

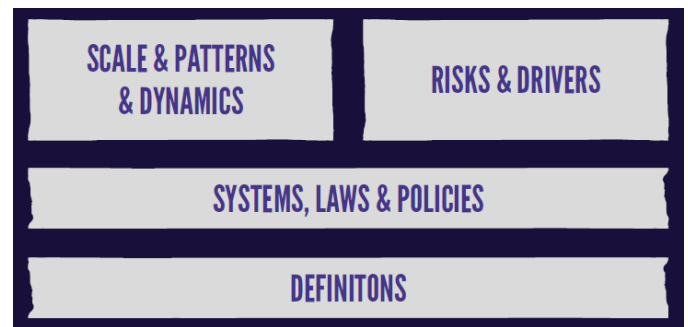


# CRACKS IN THE SYSTEM: CHILD TRAFFICKING IN THE CONTEXT OF INSTITUTIONAL CARE IN EUROPE

## ANNEXE - METHODOLOGY

### RESEARCH DOMAINS AND QUESTIONS

Between July 2019 and May 2020, Lumos researched the intersection between institutional care and child trafficking across Europe. The findings of this research are presented in Lumos' report "*Cracks in the System: Child Trafficking in the Context of Institutional Care in Europe*". The report aims to synthesise, appraise and build on the current evidence base on institution-related trafficking in diverse contexts around Europe. Four central domains of inquiry were identified and prioritised:



- **Definitions:** What are the key definitions that apply to institution-related trafficking?
- **Systems, Laws & Policies:** What are the systems, laws and policies that frame institutional care for children and child trafficking in all its forms in Europe?
- **Scale, Patterns & Dynamics:** How are children trafficked and exploited in the context of institutional care in diverse settings across Europe?
- **Risks & Drivers:** Why do children fall victim to institution-related trafficking in diverse settings across Europe?

### RESEARCH METHODS

To answer the research questions outlined above, the research consisted of four qualitative methods:

1. **Literature review**
2. **Call for evidence**
3. **Key informant interviews**
4. **Country case studies**

This annexe provides a detailed overview of these four methods.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

By establishing the shape and strength of the evidence base, the literature review is the foundation and core component of this study. Although the study did not include a systematic review, the literature review used features of the systematic review to strengthen its internal and external validity. To ensure a structural collection and analysis of the available qualitative data, the research followed the guidelines on critical appraisal and evidence assessment from the UK Department for International Development (DFID).<sup>1</sup>

The following libraries, online portals and search engines were consulted: ESCO Research Portal, online library of the London School of Economics and Political Science (including JSTOR, Sage Journals and Open Access Journals), Better Care Network, Childwatch International Research Network, IDS Open Docs, Save the Children, Google Scholar, Google, and Lumos' internal digital literature collection. Through these sources a range of written documents was collected, broadly falling into the categories of (1) academic publications; (2) civil society documents; (3) governmental documents; (4) documents from international organisations; and (5) media items. Given the dearth of academic publications that specifically address the intersection between child trafficking and institutional care, the literature review relied heavily on the available grey literature to adequately assess the evidence base. Where grey literature was also scant or absent, the literature review was supplemented by media articles.

The following search terms and criteria were used:

- child OR children;

*AND*

- orphanage OR "children's institution" OR "institutional care" OR "residential care" OR "children's home" OR "asylum centre" OR "refugee centre" OR "reception centre" OR "residential health facility" OR "psychiatric ward" OR "residential school" OR "boarding school";

*AND*

- trafficking OR exploitation OR smuggling OR laundering OR harvesting OR "forced labour" OR "forced services" OR slavery OR slave OR servitude OR abuse OR "use of force" OR "abuse of power" OR coercion OR abduction OR fraud OR deception OR prostitution OR selling OR sale OR pornography OR organ OR "illegal adoption" OR "sex tourism" OR "forced begging"

As this study deals with an international issue and to ensure a diversity of perspectives, language biases were removed as much as possible from the research design. The literature review was carried out in English, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Romanian, Spanish, and Chinese. The first seven languages were selected as their status amongst the eight most spoken languages in the European Union.<sup>2</sup> Chinese was primarily added for the wider literature review (beyond the European context). The above search terms in

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<sup>1</sup> UK Department for International Development [DFID]. (2014). Assessing the Strength of Evidence.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/291982/HTN-strength-evidence-march2014.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/291982/HTN-strength-evidence-march2014.pdf) [accessed 8 June 2020].

<sup>2</sup> European Commission. (2012). Special Eurobarometer 286: European and Their Languages.

[https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_386\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/archives/ebs/ebs_386_en.pdf) [accessed 8 June 2020].

English were translated into the other review languages. Research volunteers from the London School of Economics and Political Science supported the literature review across this range of languages.

For each research publication that was collected, the methods and sources were analysed and categorised based on their research type (primary, secondary or theoretical/conceptual) and research design (experimental, quasi-experimental, observational, systematic review or other review). The literature on institution-related trafficking outside Europe was not directly included in the thematic analysis for this specific report.

## CALL FOR EVIDENCE

The purpose of the call for evidence was to collect examples, information, knowledge and resources about institution-related trafficking across different contexts in Europe as well as practice in tackling the problem. Through the call for evidence, the study unveiled hard-to-find information and knowledge of cases of trafficking that the literature review did not identify.

The call for evidence was available online for three months through the online survey service SurveyMonkey and provided respondents with an unlimited text box that they could freely use to structure their submission. Suggested topics for the submission were:

- Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, receipt and exploitation of the children into, inside, out of or after leaving the institution
- Connection between institutionalisation and trafficking of the children
- Vulnerabilities of the children and families
- Causes and drivers of trafficking
- Harms and effects on the children
- Context, origin and application of counter-trafficking practice
- Outcomes, impact and successes
- Challenges and obstacles

Respondents were also able to upload an unlimited number of publications and other resources in support of their submission. Evidence could be submitted in any language, and the online survey was available in English, Bulgarian, Czech, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Arabic and Chinese. Together, this covered all the official UN languages and eight out of the 10 most spoken languages in the EU.<sup>3</sup> Other European languages were included to reflect the geographical presence of Lumos' country offices in Europe, where the promotion of the call for evidence was believed to be most viable.

The call for evidence was sent to practitioners, policymakers, researchers, advocates and others from the child protection and counter-trafficking sectors, directly reaching at least 1,185 individuals and organisations across at least 95 countries around the world. This included all the relevant member organisations of the following networks: Better Care Network, Child Protection Hub for Southeast Europe, Children Without Parental Care (CWAPC) Working Group, EU Civil Society Platform, GTPE, Mouvement African des Enfants et Jeunes Travailleurs (MAEJT), Missing Children Europe, One Young World, ReThink Orphanages, and the

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

Working Group Ending Sexual Exploitation of Children (SEC). The call for evidence was also shared with numerous external contacts of Lumos' staff, including through the country offices in Moldova, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Haiti, Greece, United States, EU (Brussels), Colombia, Ethiopia, Ukraine, UK, and Kenya. Past recipients of training and advisory support by Lumos were also informed about the call for evidence.

Moreover, the call for evidence was shared indirectly through several relevant networks, platforms, newsletters and websites: Africa Network of Care-Leaving Researchers, Anti-Trafficking Legal Project (ATLEP), Better Care Network, Better Care Network Netherlands, Cambridge Centre for Applied Research in Human Trafficking (CCARHT), Child Rights Connect, Child Rights Coordinator of the European Commission, Commonwealth Lawyers Association, Delta 8.7, ECPAT International, Faith to Action Initiative, Family for Every Child, Fundamental Rights Agency, Human Trafficking Foundation, International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC), International Social Service USA, Modern Slavery Research Consortium, Modern Slavery Strategic Implementation Group (MSSIG), One Young World, Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM), Porticus Foundation, Sexual Violence Research Initiative, Terre des Hommes Brasil, UK Child Task and Finish Group on child trafficking (CTFG), UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean (LAC), and Where There Be Dragons. The sharing and promotion of the call for evidence were conducted in each of the 13 languages listed above.

The report *Cracks in the System* looked specifically at submissions related to Europe. Within this remit, Lumos received submissions from 35 organisations and individuals across 16 European countries, with 27 submissions relating to evidence within Europe. The submissions with evidence outside of the European continent were not directly included in the thematic analysis for this specific report. The wealth of evidence and insights collected strongly complemented and supported the triangulation with the findings of the literature review.

## KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

To supplement the literature review and call for evidence, semi-structured interviews were carried out with eight key informants. The informants interviewed are experts with international experiences working at the nexus between counter-trafficking and care reform. They were selected amongst relevant professional contacts of the Lumos research team who had not been able to respond to the call for evidence but were considered key thematic experts for the overall research. The interview questions covered the following topics:

- Patterns of institution-related trafficking
- Links between child institutionalisation and child trafficking
- Vulnerabilities and risks of children and families
- Causes and drivers of trafficking
- Harms and effects of institution-related trafficking
- Specific cases of institution-related trafficking in European countries

The key informant interviews provided a nuanced and detailed understanding of the specific nature of institution-related trafficking. They thus helped gather valuable knowledge and evidence to fill some of the gaps that had arisen through the literature review and call for evidence. The key informants were also encouraged to share any relevant resources they had or were aware of, which were subsequently incorporated into the literature review.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed to allow for a systematic thematic analysis in tandem with the other methods. Only contributions relevant to the European context were directly included in the thematic analysis for this specific report. Although, the existing knowledge of institution-related trafficking outside of European and informants' experiences in other experiences were used to support the thematic analysis for this report.

## COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

Alongside the literature review, the initial analysis of the numerous submissions received through the call for evidence pointed to various European contexts where the manifestations of institution-related trafficking were particularly conspicuous and illustrative. The following criteria were used to select case studies:

- Likelihood of gleaning original and distinctive insights
- Existing evidence base on institution-related trafficking (call for evidence submissions and available literature)
- Availability of and existing contacts with potential research informants in the country
- Quality of the data that could be collected
- Potential use for future influencing and advocacy work by Lumos

Amongst the various identified contexts, three countries were ultimately chosen as case studies: Hungary, Ukraine and the Netherlands. Hungary, a Tier 2 Watch List country<sup>4</sup> and a source-transit region, was selected to illustrate the over-representation of children of minority populations in the institutional care system. The case study examines the pattern of children being trafficked out of institutions, as well as the institutionalisation of child victims of human trafficking. Ukraine, a Tier 2 country<sup>5</sup> and a source-transit region, was selected to examine the complicity of institution staff in the trafficking of children into institutions. Additionally, the case considers the vulnerabilities surrounding the trafficking of institutionalised children for exploitation as child soldiers. The Netherlands, a Tier 1 country<sup>6</sup> and a destination region for trafficking, was selected to analyse the common pattern of trafficking and sexual exploitation of institution runaways and care leavers, in particular teenage girls. The case study highlights the existence of institution-related trafficking patterns in a relatively well-resourced and deinstitutionalised child protection system.

Each case study consisted of a detailed review of the available literature on child trafficking and institutional care in the country. Subsequently, the organisations and individuals who had submitted relevant evidence in response to the call were contacted. They were invited to provide further information, take part in key informant interviews and suggest other potential interviewees. Through snowball sampling, 11 key

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<sup>4</sup> As per the US Department of State's 2019 Trafficking in Persons report, Tier 2 Watch List Countries mirror the same characteristics as Tier 2 countries, with the addition of: an increase in the number of victims experiencing severe forms of trafficking; an inability to provide evidence-based outcomes of increased actions to combat severe forms of trafficking as promised in prior years; and the incapacity to meet future commitments to address the issue.

<sup>5</sup> As per the US Department of State's 2019 Trafficking in Persons report, Tier 2 Countries are countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards.

<sup>6</sup> As per the US Department of State's 2019 Trafficking in Persons report, Tier 1 Countries are countries whose governments fully meet the minimum standards of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA).

informants were interviewed across the three case studies. The interviews were semi-structured and covered the following topics:

- Scale, patterns and dynamics
- Risks and drivers
- Funding and voluntourism
- Outcomes and harms
- Counter-trafficking
- Challenges and recommendations

The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The relevant call for evidence submissions, literature and interview transcripts were jointly analysed, emanating in the individual country case study chapters in the report. The country-specific analyses thus differed from the report's general thematic analysis, for which the thematic framework was used as outlined below.

## THEMATIC FRAMEWORK

Upon completion of the data collection process, a thematic framework was built to structure the thematic analysis. This framework dissects each of the four research domains outlined on page 1 with further detail.

### 1. Definitions

- 1.1 Empirical definitions of trafficking linked to institutions
- 1.2 Legal definitions of trafficking linked to institutions (International definitions; National definitions)
- 1.3 Other relevant definitions in the context of institutional care (Child exploitation; Child slavery [and slavery-like practices]; Child smuggling; Child laundering; Child harvesting; Child selling; Child abduction)

### 2. Laws, policies and systems

- 2.1 Governmental actors (International and regional level; National level; Local level)
- 2.2 Corporate actors
- 2.3 Civil society actors

### 3. Scale, patterns and dynamics

- 3.1 Dimensions (Incidence [number of cases]; Trafficking hotspots; Domestic trafficking flows; Transnational trafficking flows)
- 3.2 Types of children's institutions (State-run orphanages and institutions; Non-state-run orphanages and institutions; Institutional care for unaccompanied migrant and refugee children; Health and psychiatric residential facilities; Special schools and boarding schools; Small-group homes; Juvenile justice institutions)
- 3.3 Links to institutionalisation of children (Trafficking into institutions [orphanage trafficking]; Trafficking out of institutions; Institutionalisation of child victims of trafficking; Trafficking and exploitation of care leavers)
- 3.4 Trafficking elements (Means of trafficking [force, fraud, coercion, deception, abuse of power]; Act of trafficking [recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, receipt]; Purpose of trafficking/forms of exploitation [Commodification of children's time and experience; Labour exploitation; Sexual exploitation; Domestic servitude; Child abuse and neglect; Forced begging; Illegal adoption; Online exploitation; Forced marriage; Forced criminality; Child soldiers; Organ harvesting])

#### 4. Risks and drivers

- 4.1 Poverty and socio-economic factors
- 4.2 Disability
- 4.3 Gender
- 4.4 Discrimination
- 4.5 Abuse and neglect
- 4.6 Armed conflict and community violence
- 4.7 Natural disaster
- 4.8 Conflict with the law
- 4.9 Migration, refugees and internally displaced persons
- 4.10 HIV/AIDS and other illnesses
- 4.11 Orphanhood
- 4.12 Harmful outcomes of institutionalisation and trafficking (Short-term wellbeing; Effects of revolving cycle of carers; Long-term psychological development; Long-term physical development; Socio-economic effects on children; Effects on family; Effects on community & society)

### QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The qualitative analysis of the collected data was carried out through NVIVO. The literature, call for evidence submissions and key informant interview transcripts were translated (where necessary), coded, summarised and analysed according to the thematic framework presented above. A detailed framework matrix was created to enable a (“vertical”) reading of the overall evidence base per subtheme. The DFID guidelines on critical appraisal and evidence assessment were used to assess the main characteristics of the body of evidence, distinguishing between four characteristics: (1) Quality of the studies constituting the body of evidence; (2) Size of the body of evidence; (3) Context of the body of evidence; and (4) Consistency of the finding of studies constituting the body of evidence.<sup>7</sup> The framework matrix, critical appraisal and evidence assessment subsequently resulted in the individual thematic chapters included in the report.

### SAFEGUARDING

Lumos has a duty to report any concerns about safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults that may be raised through its research. Given the sensitivity and illegal nature of institution-related trafficking, the research team took measures to ensure the highest level of safeguarding and child protection. For the call for evidence, key informant interviews and country case study interviews, all research informants had to read and sign a statement on safeguarding and personally identifiable information. All informants were required to refrain from mentioning names or identifying personal details or the exact location of children, families, other individuals or children’s institutions in their evidence submission or interview. Anyone with safeguarding concerns was directly signposted to Lumos’ Senior Safeguarding Manager.

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<sup>7</sup> DFID (2014). *op cit*.

## RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

The primary purpose of this research is to discuss and analyse the current evidence base on institution-related trafficking in Europe by means of a qualitative and explorative research design. As this report connects two largely separated fields of knowledge and research, while identifying evidence gaps, it is limited in its ability to make generalisations about scale, patterns, dynamics, risks and drivers for the entire European region. More research is needed to examine the more quantifiable dimensions of institution-related trafficking to further build the evidence base.

Moreover, this report seeks to analyse the *problem* of institution-related trafficking, including scale, patterns, dynamics, risks and drivers. The report does not look at best practice in preventing and countering institution-related trafficking as a *response* to this problem. However, the report does occasionally allude to relevant practice and policy. Further research is needed to properly examine and compare relevant practical responses to institution-related trafficking.

Finally, as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak in 2020, the research team was unable to travel to the three countries selected for the country case studies. This limited the ability to undertake primary research in these countries. Interviews with key informants were instead carried out virtually.