.1
Confiscation of goods	1	0.1
National discrimination	1	0.1
Financial problems	2	0.2
No problems at all	164	19.2
Don't know	96	11.1

<b>Table 16: Kinds of problems persons working abroad have faced</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>1293</i></b>	<b><i>150.9</i></b>

<b>Table 17: Countries where exploitation of migrants mainly take place</b>		
(in case of awareness)	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
USA	98	16.1
European countries	30	5.1
Austria	3	0.5
Belgium	21	3.5
Czechoslovakia	5	0.8
Denmark	6	1.0
England	4	0.7
France	19	3.1
Germany	70	11.5
Greece	43	7.1
Holland	39	6.4
Poland	48	7.9
Romania	3	0.5
Spain	16	2.6
Sweden	6	1.0
Switzerland	4	0.7
Newly Independent States (NIS)	3	0.5
Kazakhstan	3	0.5
Russia	321	52.9
Tajikistan	3	0.5
Turkmenia	2	0.3
Ukraine	20	3.3
Uzbekistan	3	0.5
Turkey	99	16.3
Asian countries	5	0.9
Arab Emirates	8	1.3
Iran	6	1.0
Syria	3	0.5
Argentina	1	0.2
Canada	1	0.2
Mexico	1	0.2
Do not know	48	7.9
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>942</i></b>	<b><i>155.5</i></b>

<b>Table 18: Awareness about individual RA citizens who emigrated from Armenia and have to work in the sex industry</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Awareness	1544	61.8
Lack of awareness	956	38.2
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>2500</i></b>	<b><i>100.0</i></b>

<b>Table 19: Countries where emigration for working in the sex industry mainly takes place</b>		
(in case of awareness) (Multi code)	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
USA	71	4.6
European countries	31	2.0
Belgium	8	0.5
Bulgaria	3	0.2
Czech Republic	7	0.5
France	8	0.5
Germany	21	1.4
Greece	47	3.0
Holland	10	0.6
Poland	42	2.7
Romania	3	0.2
Spain	13	0.8
Newly Independent States	13	0.8
Russia	237	15.3
Tajikistan	8	0.5
Ukraine	7	0.5
Turkey	899	58.2
United Arab Emirates(UAE)	339	22.0
Asian (Arab Muslim) countries	63	4.1
Syria	77	5.0
Lebanon	7	0.5
Egypt	5	0.3
Iran	80	5.2
China	3	0.2
Donotknow	281	18.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2283</b>	<b>147.8,8</b>

<b>Table 20: Personal awareness of anyone who has ever been in exploitative labour situations</b>						
Frequency and infrequency of these situations	Working to pay off travel debts. (or working without payment because the passport was confiscated by employer)		Returned to RA without money because the employer did not pay or paid low wages		Gone abroad to work and upon arrival learned that the employment arrangements were not as agreed	
	<b>Num</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Num</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Frequent	501	23.4	711	33.2	630	29.4
Infrequent	521	24.3	539	25.2	544	25.4
Do not know	1120	52.3	892	41.6	968	45.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2142</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2142</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2142</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 21: Respondents personally affected by exploitation in the context of migration**

	Num.	%
Labour exploitation	33	68.7
Prostitution	4	8.4
Any other kind of bondage or abuse (specify)	11	22.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 22: Details of experienced exploitation in the context of migration</b>		
(in case of occurrence)	Num.	%
I didn't receive payment from the company	11	33.3
I was forced to prostitute myself	2	6.1
Had to work overtime	5	15.2
Payment delays	1	3.0
They locked us in a camp and forced to work	1	3.0
They were forcing us to work in humiliating conditions	1	3.0
I had to find another employer	3	9.1
Do not know	9	27.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 23: Middle-men or mediators helping people to migrate illegally from the country</b>		
	Num.	%
Tour agency	500	20.0
Individual middle-men	586	23.4
Recruitment agency	396	15.8
Marriage agency	173	6.9
Embassy officials	87	3.5
They organized it on their own	5	0.2
Acquaintances friends	235	9.4
Relatives	66	2.6
Those already working abroad	244	9.8
Different agencies	3	0.1
Do not know	986	39.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>3281</b>	<b>131.1</b>

<b>Table 24: Personal awareness of such mediators</b>		
	Num.	%
Travel/tour agencies	68	2.7
Individual middle-men	129	5.1
Acquaintances. friends	62	2.5
Relatives	5	0.2
Don't know	2239	89.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2503</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 25: Use of such mediators</b>		
(in case of awareness)	Num.	%
Used	55	21.1
Did not use	206	78.9

<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>100.0</b>
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**Table 26: Perception of mediators (organizations and individuals) organizing illegal migration from Armenia**

	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Negative	1837	73.5
No accusation	361	14.4
Indifferent	12	0.5
Other	6	0.2
Do not know	284	11.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 27: Perception of women returning to Armenia who worked in the sex industry**

	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Blaming them	1711	68.5
Not blaming them	403	16.1
Do not know	386	15.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 28: Awareness of any organizations in Armenia (governmental or non-governmental) protecting basic human rights of:**

		Victims of trafficking (including women, men and children)	Local prostitutes in Armenia	Armenian women doing sex work abroad	Migrants
Aware	Num	267	138	129	304
	%	10.7	5.6	5.2	12.1
Unaware	Num	1112	1146	1141	1039
	%	44.5	45.8	45.6	41.6
Do not know	Num	1121	1216	1230	1157
	%	44.8	48.6	49.2	46.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>Num</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>2500</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 29: Known Organizations considered to protect human rights**  
(in case of awareness)

	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
NGOs	14	3.2
“Huysi Kamourj” (Bridge of Hope)NGO	8	1.9
“Sakharov Foundation” (NGO)	7	1.7
Human rights protecting organizations	26	6.3
Women’s Union (NGO)	56	13.4
UN Agencies in Armenia	17	4.1

<b>Table 29: Known Organizations considered to protect human rights</b>		
(in case of awareness)	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
UNHCR	4	1.0
UNDP Anti-Trafficking Project	3	0.7
International organizations	2	0.5
Red Cross	6	1.4
“Save the Children”	13	3.1
Helsinki Citizens Association	2	0.5
Ombudsman’s office in the RA	8	1.9
Political Parties	15	3.6
Government	23	5.5
Department of Refugees and Migration	51	12.3
Ministry of Justice	2	0.5
Ministry of Internal Affair	5	1.2
National Security Service	4	1.0
Police	26	6.3
Armenian Embassies	29	7.0
Interpol	3	0.7
Hot phone lines	3	0.6
Church	3	0.7
Travel agencies	2	0.5
Mediation agencies, individual mediators (middle-man)	5	1.2
Other	3	0.6
Do not know	177	42.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>124.0</b>

<b>Table 30: Familiarity with the term “trafficking”</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Familiar	582	23.3
Not familiar	1918	76.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 31: The source of knowledge of the term “trafficking”</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Television	432	74.2
Radio	38	6.5
Newspapers	119	20.5
NGOs	45	7.7
From friends	13	2.3
From books	8	1.3
From Internet	7	1.2
At a conference	3	0.5
At the University	2	0.3
At school	2	0.3
At the work place	2	0.4
From my children	2	0.4
From UN agencies	2	0.3
Don’t know	4	0.7

	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Total</i>	<i>679</i>	<i>116.6</i>

(in case of familiarity)	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Transfer and harboring of persons by means of violence or threat	356	61.2
Forcing into prostitution	259	44.5
Other forms of exploitation	120	20.6
Being treated like a slave	3	0.5
Selling people	5	0.9
Selling people’s organs	1	0.2
Illegal transportation of drugs	2	0.3
Don’t know	2	0.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>748</i>	<i>128.5</i>

	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Wish	1403	56.1
Do not wish	957	38.3
Do not know	140	5.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>2500</i>	<i>100.0</i>

(in case of wish to receive information)	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
About living conditions in foreign countries	508	36.2
About the employment in foreign countries	944	67.3
About visa regime	536	38.2
About crossing the borders	197	14.0
About the conditions of return	258	18.4
Related to educational institutions in foreign countries	3	0.2
Legislation of that country	3	0.2
Any information which can help to solve my problems	1	0.1
Do not know	4	0.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>2454</i>	<i>174.9</i>

	<b>Num.</b>
1. Yerevan	10
2. Gyumri	7
3. Hrazdan	6
4. Vanadzor	4

<b>Table 35: Home towns and villages of respondents who identified themselves as exploited in the context of migration</b>	
	Num.
5. Vardenis	4
6. Abovyan	2
7. Litcq	2
8. Stepanavan	1
9. Alaverdi	1
10. Vardenik	1
11. Tcovinar	1
12. Vardablur	1
13. Vahagni	1
14. Darpas	1
15. Margahovit	1
16. Bjni	1
17. Artavaz	1
18. Artik	1
19. Akhurik	1
20. Vardaghbyur	1
	<b>48</b>

<b>Table 36: Locations of in-depth interviews</b>		
<b>Marz</b>	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Yerevan</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>43.9</b>
<b>Lori</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>32.6</b>
Vanadzor	27	20.5
Spitak	8	5.9
Stepanavan	3	2.3
<i>Shirakamut</i>	2	1.5
<i>Margahovit</i>	1	0.8
<i>Chochkan</i>	1	0.8
<i>Bazum</i>	1	0.8
<b>Shirak</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13.6</b>
Gymri	18	13.6
<b>Kotayk</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8.3</b>
Abovyan	10	7.6
Charentsavan	1	0.8
<b>Armavir</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.8</b>
Echmiadzin	1	0.8
<b>Tavush</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.8</b>
Ijevan	1	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 37: In practice (if you found yourself in trouble) did it subject**

<b>you to an exploitative or abusive situation</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Labour exploitation	94	71.2
Prostitution	23	17.4
Any other kind of bondage or abuse (specify)	7	5.3
No answer	8	6.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 38: Have you been deceived by employers or a spouse (if married abroad)? In what way?</b>		
(Multiple response)	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
They didn't pay for the job or paid only in part	74	56.1
Employer offered another job	6	4.5
Not relevant information	5	3.8
They humiliated me	3	2.3
They forced me to have clients	2	1.5
They didn't provide temporary registration for me	1	0.8
My contract was declared invalid	11	8.3
They took my passport	4	3.0
I was abused	1	0.8
The conditions didn't correspond to what I expected	4	3.0
I had to do other hard jobs	2	1.5
I had to work as a prostitute	8	6.1
Do not know	18	13.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>105.3</b>

<b>Table 39: Current occupation</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Blue collar employee	16	12.1
White collar employee	12	12.1
Own business	21	15.9
Farmer	5	3.8
Housewife	4	3.0
Student	4	3.0
Prostitute	3	2.3
Unemployed	62	47.0
Pensioner	1	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 40: Did you have a valid visa for the country of destination?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	93	70.5
No	31	23.4
Do not know	8	6.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 41: Did you have an arrangement in the destination country?</b>		
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	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
An employment contract	31	23.5
A marriage certificate (if purpose for travel abroad was marriage)	1	0.8
A promise to get a job	0	0.0
Verbal agreement	3	2.3
Studying contract	1	0.8
Neither	96	72.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 42: Did you go there directly, or via another country?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Via another country	26	19.7
From Armenia	106	80.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 43: Were you sold to another person?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	15	11.4
No	117	88.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 44: Were you sold to another person? (Gender Breakdown)</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>Num.</b>
	Male	Female
Yes	0	15
No	117	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>44</b>

<b>Table 45: Will you go again to the same country that you were in?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes. I will	42	31.8
No. never again	51	38.7
I will see	39	29.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 46: Do you know any cases when women were invited to work as dancers, waitresses, babysitters, nurses etc., but finally were forced to engage in commercial sex?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	71	53.8
No	50	37.9
I do not know how to answer	11	8.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 47: Do you know any cases when men were forced and exploited, or were engaged in commercial sex?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	16	12.1
No	110	83.4
I do not know how to answer	6	4.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 48: Do you know any cases when children were forced and exploited, or were engaged in commercial sex?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	24	18.2
No	105	79.5
I do not know how to answer	3	2.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 49: Are you familiar with the term “Trafficking”?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	42	31.8
No	90	68.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 50: Experience with working conditions abroad:</b>		
(Multiple response)	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Satisfactory	26	19.7
Passport was taken away	27	20.5
Restricted movement	30	22.7
Long working day	58	43.9
Physical and psychological abuse	45	34.1
Underpayment	84	63.6
No freedom to refuse clients	21	15.9
They didn't pay	4	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>223.4</b>

<b>Table 51: If you know such mediators, have you ever used their services?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	66	86.8
No	10	13.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 52: Who organized your trip?</b>		
(Multiple response)	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Tour agency	9	6.8

Individual middle-men	16	12.1
Recruitment agency	5	3.8
Marriage agency	1	0.8
Embassy officials	1	0.8
I organized it on my own	61	46.2
Acquaintances. friends	26	19.7
Relatives	9	6.8
People already working abroad	8	6.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>103.1</b>

<b>Table 53: Did you have to pay the recruiter to go abroad?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	43	32.6
No	89	67.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 54: Did it put you in debt or make you sell assets?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Put you in debt?	32	52.5
Make you sell assets?	11	18.0
Neither	18	29.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 55: Have you been deceived by middlemen who arranged for your trip abroad?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	47	35.6
No	85	64.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 56: If you have been deceived by middlemen, in what way?</b>		
(Multiple response)	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Wrong information	29	61.7
Labour exploitation	4	8.5
They didn't provide me with registration and job	3	6.4
The marriage agreement was fake	2	4.3
I had to prostitute myself	8	17.0
They paid me in part	6	12.8
I had to do another hard job	1	2.1
Do not know	1	2.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>114.9</b>

<b>Table 57: Have your rights as a migrant ever been violated?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Often	41	31.1
Seldom	19	14.4
Never	72	54.5

<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>
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<b>Table 58: If your rights as a migrant have been violated, what kind of violation?</b>		
(Multiple response)	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Forced to have unprotected sex	18	30.0
Inhuman and degrading treatment	35	58.3
Slavery-like conditions	23	38.3
They paid low salary	2	3.3
They lied to me. and I didn't work according to the contract	2	3.3
Do not know	1	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>134.9</b>

<b>Table 59: Have you suffered any physical or mental harm as a result from mistreatment?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	95	72.0
No	30	22.7
I do not know	7	5.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 60: How did you return to homeland?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
By police	10	7.6
By organizers	6	4.5
By myself	102	77.3
Embassy	2	1.5
NGO assisted	1	0.8
With aid of local Armenians	2	1.5
Through my acquaintances	9	6.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 61: Have you ever personally sought the help of an Armenian mission abroad?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	12	9.1
No, never	120	90.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 62: If you have sought the help of an Armenian mission abroad, did you receive help?</b>		
	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	7	58.7

No	5	41.7
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>12</i></b>	<b><i>100.0</i></b>

**Table 63: If you did not receive help from an Armenian mission abroad, why not?**

	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
I have refused it	5	100.0
Do not answer	0	0.0
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>5</i></b>	<b><i>100.0</i></b>

**Table 64: Do you know any organization abroad with the mission to help persons who suffered violence?**

	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	16	12.1
No	116	87.9
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>132</i></b>	<b><i>100.0</i></b>

## ***ANNEX 1 TRIP REPORTS FOR CHAPTER 3:***

### **United Arab Emirates**

Report on the ASA's fact-finding and training trip to the UAE, April 15 - 22, 2005. The trip was conducted from April 15 to 22 by Hrachia Kazhoyan (IOM Armenia) and Aram Poghosyan, (ASA).

The objectives of the visit were:

1. To explore the possibility and identify the capacities for conducting a research in the United Arab Emirates on the situation with victims of trafficking from Armenia; and
2. To create preconditions for data collection and organize a small research team that would reach out and interview up to 50 trafficking victims as a part of the Armenian Sociological Association's study on trafficking in human beings from Armenia on the basis of a questionnaire developed by the ASA.
3. To meet these objectives, institutional capacities for conducting a survey were to be explored and partner organization(s) identified; a core group of researchers established and trained, and support of different parties for them ensured.

### **Schedule of Meetings**

The following formal meetings and telephone conversations (TC) were held during the visit:

April 16, 2005. Saturday	Armenian Embassy in Abu Dhabi (TC), Cyclone the Club, Dubai
April 17, 2005, Sunday	Sultan Al Owais Cultural Foundation, Dubai, Armenian Church in Sharjah
April 18, 2005, Monday	Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, American University of Sharjah
April 19, 2005, Tuesday	Armenian Church in Sharjah IOM Representative in UAE, Dubai Ladies Committee, Sharjah
April 20, 2005, Thursday	Armenian Embassy in Abu Dhabi (TC) Ladies Committee, Sharjah

### **April 16, 2005, Saturday**

First days in the United Arab Emirates the meetings and conversation with the representatives of Armenian community in Dubai and Sharjah, and Nane Ghazaryan, Consul of the RA in the UAE was done. The Armenian visitors were advised to take precautions when explaining the objectives of visit to Arab officials and discussing the issues of trafficking and illegal migration as it is not customary in that country.

Next visited place was Cyclone the Club, one of the notorious places of sex industry in Dubai. It was not easy to get any information about victims, as the women were instructed not to maintain any unusual conversation.

**Cyclone the Club;** Al Nasr Leisureland; Bur Dubai, Behind the American Hospital ; Tel: +(9714) 3369991.

### **April 17, 2005, Sunday**

On the second day of our stay in Dubai, we attended a public discussion on the role of woman in the contemporary Arab society organized by Sultan Al Owais Cultural Foundation and the Australian Embassy. Participants mentioned raising pluralism, tolerance and other positive changes in the UAE. Following the discussions, we approached Dr. Abul Elah Abdul Qader, the Executive Director of the Foundation, who referred us to Dr. Abdoul Aziz from Islamic Educational Scientific Cultural Organization and Dr. Yousuf Aidavi from the Educational and Cultural Department.

In our communications with these officials we talked about Armenian migrants living and working in the UAE. We agreed that some of them were successful and they actively participated in and contributed to the economic, cultural and social developments in the country. As to the less successful migrants and especially those who could not neither find their place in the country nor get back home, we stated that in order to help them within the UAE or explore the ways and possibilities for their voluntary return and reintegration, we need to research the situation, to get in contact and interview these people in need.

**Dr. Abdoul Aziz Al Qassime;** Islamic Educational Scientific Cultural Organization; Sharjah Center, near the Post Office; Saad, the Secretary tel.: (+9716) 5565000.

**Dr. Yousuf Aidavi;** Educational and Cultural Department, Sharjah Kuran Rd., Tel.: (+9716) 5671116.

### **April 18, 2005, Monday**

In Sharjah we were referred to Dr. Obaid Saif Al Hajri, the Regional Manager of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Dr. Al Hajri was also receptive and willing to support our mission. He brought us in contact with Dr. Salem Y. Al Qaseer and the other colleagues at the American University. Later on in a private conversation, he also advised us that an official To-Whom-It-May-Concern letter could be useful in establishing contacts with our counterparts in Arabic countries.

At the American University of Sharjah, we met with Dr. Judith Killen, Director of the Graduate Studies and Research Department and Lena Hadajian, the Senior Executive Assistant to the Chancellor. Dr. Killen was familiar with the phenomenon of trafficking and willing to provide her best students interested in conducting the research. She proposed to identify and gather a small research team within the coming week of April 25. The only remaining issue was that according to Ms. Hadajian, there were no Armenian speaking students at the University, and to help the researchers to be selected by Dr. Killen, we suggested bringing in two or three young English speaking women from Armenian community in Sharjah that would help in reaching out to the presumed victims of trafficking and with translation during the interviews.

In parallel with our negotiations with Arab authorities and NGOs, we visited the Armenian Church in Sharjah. We met with Maida Demirdjian, the Chairwoman of the Ladies Committee and had two meetings with Rev. Father Aram Dekermendjian, the leader of the Armenian Church. We hoped that the members of the Ladies Committee can help us in supporting the research group. We also got the approval of their Chairwoman to receive and channel the funds allocated by the Armenian Sociological Association for the survey.

**Dr. Obaid Saif Al Hajri;** Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Regional Office in Sharjah; PO Box 24244, Sarjah, UAE; Tel.: (+9716) 5565000; Fax: (+9716) 5565001

**American University of Sharjah,** PO Box 26666 Sharjah, UAE, <http://www.ausharjah.edu>; Dr. Salem Y. Al Qaseer, Vice Chancellor ; Tel.: (+9716) 5152207; [qaseer@ausharjah.edu](mailto:qaseer@ausharjah.edu)

**Dr. Judith Killen, Director,** Graduate Studies and Research; Tel.: (+9716) 5585555; [jkillen@ausharjah.edu](mailto:jkillen@ausharjah.edu)

**Lena Hadajian,** Senior Executive Assistant to the Chancellor; Tel.: (+9716) 5155555; [hadajian@ausharjah.edu](mailto:hadajian@ausharjah.edu)

#### **April 19, 2005, Tuesday**

When we contacted Maida on Tuesday, she was evidently less enthusiastic and, excusing herself she proposed to negotiate the issue with the heads of the Armenian community.

The Rev. Father Aram Dekermendjian was also not as much interested in supporting us as the day before. He called Mushegh Bedirian the Deputy Chairman of the Council, who informed that a decision was made by the Council not to support the ASA in conducting the survey. Although we informed him that our activities were endorsed by Arab authorities and the Armenian Embassy in Abu Dhabi, he refused meeting with us and stated that this was a political decision made by the Council as the elected self-governance body and nobody from the community was allowed to take part in the research and help us in any possible way. He mentioned that there was a research conducted recently by two journalists from Armenia, and that community is disappointed by their disrespectful and inadequate publications.

We also met Khaled Qadir, the Representative of the International Organization for Migration in the UAE. He mentioned that although the sex business is thriving in Dubai and with time the traffickers are becoming more sophisticated in their methods and ways of luring people into the sex slavery.

**Moushegh Bedirian;** Deputy Chairman, National Administration (Council) of the Armenian Community in the Northern Emirates (Dubai and Sharjah)

**Rev. Father Aram Dekermendjian;** St. Gregory the Illuminator Church; Al Yarmook, Sharjah; Secretary: Eliza, tel.: (+9716) 5660320; [armcom@emirates.net.ae](mailto:armcom@emirates.net.ae)

**Maida Demirdjian;** Chairwoman, Ladies Committee; Tel.: (+9716)6679290

#### **April 20, 2005, Wednesday**

As April 20, 2005, Wednesday was the Prophet's Birthday, a national holiday, it was impossible to identify the members of the research group at the University. In our conversation with Dr. Killen, we decided to continue the cooperation between ASA and AUS via email.

#### **April 21, 2005, Thursday**

In our conversation, Mr. Arshak Poladian, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Armenia to the United Arab Emirates confirmed that the community was really discontent with the recent publications and it would be difficult to get their support at least at the moment.

Maida Demirjian, the Chairwoman of the Ladies Committee was still looking for ways to get the Armenian community's endorsement for cooperation with the research team to be identified at the American University in Sharjah.

**Armenian Embassy in UAE;** Mr. Arshak Poladian, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary; P.O. Box 6358, Abu Dhabi, UAE; Tel: (971 2) 6769222; Fax: (971 2) 6764888; [arem@emirates.net.ae](mailto:arem@emirates.net.ae)

## Greece

Report on the ASA's fact-finding and training trip to Athens, Greece

**29 April - 6 May, 2005**

Within the ASA Trafficking Research Project financed and supported by the US Embassy in Armenia and the OSCE Office in Yerevan, and aimed at studying the trafficking-related situation of the Armenian citizens in the Republic and in some destination countries, two specialists went to Athens, Greece.

The major component of the Project is a sociological survey conducted among the citizens of the RA both in and out of the Republic, to get a picture on the current and potential trafficking situation.

In order to ensure that the survey conducted among the Armenian citizens in Greece meets necessary requirements, Mrs Rima Poghosian, member of the ASA, Project Manager, and Mrs Ovsanna Babayan, OSCE Migration Expert, made preliminary meeting arrangements with the Armenian Embassy in Greece, the Armenian Relief Society (ARS) office in Athens and the Greek IOM office. The purpose was to discuss the possibilities and establish contacts with an entity or an organization to carry out the section of the survey in Greece within a 30-40 days period. The below is the report on the meetings held, as well as some observations made during the trip.

- On the day of the arrival, at the Athens Airport, the team met a young Armenian woman flying from Yerevan to Saloniki through Athens. She said she worked as a cleaning lady at a house in Saloniki, was paid 370 Euros per month, stayed at the same house, but was not happy with the payment, so was planning to work as a hairdresser in the near future. She was not from Yerevan herself and said there were many other Armenians trying to find jobs in Saloniki and other cities of Greece.

The Consul, Mr. Haik Hakobian, briefed on the current immigration situation in Greece. As for trafficking cases, there are much more victims from Moldova, Russia, Belarus, but he hadn't heard of any Armenians. To his knowledge, most of the Armenian trafficking victims are taken to the United Arab Emirates. Many of them are cheated and told that they will go to Greece to get jobs, but in fact they end up being exploited in the UAE.

There are many illegal Armenian migrants in Greece, though, who agree to do anything for very low payment. (*So this is exploitation and should be considered within the Project.*)

Armenian citizens approach the Embassy for lost documents or other related issues, but more often the Greek Police contacts the Embassy for deportation cases. There are 1-2 deportation cases per week. The Embassy does not cooperate with the IOM office in Athens. Almost all the deported Armenians are men (about 99%). They do either construction or any other casual work, mostly in Saloniki and in other Northern areas of Greece. When Police finds them, they are taken to the Armenian Embassy for the arrangement of the necessary documentation for deportation.

Although prostitution is legal in Greece, but given the current picture with foreign sex-workers in this country, trafficking is a problem here.

According to the Consul, there have not been any complaints to the Embassy from Armenians residing in Greece. The ARS has offices in the North of the country, so it would be more useful to ask them to try and find Armenian migrants there, and see if the ARS people could interview some of these migrants for the Project.

There are about 45 thousand Armenian citizens in Greece, about 6 thousand of them in Athens.

- Meeting with Mr. Vahram Kazhoyan, Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to Greece

Mr. Kazhoyan stated that the number of Armenian migrants in Greece had gone down recently, so emigration of Armenians to this country is not as active as it used to be years ago. That's because many of them realize it's not worth coming here, as the chances for finding jobs are minimal. Every Friday (Yerevan - Athens flight days) 1-2 Armenians are returned from the Athens Airport, without even entering the country.

He informed that the ARS in Athens acts as a "recruitment office" for our compatriots, so many Armenians are assisted to find jobs through the ARS.

**Armenian Embassy address:** Sigrou Avenue 159, Athens, Tel. (0030)210 93 45 727; [armemb@hol.gr](mailto:armemb@hol.gr)

- Meeting with Mr. Daniel Esdras, Head of IOM Mission in Greece

Mr. Esdras spoke about trafficking at large, stressing that the so-called "voluntary trafficking" (when people, especially women, are aware what they are supposed to do in the foreign country and are ready for that) makes it more difficult to find victims and define them.

When the Armenian delegation briefed Mr. Esdras on the number of deportations of Armenians from Greece, he said he would be interested in being contacted by the Armenian Embassy for further cooperation aimed at returning these migrants voluntarily. IOM has good experience in voluntary return programmes, and this might be useful for both the returnees and the country sending them back. The Armenian delegation also raised the issue of possible cooperation between the IOM offices in Athens and Yerevan, particularly in the area of the Micro-Enterprise Development Programme for the voluntary Armenian returnees from Greece. IOM Yerevan runs this project successfully, so that would also contribute to the sustainable return and reintegration. Mr. Esdras was quite interested and enthusiastic about this idea.

He also mentioned that labour exploitation of Armenians seemed to be more of a problem in Greece, than sex trafficking. He has interviewed and talked to more than 300 victims of trafficking in Greece, none of them were Armenians.

The Armenian delegation was informed that there would be a Transnational Trafficking Seminar: "Prevention and Counteract Trafficking in the Mediterranean Region -

Transnational Cooperation", to be held in Athens on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May. The Armenian delegation asked if the ARS or other potential counterparts in the current ASA trafficking project could be invited to this seminar. The idea was warmly accepted and encouraged by IOM.

**Mr. Daniel Esdras**, Head of the IOM Mission in Greece; 6, Dodekanissou str., 174 56 Alimos; Phone 210 99 19 040; email: [iomathens@iom.int](mailto:iomathens@iom.int)

The Armenian delegation briefed the ARS ladies that the purpose of the trip was to establish links with an organization which could interview 30-50 Armenian emigrants in Greece, to see about the migration and particularly trafficking status of Armenians in this country. ARS was provided with copies of the Armenian version of the ASA questionnaire.

The Head of the office informed that they had already done a similar activity for the ARS Yerevan office and in response to their request. About 60 questionnaires have been completed and sent to Yerevan. The ARS said it would not be easy to find other Armenian emigrants for conducting this mini-survey. The ASA team asked ARS to involve their branches operating in the North of the country, as there are much more Armenians up there, but it was explained that only the ARS Yerevan office could contact these branches for such an assignment.

ARS staff informed that they had assisted many Armenian women in finding jobs in Greece and had never received any complains on exploitations. They agreed that there definitely were cases of exploitation but not with those who had got jobs through this office. However, they added, that some Armenian women assisted by the ARS have re-approached the office asking to find them another job, as the current one was very difficult and/or underpaid.

The Armenian team stressed once more the importance of the project and asked to consider the possibility of involving those women who apply to them for finding jobs, in approaching Armenian emigrants and filling out the ASA questionnaires. ARS promised to do its best.

The office was also informed by the delegation about the IOM Anti-Trafficking Seminar and was asked to contact the IOM Athens office for getting invited. The ARS staff seemed very interested and made copies of the Agenda and the invitation letter.

- The ASA team met an Armenian young man, Hakob, who works at the Athens market souvenir shop. He is an Economics student at the Athens University and works to earn money. He was approached by the delegation with an offer to cooperate with the ARS and the Armenian Embassy in interviewing Armenian emigrants. He seemed interested and promised to contact the ARS for further instructions. He was given the ASA Yerevan contact information for any detailed clarifications. Hakob has some understanding of the situation of migrants in Greece, and could be a potential contact point for the Greek section of the Project.
- An Armenian Embassy staff member, Arpine, was also re-approached by the ASA team with the request to consider the possibility of interviewing Armenian

emigrants and filling out some questionnaires. She also seemed interested and informed that her friend in the Northern regions of Greece is working for a travel agency and could also be involved in this.

- The team saw many Georgian and Russian women in Athens. The Georgians were involved mostly in trade, while Russians seemed to make money taking care of the elderly and cleaning houses. There was a special place not far from one of the central squares of the city, where tens of notices in Russian informed about job opportunities for Russian speaking women.

**Armenian Relief Fund:** Sigrou Avenue 220, Athens, Tel. (0030) 210 95 75 011; [arfgr@otenet.gr](mailto:arfgr@otenet.gr)

## Turkey

Report on the ASA's fact-finding and training trip to Istanbul, Turkey

### April 8 - 14, 2005

The objective of the visit was to ensure establishment of all necessary conditions for implementation of a research in Istanbul for the purpose of evaluating the situation of Armenian illegal migrants/victims of trafficking from Armenia.

To meet this objective the delegation identified partner organizations, established a core group, trained them, and ensured support of different parties for them.

The following meetings were held during the one-week visit:

April 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2005, Friday	2:00 pm	SAM
April 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2005, Saturday	2:00-4:00 pm	Armenian Church in Taksim
		Tekeyan event
	7:00 pm	Dinner with Ferhat and Nil
April 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2005, Monday	11:00 am	HRDF
	1:00 pm	IOM Istanbul
	3:00 pm	Russian Consul General
April 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2005, Tuesday	11:00 am	Marmara Newspaper
	2:00 pm	Peshchyan Armenian College
	5:00 pm	Dinner with Makruhi
	9:00 pm	Event in Dadian Armenian College

April 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2005, Wednesday	4:00 pm	Meeting at SAM to report on progress
	5:00 pm	Training for interviewers

**April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2005, Friday**

### **Meeting at SAM office**

**Participants:** Mr. Genab Nuhlat, President, SAM; Ms. Ayla Ortach, Senior Research Analyst, SAM; Mr. Ferhat Kentel, Sociologist, Istanbul Bilgi University Professor; Mr. Karen Asatryan, ASA, Programme Director; Ms. Shushanik Zakaryan, IOM, CT Programme Manager

Mr. Asatryan and Ms. Zakaryan introduced themselves and the counter-trafficking activities of their respective offices, including the present research initiative. It was agreed that SAM will provide technical assistance to the program but refrained from taking a leading role and coordinating the whole process. SAM is a profit organization and they would normally charge at minimum 4000 USD for a research like this. Nonetheless, they expressed readiness to provide tapes, recorders, help find interviewers, and train them.

It was pointed out that the “snowball” methodology will be utilized to interview respondents. Each interview will last an hour or an hour and a half. Interviewers will be Armenians from local Armenian community (students, journalists, sociologists). Interviews will be conducted in Armenian. Fifty interviews will be conducted within a period of about one month.

It was decided that there will be one coordinating agency, ideally an NGO, responsible for supervising the interviewers, coordinating the process and sending the questionnaires and/or tapes to ASA; about five interviewers who will be responsible for interviewing about 10 respondents each. It was acknowledged by all parties that it may be rather difficult to find respondents, especially taking into account that no Turkish trafficking-related report mentions Armenians among victims trafficked to Turkey. Another concern expressed by SAM was the security of interviewers. It was decided to identify safe places by the next meeting where respondents could be interviewed.

Mr. Kentel promised to use his connections to find Armenian students and/or journalists to act as interviewers.

**SAM:** Tel: +90 212 280 2673; Fax: +90 212 284 8873; [www.samardan.com](http://www.samardan.com); [cenap.nuhlat@samardan.com](mailto:cenap.nuhlat@samardan.com); [samardan@superonline.com](mailto:samardan@superonline.com)

**Ferhat Kentel;** Tel: +90 212 311 6131; Fax: +90 212 216 2400; [ferhatk@bilgi.edu.tr](mailto:ferhatk@bilgi.edu.tr)

**April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2005, Monday**

### **Meeting at HRDF office**

**Participants:** Ms. Berna Eren, Executive Director, HRDF; Ms. Shushanik Zakaryan, CT Programme Manager, IOM Armenia; Mr. Karen Asatryan, Programme Director, ASA, Armenia

After an introduction made by the Armenian delegation, Ms. Eren presented the counter-trafficking activities implemented by HRDF. HRDF closely cooperates with the police and conducts training courses for the police, gendarmes, district attorneys, and judges.

Identification of victims is done in police stations by policemen. IOM is invited to do double identification of identified victims, after which (sometimes before) HRDF is contacted and victims are placed in the HRDF shelter. The shelter has three counselors who speak Russian, and a physiologist. Victims are referred to hospitals if treatment is needed. The Municipality covers the expenses of the rented apartment that serves as shelter, other shelter expenses are funded by Phillip Morris. IOM Istanbul arranges return of the sheltered victims of trafficking.

Ms. Eren stated that it will be difficult to find victims, especially Armenian victims. Nevertheless she was very positive and agreed to act as coordinator for the research work. She promised to attend the meeting scheduled on April 13<sup>th</sup> at SAM office, get acquainted with other parties involved and participate in the training to be conducted for the interviewers.

**Human Resource Development Foundation (HRDF);** Tel: +90 212 293 1605; Fax: +90 212 293 1009; [ikgv@ikgv.org](mailto:ikgv@ikgv.org); [beren@ikgv.org](mailto:beren@ikgv.org)

**April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2005, Monday**

### **Meeting with IOM Istanbul**

**Participants:** Mr. Murat Kalkan, Operations Assistant, IOM Istanbul; Ms. Elina Siderova, CT Project Assistant, IOM Istanbul; Ms. Shushanik Zakaryan, CT Programme Manager, IOM Armenia; Mr. Karen Asatryan, Programme Director, ASA, Armenia

IOM Istanbul has funding from USAID to organize return of identified victims of trafficking. According to IOM Ankara, Moldova is the main source country for victims trafficked to Turkey. No Armenians have been identified in the 2003 IOM Turkey report, nor have there been any Armenian victims among the 55 victims returned to their home countries since January 2005, and before. IOM Istanbul conducted trainings on victim identification for the police and gendarmes with the participation of representatives from Scotland Yard and Interpol. Passport inserts are being distributed in the airports. A toll-free hot line number will be launched shortly, which will eventually be handed over to be administered by a local NGO. Suspected victims of trafficking will be referred to the police for identification.

IOM Istanbul expressed readiness to be of any help in the research initiated by the ASA in Turkey. This meant primarily technical assistance. Mr. Kalkan and Ms. Siderova also welcomed further close cooperation between IOM offices in Istanbul and Yerevan.

**IOM Istanbul;** Tel: +90 212 292 1338, +90 212 293 5000; Fax: +90 212 249 2733;  
[IOMIstanbul@iom.int](mailto:IOMIstanbul@iom.int)

**April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2005, Monday**

### **Meeting with the Russian Consul General in Istanbul at the Russian Consulate**

**Participants:** Mr. Igor Yurovskiy, Consul General of Russia; Ms. Shushanik Zakaryan, CT Programme Manager, IOM Armenia; Mr. Karen Asatryan, Programme Director, ASA, Armenia

The Armenian delegation had a short meeting with the Russian Consul, briefly introduced the research project and enquired about Armenians addressing to the Russian Consulate for assistance. Mr. Yurovski stated that although there is no official agreement between the Russian and Armenian governments, the Russian Consulate in Istanbul addresses the Armenian citizens when they apply to the Consulate. Forty Armenian citizens applied for assistance in 2004 and 36 in 2003 mainly with lost passports and were issued laissez-passers by the consulate after getting in touch with the Armenian MFA and verifying identities.

**Russian Consulate in Istanbul;** Tel: +90 212 292 5101, +90 212 292 5102; Fax: +90 212 249 0507, +90 212 293 2358

**April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2005, Tuesday**

### **Meetings with the Armenian community**

#### **Marmara publishing house**

**Participants:** Mr. Rober Hattechyan, Editor in Chief; Ms. Makruhi Hakobyan, Assistant to Editor in Chief; Ms. Shushanik Zakaryan, CT Programme Manager, IOM Armenia; Mr. Karen Asatryan, Programme Director, ASA, Armenia

The Armenian community in general and Marmara newspaper in particular, were very responsive and supportive to the whole initiative. According to their data, there are about 3000 persons from Armenia in Istanbul, most of them without legal status. This does not necessarily mean that they entered the country illegally (almost everybody enters the country legally, because of the simple entry regime), or have not extended their entry visas (there were different opinions on the procedure of extending entry visas expressed by different parties, Turks and foreigners; SAM staff promised to clarify the latest changes to the system and report to us): but rather that they have no legal right to work and their children, not being Turkish citizens, cannot go to school. On the other hand, Ms. Makruhi stated that those Armenians who work abroad and send money back home are “benefactors” and should be acknowledged as such. In Mr. Hattechian’s opinion, Armenians in Istanbul may be less vulnerable than those in Trabson region for example (where to his knowledge, many Armenian women are being forced into sex work against their will), because the Armenian community is very strong in Istanbul and can provide protection to Armenians from Armenia.

Marmara published an article in Wednesday's issue about the mission of the Armenian delegation and encouraged all interested parties to apply to Marmara for more information on the project and the issue at large. Marmara committed itself to being a focal point for the prospective interviewers to seek information on whereabouts of Armenians from Armenia and be of assistance in any other related matters.

Ms. Makruhi arranged a meeting with the director of one of the Armenian schools which is located in the Kumkapi district, where most of the Armenians from Armenia reside. Mr. Sinair Yildiz, the school principal, did not encourage the idea of providing school teachers as interviewers for a number of considerations, but promised to be of any assistance to the project, including helping prospective interviewers to locate and interview Armenians, although he stated that it might be difficult because Armenians are under constant control.

**April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2005, Wednesday**

### **SAM office**

**Participants:** Mr. Genab Nuhurat, President, SAM; Ms. Ayla Ortach, Senior Research Analyst, SAM; Mr. Ferhat Kentel, Sociologist, Istanbul Bilgi University Professor; Ms. Berna Eren, Executive Director, HRDF; Mr. Karen Asatryan, ASA, Programme Director; Ms. Shushanik Zakaryan, IOM, CT Programme Manager; Mr. Aris Nalci, prospective interviewer

Mr. Asatryan and Ms. Zakaryan introduced Ms. Eren as coordinator of the project and presented other results of the meetings they had since the first gathering at SAM office, including the names and telephone numbers of five suspected victims of trafficking they were able to obtain. The overall picture of the upcoming interviews was presented, all details clarified and roles identified. The meeting was then joined by three prospective interviewers (Mr. Kentel and Mr. Nalci believed they would be able to involve more later). Mr. Asatryan presented (in Armenian) the objectives and expected results of the research and acquainted them with the questionnaires detailing on how best to use them. Mr. Nuhurat (in Turkish for easier communication) delivered a short training on how to interview respondents in general, pointing out difficulties and ways of overcoming them. Ms. Zakaryan explained in a comprehensible way what human trafficking is and how to identify victims of trafficking having a number of criteria in mind. Handouts were later sent out to the interviewers for easier reference.