



New issues New frontiers in child trafficking

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**Child trafficking; Responses and
challenges at local level**

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We want to highlight :

- New forms of child trafficking remain mainly hidden. But knowing more about new vulnerability situations for children can provide us with hints.
- We need to know more about the implications of new vulnerability situations such as baby abandonment and children left behind by migrant parents.
- To be truly effective responses must reinforce the child protection system.
- But also go beyond responses in one-country only and be regional or multi-country
- OSCE can play a key role in monitoring responses beyond one country.

New issues – New frontiers

Baby abandonment

- Still high rates of infants in institutions
- Most infants in institutions have been abandoned in maternity/hospital/paediatric wards
- Abandonment of infants from HIV positive mothers identified as a problem
- Some countries in CEE/CIS still display worrying trends

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New issues – New frontiers

Baby abandonment (2)

- Last year the Council of Europe discussed disappearance of babies in maternity wards soon after birth in Ukraine. Illegal adoption was mentioned as a possible root cause.
- In Moldova, the organised selling of babies is reported to be conducted through newspaper advertisements.
- There is no detailed study yet of what is happening under our eyes as human trafficking continually evolves.
- But in a global environment we may look at other regions of the world: in Guatemala, the building of an “industry of illegal adoption” is thriving and has been documented.

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New issues – New frontiers

Children left behind

- Number of children affected by the migration of their parents in CEE-CIS remains unknown. However, recent studies in some countries demonstrated that hundreds of thousands of children are affected, many of which spending more than a year alone while both parents are abroad.
- The social impact of migration and remittance on children left behind and divided families is only beginning to be documented and understood
- Complexity and widening scope of child protection issues due to migration (including pull and push factors).
- These children are more vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and/or child trafficking

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Children left behind

Impact on children

- **While parents' departure has a positive impact on children's material conditions, it negatively affected a child's emotional development, social relations. And their school performance.**
- Remittances are often invested in highly visible goods and are not invested in a way that would secure the livelihood of the family independently of migration.
- This leaves children without any other option than migrating themselves (pull and push factors)
- 25% of parents do not send back remittances at all. Other families do not receive any remittance during the first year.
- Institutionalisation as a coping strategy for migrant families (in Moldova, 15% of children institutionalised because of parents living abroad).

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New issues – New frontiers

Child trafficking in Central Asia

Preliminary findings of UNICEF study

- There are numerous misunderstandings and a general lack of common agreement around the definition of child trafficking in Central Asia.
- This leads to the development of inappropriate responses (being in prevention, protection and care and support to victims)
- Both **internal and cross-border** child trafficking is taking place
- There is a **small number of officially registered cases** of child trafficking in each country
- **Labour exploitation and sexual exploitation** are the two main purposes of suspected or alleged child trafficking in the region.

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New issues – New frontiers

Child trafficking in Central Asia

Findings from UNICEF study (2)

- There are conceptual and legal **challenges to the adequate identification and response** to child trafficking cases
- There are strong **vulnerability factors** in Central Asia such as child exploitation, high levels of poverty and inequity, and weakened community and institutional support networks
- **Examples of suspected or alleged child trafficking cases mirror general trends of human trafficking in the region.**
 - internally in each country
 - sub-regionally mainly to Kazakhstan
 - Out of the sub-region, notably to Russia, Middle East, Western Europe and Asia.

New issues – New frontiers

Child trafficking in Central Asia

Findings from UNICEF study (3)

- **No trafficking routes have been identified as being specific to child victims**
- **Informants argued that children may be more prone to internal trafficking than to external (cross-border) trafficking**
- **The issue of children left behind in Central Asia has not yet been identified as a major issue and is not integrated in social policies.**

Problems in responses child trafficking in Central Asia

- **Legal and policy frameworks are not adequate.**
 - not in line with international standards
 - not effectively implemented
- **There are child protection gaps in all countries.**
 - deterrents to the official referral and registration of child trafficking cases
 - absence of child-focused anti-trafficking policies
 - inability of child protection systems to adapt to children's needs

Some recommendations

- Need to address child trafficking in a **holistic manner!**
- Need to **up-scale legal and policy frameworks** to allow the identification and registration of child trafficking victim and improve **child protection systems** to adequately support **all** children who are victims or at risk of violence, abuse and exploitation, including trafficking !
- We need more reliable data and analysis of trends in all affected countries to monitor these new issues. Depending on the findings we need a commitment from all countries to act in the best interest of their children. This audience under the leadership of Mrs Biaudet can play an important role in monitoring the effectiveness of these commitment and promote better coordination of multi-country responses.

