

Responses to Child Trafficking at Local Level in Norway

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Background information

Norway

- Ratified the Palermo protocol in 2003
- Ratified the European Convention February 2008
- Criminalize the buying of sexual services in 2009
- 3 National Action Plans - current 2006-2009
 - Measure 29: National Coordination Unit for Victim Support



Experiences on child trafficking in Norway

- 2000-2004: Rumours and plans on national level - little knowledge and action on local level
- 2004: First trafficking case with minors as victims – focus on prostitution
- 2005: Media write about Chinese minors in Nordic countries – can this happen in Norway?

- October 4th 2005: Two Chinese boys disappear from asylum reception centre in south of Norway
- Severe criticism from NGOs
- Massive media attention



2005-2006 From chaos to coordinated action

- 10 Chinese minors arrive the next week (12-16 years old)
- Police, child care services, Immigration services, lawyers, NGOs
- Asylum interview, police interview, child care interview, medical examinations, age-tests
- Chaos...

- National coordinator
- Plan for coordinated action
 - Early identification
 - Notification of relevant authorities
 - All Chinese minors in safe house under child care authorities during first 24 hours
 - Meetings to agree on who's doing what and when
 - Individual Plans for each child



What happened?

- Police investigation led to 2 Swedish persons convicted for organized smuggling (evidence that all 12 children were handled by the same organization)
- 2 Chinese boys still missing (Italy and France)
- 10 Chinese minors living a “normal” life in Norway

2006:

- 3 Chinese girls taken care of (16 years old, heading for England)
- 1 convicted of organized smuggling

August 2007:

- 7 Chinese minors taken care of (16-18 years old heading for England)
 - 2 have returned with IOM
 - 4 consider seeking asylum
 - 1 consider returning with IOM



What did we learn from working with the Chinese minors?

- National action plans are worth little unless they are implemented at a local level
- Coordinated action at national and local level is required
- Trafficking-convictions are dependent of evidence of exploitation, but we can't wait for evidence on actual exploitation before we act
- The right to identify and define what is trafficking and who are victims must not be restricted to police only
- It is OK to disagree as long as it is on a professional basis
- Need for more action against smuggling of unaccompanied minors



What did we learn from working with the Chinese minors?

- Transit countries are especially dependent on international cooperation
 - Information sharing
 - Investigation
- Coordinated action = effective prevention
- Cost-effective in long term
- What is “the child’s best”?
 - Cultural differences and international principles
 - Restrictions
 - Gaining trust
 - Information and education

- What about the minors in Norway that are not from China?



Government

Inter-Ministerial group

6 ministries - Head: Ministry of Justice and the Police

National Coordination Unit for VOTs

Project manager: National Police Directorate

Project-group

Police
Prosecutors
Immigration authorities
Social authorities
Health authorities
Labour authorities
Child welfare authorities

Reference-group

NGOs
Labour union
Employers agencies
Local projects

Local Units

Local Units

Local Units

National Coordination Unit for Assistance and Protection of VOT

■ **Tasks:**

- National system for report and monitoring on VOT
- National system for exit strategies and sustainable rehabilitation for the VOT
- National system for voluntary safe return of VOT to home country
- Guidelines for identification of VOT
- Guidelines for motivating VOT to cooperation with the police
- Guidelines for interdisciplinary cooperation
- Information on VOT rights
- Local coordination units

■ **Facts:**

- Approximately 200 VOTs under support Nov. 2006 - May 2008
- About 30% of VOTs cooperating with the police
- 30 VOTs on 6 months reflection period in 2007
- May 2008: reflection period available for all nationalities
- May 2008: National guidelines for identification of VOT



Identification of possible victims 2007-2008

Reports come from:

- Police
- Immigration authorities
- Health services
- Child care service
- NGOs

25% minors

Hidden numbers must be considered

Year	VOT	Women	Men
2005	27	26	2
2006	43	43	0
2007	110	86	25
January – March 2008	21	19	3
Total	204 (54 minors)	174	30



Criminal cases on human trafficking in Norway 2003-2008

Verdicts = 9

1. Oslo 2003: Georgian network – women from Russia and Lithuania
2. **Trondheim 2004: Estonian/Norwegian network – Estonian women and girls**
3. Trondheim 2006: Albanian/Norwegian network – Albanian women
4. **Norway/Stockholm 2006: Chinese network – Chinese children (smuggling)**
5. Norway/Czech Republic 2006: Czech network – Czech women
6. **Stavanger 2006: Chinese network – Chinese children (smuggling)**
7. **Oslo 2007: Norwegian/International network – Thai boys**
8. Bergen 2007: Romanian network – Romanian women
9. Bergen 2008: Norwegian/Swedish/Thai network – Thai women

Process in court = 2

1. Oslo 2008: Bulgarian network – Bulgarian women
2. **Stavanger 2008: British network – British men and boys**

Cases under investigation 2008 = approx 20

Two cases regarding forced labour, the rest on sexual exploitation



Current challenges in the work against child trafficking in Norway



Need for more understanding and action against

- Exploitation of minors in begging and petty crime
- Exploitation of minors in arranged marriages and housework
- Boys in trafficking – all forms of exploitation
- Parents and other relatives who act as their children's traffickers





POLITIET

POLITIDIREKTORATET

Thanks for your attention!

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