



# THE EMPLOYMENT OF VICTIMS OF FORCED LABOR IN FINLAND

## PREPARED BY

*Åkerlund Iris*  
*Osman Edil*  
*Pesonen Elina*

*Tuominen Jenni*  
*Yao Wei*



**A!**  
Aalto University

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



In this report, we offer Finnish companies a practical way to fight against a global crime, human trafficking, by introducing how to streamline the employment process of victims of forced labour. Human trafficking is an increasing issue around the world as well as in Finland. For creating this report, we have interviewed leading professionals working with the issues in Finland and have utilized different reports and academic literature assessing human trafficking.

According to our research, employing victims of forced labour is beneficial for companies for several different reasons. After finally being treated fairly, the former victims become highly committed and motivated employees that often are very talented and have versatile skill sets. Therefore, these employees form a long-term talent pool for the organizations. From the viewpoint of diversity, employing people from various cultural backgrounds enriches team diversity and offers companies the opportunities to learn new things. Lastly, this is a great way to make contributions to build a more sustainable society.

In this report, we have also identified some potential challenges in the employment related to e.g., resources, finding candidates, legal aspects, and communications. Understanding these potential challenges offers companies an opportunity to be prepared in advance. These challenges were also a starting point for the recommendations presented in the report.

We have divided the recommendations to three different sections: pre-recruitment, recruitment, and after-recruitment. First, we present how companies should prepare themselves for the recruitment by e.g., getting familiar with the topic, doing an internal assessment in terms of company's ability to employ former victims, defining the requirements for the position, and collaborating with other institutions working with the issue. During the recruitment process, employers should build a network, make recruitment available for everyone, divide responsibilities and utilize governments' support. After-recruitment practices should include e.g., focus on clear communications, building social bonds at the workplace, and being prepared to offer flexible arrangements for the employee. In this report, these recommendations are explained in detail, and we also offer lists of potential co-operatives and websites for more information.



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

According to UNODC (n.d.), Human Trafficking is defined as 'the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of people through force, fraud or deception, to exploit them for profit'. The victims of human trafficking are usually from less developed countries, lured by the 'false promise of better lives' (Kragten-Heerdink, Dettmeijer-Vermeulen & Korf, 2018, p.1765) and end up being forced to be engaged in prostitution, forced labor, forced criminal activities, begging, forced marriage and other forms of exploitation (UN, 2020).

The UN's (2020) statistics show that the number of detected victims reported (2018 or most recent) has reached 49,032. In Finland, 123 persons have been accepted as new clients of the Assistance system because of being assessed as victims of human trafficking in 2020 and the total number of clients receiving services from the Assistance system was 916, a figure increased by 35.5% compared to that of 2019 (Finnish Immigration Service, 2021).

Moreover, as a hidden crime, human trafficking is usually committed clandestinely, therefore, it is believed that the volume of human trafficking is largely underestimated, and the published figures are just 'the tip of the iceberg' (Laczko & Gramegna, 2003, p.183; Gibbons & Stoklosa, 2016).

Human trafficking is a severe violation of human rights and has raised increasing social concerns across the world. Responding to the UN's proposal, more than 170 countries and regions have joined the UN Protocol, to fight against the rampant trafficking of human beings through law enforcement. However, due to the difficulty in identifying victims, misrepresentation of types of human trafficking, heterogeneity of legal procedures and structures enforced and victims' unwillingness to report their situations, the occurrence of human trafficking can still be found in various economic sectors, thereby requiring global efforts, from not only authorities but also other social participants, to combat the crime.

Recent years have seen the presence of businesses in fighting human trafficking by applying more standardized employment policies, exerting strict supply chain management, and offering work placement for previous victims of human trafficking. For example, supported by the charity City Heart, the British local retail chain-Co-op has taken initiatives to help human trafficking victims by offering job opportunities and creating a matching system that connects potential employers and those in need. Co-op themselves offer a 4-week paid internship in their company, and after the 4-weeks they guarantee a job interview for the intern that can result in a permanent job. The employees are also offered mentoring and support during the internship (Hyväksikäytöstä reiluun työelämään. 2021. 49.). Similarly, Apple also has recently announced a program to employ human trafficking victims in their stores for behind-the-scenes jobs.

Unfortunately, in Finland, the initiatives in helping victims of human trafficking from the business side remain limited. As one of the leading businesses in the retailing sector, S Group has initiated the ideas of assisting victims of human trafficking by offering work opportunities to them and has already taken the first steps by employing former victims in its restaurant branch- HOK-Elanto through the cooperation with Victim Support Finland (Rikosuhripäivystys) and National Assistance System. However, for most other companies, taking initiatives to help former victims of human trafficking doesn't seem to be an item on their business agenda, because of either little awareness of the situation or no clue about approaching the problem.

Indeed, employing human trafficking victims is much more challenging than ordinary work placement, not only because it is difficult to reach out to suitable candidates, but also because the victims usually suffer from trauma, even after being released from trafficking, thereby having difficulty in reintegration into society and even experiencing stigma (Gjermani et al, 2008). Therefore, it requires more nuanced approaches to the work placement of human trafficking victims, to offer them both the ability to make a living independently and the support that help them get back on their feet with dignity.



# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

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The objective of our project is to explore solutions that could facilitate the employment of human trafficking victims. Given the various forms of human trafficking, we would like to narrow down the scope of the project by focusing specifically on victims of forced labor, who represent the largest portion of human trafficking victims in Finland. Guided by the overarching question about how to conceptualize the employment (finding candidates, recruiting, onboarding) of the victims of forced labor in Finland, to proceed with the project, we decided to break down the question into two sub-questions as follows:

- 1. How to streamline the process of the employment of victims of forced labor?**
- 2. What are the challenges and benefits associated with the employment process?**

As a final product, we would like to create a report, from the perspective of potential employers, that articulates the benefits and challenges of the employment of human trafficking victims, proposes the solutions to the challenges, and ends with a sound roadmap outlining critical steps in the employment of human trafficking victims that could hopefully be applicable to other business practitioners.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

For creating a comprehensive picture of conceptualization of the employment of victims of forced labor, we aimed to utilize various sources such as interviews, studies, and academic literature. In the following, we will go through the chosen sources and justify why we found them relevant.

Since there is only a limited number of studies exploring the topic in the Finnish context and the extent of the phenomenon is poorly known, we decided to utilize a qualitative approach to gain a better understanding of the topic. As stated by Justesen & Mik-Meyer (2012, as cited in Silverman 2016) qualitative research “seeks understanding” and “describes phenomena in context”, which were also starting points for first understanding the issue and then creating the best practices.

Since semi-structured interviews fit well when studying more complicated research questions (Fylan 2005), we decided to utilize semi-structured interviews when interviewing Finnish professionals working with the issue. All our interviewees had a different approach to the topic and thus helped us to gain a comprehensive picture of it. Due to our limited amount of time and resources, we had to prioritize which parties we would like to interview, and which interviews would offer the best-added value. We decided not to interview the former victims since our interviewees such as Pia Marttila work with the victims on daily basis and are well aware of the situations of many former victims. In addition, discussing such a traumatic and sensitive topic with a former victim did not seem necessary in this case.

We have made in total four interviews with experts from different organizations who have extensive knowledge of the issues about human trafficking and the assistance to former victims.

## SATU VENNALA

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HR Manager at HOK-Elanto

Vennala has been highly involved in employing victims of human trafficking at HOK-Elanto and operating as a pioneer in the industry. Vennala's interview offered us a great insight into the employer's perspective.

## PIA MARTTILA

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Senior advisor at Victim Support Finland

Marttila's responsibilities at Victim Support Finland include helping victims of human trafficking by e.g., offering support through the criminal process and directing the victims to social services, the Assistance system, and mental health services. Marttila's interview helped us to understand better the phenomena and how Victim Support Finland could co-operate with companies aiming to employ victims of human trafficking.

## VEIKKO MÄKELÄ

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Project manager at Assistance System for Victims of Human Trafficking (Finnish Immigration Services)

Mäkelä's responsibilities include helping victims of human trafficking to access the labor market, raising awareness of human trafficking, and encouraging companies to take concrete actions to tackle the issue. Our interview with Mäkelä offered us a better understanding of the phenomena in Finland, and how companies could potentially be involved more efficiently.



## TELLE BENAÏSSA

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Service manager at TE Office

TE Office offers different kinds of services related to employment in Finland. We did not have enough time and resources to have a 1-hour interview with them, but since we wanted to get a better insight into how they see the current situation of human trafficking in Finland, we still sent them a list of questions related to the topic.

TE Office pointed out how they are familiar with the issue and told that they have taken some actions. For instance, TE Office has participated in Ministry lead working groups that aim to prevent the exploitation of foreign labour through co-operation with public authorities.

## SECONDARY MATERIALS

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For this project, we also utilized several different studies exploring the topic. One of the most significant sources was a study published by the European Criminal Policy Institute, HEUNI, as a part of the IKUT-project in 2021 (Hyväksikäytöstä reiluun työelämään, 2021). The project targets the development of working life skills and capabilities of human trafficking victims.

INTERVIEWEES

# 3 FINDINGS

By the 4 interviews and HEUNI's study, we got a vision of the employment process and the key aspects for the employer and the employee. Based on our research questions we decided to focus on the company's point of view on the report. The interviewees had a lot of similar opinions of the benefits and challenges which can occur. In the following sections, those are discussed.

## 3.1 BENEFITS

### COMMITTED AND MOTIVATED WORKFORCE

One of the main benefits from the viewpoint of the employers is that the former victims of human trafficking are so used to working long days for a small compensation that, when they are finally being treated fairly, they become highly committed and motivated employees (P. Marttila, interview 21.10.2021; V. Mäkelä, interview 26.10.2021). Moreover, these applicants are usually very talented and have multiple skills but are not being aware of them themselves. Therefore, these employees form a long-term talent pool for the organization since being suitable for also further promotions.

## ENRICHED DIVERSITY

From the viewpoint of diversity, employing people from various cultural backgrounds enriches team diversity and offers companies the opportunities to learn new things (Pattnaik & Tripathy, 2014). For example, practically, as mentioned by Vennala, in the catering industry, recruiting employees from different culinary cultures makes it possible to create a more varied offer on the restaurant menu. Therefore, the enriched diversity could be considered a competitive advantage if managed properly (Sabharwal, 2014).

## CSR AND IMPROVED REPUTATION

Moreover, by taking part in the initiatives to help the most vulnerable and fight against global crime, companies find ways to perform their corporate social responsibility and make contributions to build a more sustainable society in a meaningful way. Especially when the awareness of human trafficking issues is relatively low in Finland, taking a lead in such initiatives is a good option for companies to improve their reputation and build a strong employer brand (V. Mäkelä, interview 26.10.2021).



## 3.2 CHALLENGES

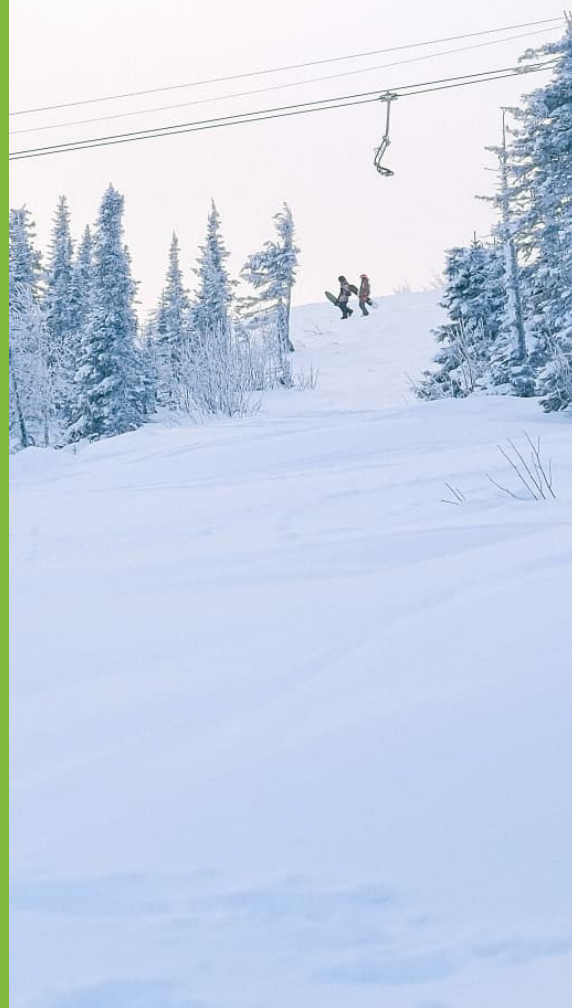
Even if employing former victims of forced labour offers various different benefits for companies, there are also some challenges that should be considered. Being prepared for the potential challenges affecting pre-recruitment, recruitment, and after-recruitment processes, supports succeeding with the employment.

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## ATTRACTING CANDIDATES

One challenge is that many companies don't have a lot of knowledge about human trafficking or the current situation in Finland. The topic might seem foreign and something that is not present in Finland. The importance of raising awareness about the topic was considered a big factor in the HEUNI study to improve the future employment of Human trafficking victims (Hyväksikäytöstä reiluun työelämään 2021, p.127-128.). Employing former victims would first require raising awareness of the phenomena amongst the recruiting personnel and also throughout the company so that the culture and environment are inclusive and welcoming.

Another challenge for the companies is how to find and attract the right candidates for the jobs, and how to reach the target group. In the study of HEUNI, it was mentioned that information about the victim status can come to light from the person or organizations helping them within the limits and obligations of customer privacy and confidentiality. The issue may sometimes not come known at all if the former victim keeps it private. It's important to acknowledge that the information on the victim status is sensitive and not public and it should not be communicated even within the organization without permission. Defining a person as a victim of human trafficking is not unambiguous when the goal is to recover from it and move beyond that. (Hyväksikäytöstä reiluun työelämään 2021, p.67.)



## RESOURCES

The employment of human trafficking victims is a time-consuming process. It requires more resources, in comparison to normal recruitment, due to the need for patience and repetition. All human trafficking victims are individually affected by their previous experiences but generally, they need to be supported regarding the task, organizational culture, and overall, the ethical way of working in Finland. Therefore, it is important to make sure that the employee's background is been checked as a part of the recruitment by, for example, Victim Support Finland (S. Vennala, interview 19.10.2021). However, this might become a challenge in the future since Victim Support Finland doesn't have unlimited resources regarding supporting the recruitment, in addition to their other services (P. Marttila, interview 21.10.2021). In the future, when the process of recruiting victims of human trafficking is more established in the Finnish society, it could therefore be highly beneficial to receive a higher and more comprehensive input from the TE Office.

When it comes to the human trafficking victims' distorted view of the working culture in Finland, they usually lack knowledge regarding employee rights and the formal employment relationship. Therefore, a part of the recruitment process should always be to discuss the topic and make sure that all parties are aware of their rights (such as paid sick leave) and know what is expected from whom (P. Marttila 21.10.2021; V. Mäkelä 26.10.2021). In addition to providing the right information, these employees would benefit from having a contact person outside their team, who could guide in day-to-day questions regarding both task- and culture-related topics. This requires additional resources from the employer but is crucial for the long-term well-being and success of both the employee and employer.

Furthermore, it is important to be aware that many of these former victims of human trafficking are staying on a resident permit, which requires having a permanent source of income. In many cases, these people are staying in Finland together with their families whereas the family permit requires that the household's income should be a minimum of 2600 euros after taxes (P. Marttila, interview 21.10.2021). Within the field of retail- and service industry the minimum wages based on the collective agreements are rarely that high, especially not when the employee is a beginner with little or no previous experience. This might be a challenge for the employer since the main idea is that these people are recruited based on a real need, not charity.

## RESIDENCE PERMIT ISSUES

For a foreign victim of human trafficking, the right to work is based on a residence permit or an application for it (Hyväksikäytöstä reiluun työelämään 2021 p. 28). Victims of human trafficking may have problems with a residence permit, fear of losing the permit, and getting deported. Having or losing a job can affect the residence permit of an employee or employee's family members permits. (P. Marttila, interview 21.10.2021.)

Victims of human trafficking may get a temporary residence permit in Finland based on the victim status if they meet some requirements, for example, staying in Finland is necessary for participating in a court proceeding. Persons in a particularly vulnerable situation may get a continuous residence permit. (Oleskelulupa ihmiskaupan uhriksi joutuneelle.) Most victims of human trafficking in Finland have a residence permit for a secondary reason because the permit for human trafficking victims is strongly associated with the recognition and pretrial investigations of the human trafficking crime. Some of the victims can belong to a group that has the right to work in Finland without a residence permit (Hyväksikäytöstä reiluun työelämään 2021 p.30).

Legislation for example on issuing of a temporary residence permit for a victim of human trafficking, on persons right to work based on a residence permit, and on the possibility to be granted an extended permit for those whose rights have been neglected by the employer are found on the Aliens Act (2004/301) (Aliens Act 52a §, 78 §, 54b §). The new possibility for victims of labor exploitation to get an extended residence permit for one year for job seeking in Finland was also mentioned in one interview (V. Mäkelä, interview 26.10.2021).

In conclusion, there are varying conditions and reasons for granting residence permits. From the employer's perspective, it is good to acknowledge that employees might need a residence permit to have the right to work and challenges with a residence permit can affect the employee emotionally. And in addition, employment of an illegally staying third-country national can lead to financial sanctions for the employer (Employment Contracts Act 11a:1§, 11a:3§).

## NEED FOR INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

As mentioned in the interviews and the HEUNI's study, victims of forced labor are a heterogeneous group and their work placement therefore should be considered case by case (Hyväksikäytöstä reiluun työelämään, Marttila interview 21.10.2021, Mäkelä interview 26.10.2021). They have various backgrounds, most of them have been in stressful situations, some might have experienced trauma (Marttila interview 21.10.2021), and some of them might have been exploited in other ways in addition to labor exploitation (Mäkelä interview 26.10.2021). Besides previous experience, their levels of ability to work can also differ. Some are more experienced and skillful than others, whereas some might need more support to become able to work, for the lack of, for example, necessary professional and language skills and some are even more vulnerable for having poor daily management skills. (Mäkelä interview 26.10.2021.)

After being recruited, in the interviews came out the fact that former victims might have other ongoing processes such as hearings and police investigations to attend during the working days and these processes usually take a long time, thereby requiring the employers to have more flexible arrangements for these employees.

Moreover, it would be ideal for the victims to have an opportunity to learn Finnish in addition to working in a language course, but that would require adjusting schedules and extra arrangements from the employer. (P. Marttila interview 21.10.2021.)

The heterogeneity of former victims makes it challenging for companies to give individualized supports to the recruits based on their situations such as personal competencies and availability, while the peculiarity of their previous experience further requires the employers to use more nuanced approaches to give support, making it even more challenging as compared to ordinary work placement.





## NEED FOR MORE ACTIVE CO-OPERATION

The employment of former victims of human trafficking is not an easy task that can be accomplished solely by employers and therefore, requires inputs from other institutions such as TE Office and victims supporting organizations to facilitate the process. According to the interviews, victims of human trafficking could need more personalized services from TE Office (P. Marttila interview 21.10.2021). 70 % of the respondents to the HEUNI's survey felt that the lack of rehabilitative integration services or employment services was a major obstacle to the employment of victims of human trafficking. The biggest challenges in the employment services are the lack of time and employees' lack of experience on how to raise the difficult topic with the clients.

The current legislation also affects the situation. No specialized employment services are catering to human trafficking victims, but the employees do have an opportunity to offer human trafficking victims individualized support. (Hyväksikäytöstä reiluun työelämään 2021, p. 127-128.) We asked has TE Office thought about offering more tailored services for human trafficking victims. According to their answer, their focus is more on the prevention of exploitation and their services for jobseekers already cover the employment of this target group (T. Benaïssa interview 28.10.2021).

The HEUNI study highlights the need to facilitate more co-operation with employers and victim supporting organizations and raise the recognition and prevention of forced labor situations. It recommended building better networks that bring together responsible employers and other facilitators that work with forced labor victims so that in the future the victims of human trafficking could more easily find a pathway into fair employment. (Hyväksikäytöstä reiluun työelämään. 2021. Pg. 132-139.)

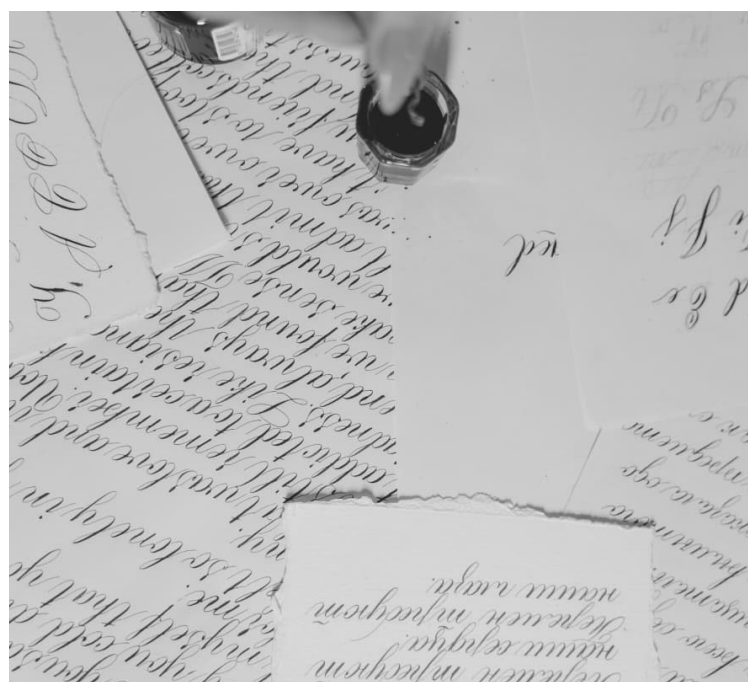
## LACK OF COMMON LANGUAGE

As mentioned earlier, there are also some potential communication-related challenges. First, the former victims often have limited language skills in both English and Finnish. Therefore, there might be communication barriers in the work community. Sometimes the communication can be challenged even more by very practical challenges – for instance, wearing face masks might challenge the articulation, and working in a very noisy work environment might make the communication even more difficult. (V. Mäkelä interview 26.10.2021; S. Vennala interview 19.10.2021).

The lack of a common language might be an issue in several different situations. For instance, the communication issue might appear as a need to go through things multiple times when onboarding. This might slower the orientation process. (S. Vennala interview 19.10.2021). Taking care of a proper orientation is important from the legal perspective as well. The general obligations of the employer and the employee are comprehensively regulated in the Employment Contracts Act (2001/55) chapters 2 and 3. In addition, employers must take care of the health and safety of the employees, to provide adequate information on the hazards of the workplace and ensure that employees

receive adequate information on work-related equipment, methods, and safe working practices. (Occupational Safety and Health Act 2002/738 2:8 §, 2:14 §.). Taking care of these obligations might be challenging if there are significant difficulties with finding a common language.

Ensuring that the employee understands what has been discussed or agreed is especially important when going through other legal documents such as working contracts. Also, in different job positions understanding certain words is especially crucial for job security and customers' safety. For instance, in the restaurant industry understanding, different allergies are crucial. (S. Vennala interview 19.10.2021).





## TRUST

Communication might be also challenged due to the lack of trust and a sense of security. Due to their traumatic working history, the former victims are often unwilling to bring up if they don't understand what was discussed or instructed. As pointed out by one of the interviewees, if you ask if they have understood, the answer is invariable yes. (S. Vennala, interview 19.10.2021; V. Mäkelä, interview 26.10.2021).

The former victims struggling with their Finnish are also in a more challenging position compared to the native or fluent speakers of Finnish in the workplace. Native speakers of the dominant language have better access to different formal and informal communication channels in the organization which helps them to bond better with their colleagues (Marschan-Piekkaria et al., 1999 as cited in Tange & Lauring 2009). However, building these relationships with colleagues is especially important when building trust that is a prerequisite for successful employment.

## MARKETING OF THE BUSINESS CASE

Companies might struggle with deciding how to communicate – or if to communicate at all – about the employment of victims of forced labor. Raising awareness of the issue is especially important to prevent it in Finland and globally (V. Mäkelä, interview 26.10.201; Hyväksikäytöstä reiluun työelämään 2021), and as one of the interviewees pointed out, communicating about these kinds of projects might encourage also other companies to employ former victims of human trafficking. However, all our interviewees highlighted, that communicating these topics must be done especially sensibly and with the highest respect to the employees' privacy.

## PRIVACY

There are several different – easily overlooked – challenges that should be considered in external and internal communications. For instance, announcing widely that an employer has hired employees in co-operation with Victim Support Finland or communicating about it internally might lead to a situation, where former victims' ongoing pretrial investigations are in the spotlight against their will and best interest. In the worst scenario, the former, abusive employers might find out about the investigations, or it can cause other legal trouble for the former victim (P. Marttila, interview 21.10.2021). Legislation related to the publicity of pretrial investigation and its material can be found in the Criminal Investigation Act (805/2011) and Act on the Openness of Governments Activities (621/1999).

Privacy issues are an essential part of internal communications as well. Not everyone in the company needs to know about the employment of former victims. (V. Mäkelä, interview 26.10.2021; S. Vennala, interview 19.10.2021). Each one of us deserves an opportunity to work in a safe working environment without a need to share the most sensitive and traumatic life experiences.

## 4 RECOMMENDATIONS



After articulating the challenges and benefits of taking part in the work placement of former victims of forced labor, we would like to make some recommendations based on the interviews that could solve part of the aforementioned problems and facilitate the process. Before elaborating on the practical steps that could be taken during the employment process, we would like to highlight the importance of corporate culture and value.

Corporate culture and values do not take shape in a short time but are the cornerstones of the initiatives of employing former victims. Because the employment process could usually be more iterative and time-consuming compared to ordinary employment procedures, to be a proper employer, the company should be long-term-oriented and patient enough as well as willing to create an inclusive and relaxing work environment for the recruits to adapt in the new workplace. Therefore, inclusive corporate culture and long-term orientation are the traits that make a company a suitable employer for former victims.

“

*Corporate culture and value are the cornerstones.*

”

# THE ROADMAP



Given the prerequisite of having an inclusive and corporate culture, we will then give several practical recommendations based on the employment process that is roughly divided into three stages:

**Pre-recruitment**

**Recruitment**

**After-recruitment**

The suggestions can collectively constitute a roadmap (see next page) that could guide the way of the work placement of former victims for the companies that are interested in participating in the initiatives.

## PRE-RECRUITMENT

- Get yourself familiar with the topic
- Internal assessment
- Define the requirements
- Collaborate with other institutions

## RECRUITMENT

- Build a network
- Make recruitment process available for everyone
- Divide responsibility
- Utilize government's support

## AFTER-RECRUITMENT

- Assign a contact person
- Clear communication
- Flexible arrangements
- Build social bonds

# 4.1 PRE-RECRUITMENT

## GET YOURSELF FAMILIAR WITH THE TOPIC

Given the low awareness of the human trafficking issues in Finland, companies who are intended to take part in the initiative of employment of former human trafficking victims should firstly learn more about the topic to have some basic understanding of, for example, the pervasiveness of the problem in Finland, the complexity and sensitivity of the topic and what has been by others by now. To get access to such information, companies could look for related news from social media by themselves or contact official institutes for more detailed and country-specific data.

Useful resources (see appendix 1 for more information):

- The European Institute for Crime Preventing and Control, affiliated with the United Nations / Euroopan kriminaalipolitiikan instituutti HEUNI <https://heuni.fi/frontpage>
- Ihmiskauppa.fi <https://www.ihmiskauppa.fi>
- Hyväksikäytöstä reiluun työelämään. Selvitys ulkomaalaistaustaisten ihmiskaupan uhrien työllisyyspalveluiden järjestämisestä Suomessa. <https://heuni.fi/-/report-series-96a>
- Finland fights human trafficking – Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings / Suomi torjuu ihmiskauppaa: Ihmiskaupan vastainen toimintaohjelma <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/163078>

## INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

With all the aforementioned challenges, the employment of former human trafficking victims is an initiative that requires thorough consideration. Before deciding to employ former victims, companies should do an internal assessment to see whether they could be suitable employers. The things that companies can consider include whether they have a proper corporate culture, whether they have sufficient resources to support the process, and, in a practical way, whether they are really in need of employing more people.



## DEFINE THE REQUIREMENTS

Defining the requirements for the position is a crucial part of any recruitment process, and recruiting former victims is not an exception. However, it might offer an opportunity to go through the previously considered requirements more critically. As mentioned earlier, the former victims might not be as familiar with the working culture in Finland or might have limited language skills in the working language. Employers often require fluent Finnish even if it's not necessary for the job (Helsingin Sanomat 15.11.2021), which might hamper the opportunities of the former victims in their working life. Thus, employers should go through the criterion as critically as they can.

## COLLABORATE WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS

Since assisting former victims of human trafficking is not an easy task to accomplish by the employers alone, it is required to collaborate with other organizations such as charities and governmental institutes. As different organizations focus on different areas, for example, among the two institutions we have contacted during the project time, Victim Support Finland offers personalized service for victims when they are in need, while the National Assistance System project focuses on improving former victims' employability skills and educating corporates about the topic of human trafficking. (V. Mäkelä, interview 26.10.2021).

Useful resources:

- Victims Support Finland/  
Rikosuhripäivystys  
<http://www.riku.fi>
- Finnish Immigration Service/  
Maahanmuuttovirasto  
<https://migri.fi>
- TE Services /  
TE-palvelut  
<https://www.te-palvelut.fi>

(see appendix 1  
for more information)

## 4.2 RECRUITMENT

Useful resources:

- Suomen Pakolaisapu  
<https://pakolaisapu.fi>
  - Startup refugees  
<https://startuprefugees.com>
- Reception Centres /
- Vastaanottokeskukset  
<https://migri.fi/vastaanottokeskukset>

(see appendix 1  
for more information)

### BUILD A NETWORK

One challenge is how the parties find each other, so the employers need to cooperate with a party that works with this target group. Job advertisements might not reach the victims, and they also need a party like Victim Support Finland (RIKU) to inform them about the recruitments.

RIKU can organize recruitment events with employers, but they have a lot of other tasks to perform too and limited resources. To get more businesses involved, joint recruitment events for several companies interested in hiring could be one option. (P. Marttila, interview 21.10.2021.) TE Office could also be one part of the road map. According to the interviewee, TE Services could have a collaborative role for example in marketing employment opportunities to jobseekers, but any official participation should be agreed separately by the management. (T. Benaïssa, interview 28.10.2021.)

### MAKE RECRUITMENT PROCESS AVAILABLE FOR EVERYONE

Besides actually trying to recruit specifically former victims, the companies should ensure that their recruitment process is available to all job seekers. This is possible only by companies collaborating with the right expert institutions, such as the Victim Support Finland and the National Assistance system, who for their part can provide support for the former victims in applying for the positions available at collaborative partners. Therefore, it can be seen as a way of headhunting the right former victims with the help of the expert institutions. By keeping the recruitment process available for everyone organizations protect the privacy of each recruited former victim since no different processes are created for different job seekers.

## DIVIDE RESPONSIBILITIES

Practically, collaborating with other institutions also help potential employers save effort in, for example, doing a background check of candidates and offering language training. It is good to know, for instance, about an employee's working history. And it is the employer's duty to ensure that a foreign employee has the right to reside in Finland and the right to work in Finland, which are two different things (Työnantajan velvollisuudet ulkomaista työvoimaa palkatessa). In inter-organizational cooperation, the involved parties need to clarify their roles in the collaboration. As one interviewee pointed out: there should be a clear, well-defined division of the responsibilities so that the employing company only bears the responsibilities of the employer and victims of human trafficking get legal and other support needed elsewhere.

## UTILIZE GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

Pay subsidy and work trial are a few practical tools that companies can utilize when employing a human trafficking victim. Pay subsidy aims to support the employment and professional competence of the applicant. The pay subsidy conditions include that part of the unemployment is the lack of professional competence and the supported job would improve it. The pay subsidy approval also demands that the employer has paid all its taxes and other legal duties and has not left any wages unpaid, and they also must pay a fair and reasonable wage stipulated by the collective agreement (TES).

A work trial is an opportunity for the former victims to do a trial period in the workplace for a maximum of six months in the same company. During this trial period, there is no employment relationship established, but a contract is made about the trial period, locations, work tasks and goals, the payment of unemployment benefits, and the daily and weekly working times. The work trial could provide a supported start for employment. (Hyväksikäytöstä reiluun työelämään 2021, p. 40-43.)

### Useful resources:

- Obligations of the employer when hiring foreign labour / Työnantajan velvollisuudet ulkomaista työvoimaa palkatessa <https://migri.fi/en/employer-s-obligations> / <https://migri.fi/tyonantajan-velvollisuudet-ulkomaista-tyovoimaa-palkatessa>
- Guidelines for Hiring a Foreign Employee / Ohjeita ulkomaalaista työntekijää palkattaessa <https://www.te-palvelut.fi/tyonantajalle/loyda-tyontekija/tyolupapalvelut/ohjeita-ulkomaalaista-tyontekijaa-palkattaessa>
- Applying for a pay subsidy - Palkkatuen hakeminen <https://www.te-palvelut.fi/tyonantajalle/loyda-tyontekija/palkkatuki/palkkatuki-hakeminen>

(see appendix 1 for more information)

## 4.3 AFTER-RECRUITMENT

When people have been previously exploited, it can be hard for them to trust new people. Trust building has thus been a fundamental step in the employment of former human trafficking victims mentioned in the interviews and should be taken into consideration in both recruiting and onboarding processes. To restore the recruits' trust in organizations, several things can be done by the employing companies.

### ASSIGN A CONTACT PERSON

There was a shared view between the 3 interviewees that when employing victims of human trafficking, it is good for them to have a contact person (S. Vennala, interview 19.10.2021; P. Marttila, interview 21.10.2021; V. Mäkelä, interview 26.10.2021). The employer company could offer a neutral mentor who can help the new employees and talk with them regularly. As mentioned before, former victims might have communication problems in the workplace for the fear of being punished for expressing their thoughts freely, the existence of a person who can be counted on within the organization could thus facilitate the communication. A contact person could be assigned at the beginning of the employment process and play a role in facilitating for example the interviews, the early stage of integration, and communication between the recruits and line managers. However, the contact person should not interfere too much in the affairs happening in the workplace to reduce the recruits' dependency. In addition, considering the privacy issue, it could be wise to market the contact person in the company as a mentor for all new employees and not label the mentor for human trafficking victims.

### CLEAR COMMUNICATION

As mentioned in the challenges section, the employees might lack the knowledge of employee's rights and working culture in Finland and have also limited language skills in the working language. Due to that, there should be a high emphasis on clear communication. For instance, basic employment legislation and employee rights should be gone through carefully during the recruitment process, as well as the norms and habits of the workplace. Employers should also ensure that the recruits have the needed tools to have the autonomy to express their thoughts in the workplace and be equal members of the community.

## FLEXIBLE ARRANGEMENTS

Moreover, if the new employee has other ongoing processes such as a police investigation or trial where they must attend to, the companies may need to make special arrangements for the employee as a caring employer. Also making it possible for the employee to participate in language courses etc might help the former victim to integrate more into society.

## BUILD SOCIAL BONDS

Building social bonds in the workplace is also crucial for successful employment. It can facilitate the trust-building process and the employees' integration into society. Creating a relaxed working atmosphere that encourages co-operation and participation of everyone in the workplace might seem a challenging task. However, the employer can support creating a safe working environment by ensuring that the employees have opportunities to meet each other and have also informal discussions at the workplace. As pointed out by one of the interviewees, things such as taking part in after-work activities can also be a good opportunity for the recruits to build ties with their co-workers (S. Vennala, interview 19.10.2021).



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## Legislation:

Act on the Openness of Governments Activities (Laki viranomaisten toiminnan julkisuudesta) 621/1999 <https://finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/1999/19990621>

Aliens Act (Ulkomaalaislaki) 301/2004 <https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2004/20040301>

Criminal Investigation Act (Esitutkintalaki) 805/2011

<https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2011/20110805>

Employment Contracts Act (Työsopimuslaki) 55/2001

<https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2001/20010055>

Occupational Safety and Health Act (Työturvallisuuslaki) 738/2002

<https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2002/20020738>

# APPENDIX 1

## LINKS FOR USEFUL INFORMATION

### Organizations working with victims of human trafficking in Finland

- Victims Support Finland / Rikosuhrapäivystys <http://www.riku.fi>
- Finnish Immigration Service / Maahanmuuttovirasto <https://migri.fi>
- The Assistance system for victims of human trafficking / Ihmiskaupan uhrien auttamisjärjestelmä <https://migri.fi/ihmiskaupan-uhrien-auttamisjarjestelma>
- The Finnish Refugee Advice Center / Pakolaisneuvonta ry <https://www.pakolaisneuvonta.fi>
- MONIKA – Multicultural Women’s Association, Finland / Monika-Naiset liitto ry <https://monikanaiset.fi>
- Pro-tukipiste ry <https://protukipiste.fi>
- TE Services / TE-palvelut <https://www.te-palvelut.fi>
- Suomen Pakolaisapu <https://pakolaisapu.fi>
- Startup refugees <https://startuprefugees.com>
- Reception Centres / Vastaanottokeskukset <https://migri.fi/vastaanottokeskukset>

### Some other organizations related to human trafficking

- The European Institute for Crime Preventing and Control, affiliated with the United Nations / Euroopan kriminaalipolitiikan instituutti HEUNI <https://heuni.fi/frontpage>
- Non-discrimination ombudsman / Yhdenvertaisuusvaltuutettu <https://syrjinta.fi/etusivu>
- Ministry of Justice / Oikeusministeriö <https://oikeusministerio.fi/etusivu>

### Information for employers on hiring

- Find an employee / Löydä työntekijä <https://www.te-palvelut.fi/tyonantajalle/loyda-tyontekija>
- For employers / Työnantajalle <https://migri.fi/tyonantajalle>
- Foreign employee / Ulkomainen työntekijä <https://www.tyosuojelu.fi/tyosuhde/ulkomainen-tyontekija>
- Obligations of the employer when hiring foreign labour / Työnantajan velvollisuudet ulkomaista työvoimaa palkatessa <https://migri.fi/en/employer-s-obligations/> <https://migri.fi/tyonantajan-velvollisuudet-ulkomaista-tyovoimaa-palkatessa>
- Guidelines for Hiring a Foreign Employee / Ohjeita ulkomaalaista työntekijää palkattaessa <https://www.te-palvelut.fi/tyonantajalle/loyda-tyontekija/tyolupapalvelut/ohjeita-ulkomaalaista-tyontekijaa-palkattaessa>
- Applying for a pay subsidy – Palkkatuen hakeminen <https://www.te-palvelut.fi/tyonantajalle/loyda-tyontekija/palkkatuki/palkkatuki-hakeminen>
- Organizing a work trial - Tarjoa työkokeilu <https://www.te-palvelut.fi/en/palvelut/-/fsc/view/service/60c1a83b-9fbe-452e-b8ce-5706ec699897/organising-a-work-trial-at-a-workplace/KR2%3BProviding+employment>



## For more information on human trafficking

- Ihmiskauppa.fi <https://www.ihmiskauppa.fi>
- Hyväksikäytöstä reiluun työelämään. Selvitys ulkomaalaistaustaisten ihmiskaupan uhrien työllisyyspalveluiden järjestämisestä Suomessa. <https://heuni.fi/-/report-series-96a>
- Finland fights human trafficking – Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings / Suomi torjuu ihmiskauppaa: Ihmiskaupan vastainen toimintaohjelma <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/163078>
- Ihmiskaupan vastainen työ <https://oikeusministerio.fi/ihmiskaupan-vastainen-tyo>
- Prevention of human trafficking / Ihmiskaupan ehkäiseminen <https://stm.fi/ihmiskauppa>
- Ihmiskaupan uhrien auttaminen <https://www.kuntaliitto.fi/yleiskirjeet/2016/ihmiskaupan-uhrien-auttaminen>
- Non-discrimination ombudsman / Yhdenvertaisuusvaltuutettu <https://syrjinta.fi/ihmiskaupparaportoija>
- Fair labour project - Reilu työelämä hanke <https://pakolaisapu.fi/reilutyoelama/>
- Trafficking in human being is a human rights challenge / Ihmiskauppa on ihmisoikeushaaste <https://intermin.fi/poliisiasiat/ihmiskauppa>
- A victim of human trafficking can be any one of us / Ihmiskaupan uhri voi olla kuka tahansa <https://www.riku.fi/erilaisia-rikoksia/ihmiskauppa/>
- Ihmiskaupan vastainen työ <https://monikanaiset.fi/ihmiskaupan-vastainen-tyo/>

# APPENDIX 2 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

## Satu Vennala, S Group 19.10.2021

- How long have you been working in the S Group?
- What are your current job responsibilities?
- What are specific things you do with the issues related to the employment of victims of human trafficking?
- In terms of the employment of former victims of human trafficking, what kinds of steps are needed in practice?
- Are there any preparations you need to do before the recruitment process?
- How to find and attract the right candidates?
- Do you cooperate with any institutions or organizations (official or non-official) to reach out to the right candidates? If yes, are there any special considerations/criteria in choosing which institutions to cooperate with?
- What would be the best channel for potential employees to contact the S Group?
- Now when the municipal experiment (kuntakokeilu) has started in some regions in Finland and the municipality is responsible for employment services, should municipalities be somehow informed on the fact that S Group could possibly offer jobs to victims of human trafficking?
- Are there any basic requirements (e.g. language, study background) that the candidates usually should fulfill?
- How does a typical recruitment procedure looklike? Are there any differences in the procedures compared to the routine recruitment?
- What should be taken into consideration when onboarding former victims of human trafficking? What have you done to onboard these new recruits?
- What measures do you take to support former victims in finding their equal place in the Finnish society, so that they don't become victims later again?
- Is S Group helping the new recruits in some of the aspects of their personal life? Are they offered legal counseling/supportservices?
- What kind of factors support the employment of former victims of human trafficking?
- What aspects can cause challenges to the employment process?
- What legal aspects should be considered?
- What kind of legislation you have had to take into consideration when hiring former victims of human trafficking?
- How do you ensure that employees understand the details of the job contract? What about the basic obligations of the employer and employee?
- What benefits you think such initiatives have brought to your company? (practically/culturally?)
- After you've had some experience in employing human trafficking victims, what tips/advice you would tell other companies who want to offer jobs to these victims? How could they start/what should their first steps be?
- Have you faced any communication related challenges when employing victims of human trafficking?
- Have you thought about communicating this externally or internally? Why or why not?
- What kind of communication related advises would you give to companies interested in employing victims of human trafficking?
- Any things that we didn't ask but you think are worth mentioning?

## **Pia Marttila, Victim Support Finland (Rikosuhripäivystys) 21.10.2021**

- What are your current job responsibilities in Victim Support Finland (“Rikosuhripäivystys”)?
- What are specific things Victim Support Finland / you do with the issues related to the employment of victims of human trafficking?
- How victims find your organization?
- What is the current situation of human trafficking issues in Finland, more specifically forced labor?
- In terms of the employment of former victims of human trafficking, what kinds of steps are needed in practice?
- What should be taken into consideration when recruiting and onboarding victims of human trafficking?
- What kinds of business you think are suitable employers of former victims of forced labor?
- What would be the best channel for potential employees to contact the employer?
- Which institutions/organizations should companies cooperate with when looking for potential employees / hiring human trafficking victims? Could other companies contact RIKU?
- How can Victim Support Finland be part and help victims of human trafficking to find jobs / help companies who want to hire victims of human trafficking?
- How could Victim Support Finland be part of the roadmap we are creating?
- Now when the municipal experiment (kuntakokeilu) has started in some regions in Finland and the municipality is responsible for employment services, how do you think that could affect to employment of human trafficking victims? (Should municipalities be somehow informed for example on the fact that S Group could possibly offer jobs to victims of human trafficking, and if yes, how?)
- What kind of factors support the employment of former victims of human trafficking?
- Are there any ‘best practices’ made by other companies, that you think we can learn from?
- What aspects can cause challenges to the employment process?
- What legal aspects should be considered?
- What kind of legislation needs to be taken into consideration when hiring former victims of human trafficking?
- What else is important to take into consideration during the employment process?
- What measures should companies who hire victims of human trafficking do to support them in finding their equal place in the Finnish society, so that they don’t become victims later again?
- What benefits can it bring to the employer company if they hire former victims of human trafficking? (practically/culturally?) How do you think these positive aspects could be brought to the attention of companies so they would consider hiring?
- How could companies communicate the topic internally and externally?
- Do you have any advises how to discuss about these kinds of challenging topics in the workplace? Different potential situations e.g., what if prior victim discusses about the topic in the work community?
- Any things that we didn’t ask but you think are worth mentioning?

## **Veikko Mäkelä, Finnish Immigration Services, National Assistance System for Victims of Human Trafficking 26.10.2021**

- Who are you and what are your current job responsibilities at Migri?
- What kind of things does the Finnish immigration service do in terms of assisting victims of human trafficking, besides your responsibilities?
- In this project our focus is on forced labor – can you tell us about how forced labour situations can look like here in Finland?
- How do you think the recruitment process should look like in a case like this?
- What preparations are needed before the recruitment process?
- What kinds of difficulties you think the candidates might encounter during the employment process (e.g. language, study background, experience, personality)?
- Is there something specific that should be taken into consideration when onboarding a former victim of human trafficking? E.g. support in adapting to the society
- What legal aspects should be considered in the employment process of human trafficking victims?
- What benefits do you think such initiatives could bring to an organization?
- Does Migri currently cooperate with any companies? If yes, with who and how?
- How could companies communicate the case internally? Is training managers necessary? Especially line managers who are in direct interaction with the new recruits.
- When considering our task to create a roadmap about conceptualization the employment of victims of human trafficking, what could Migri's part be in this roadmap?

## **Telle Benaïssa, TE Office 28.10.2021**

- How would you describe the current situation regarding forced labor in Finland? How does it affect TE-palvelut and its operations?
- Have you participated in any kinds of initiatives or projects related to employing victims of human trafficking? If yes, what kind of experiences you have on the employment process?
- What kind of factors support the employment of former victims of human trafficking, and what could cause challenges?
- What do you think are the most important aspects to take into account?
- Have you thought about offering more tailored services for victims of human trafficking? If yes, what kind of services? If not, why?
- Our goal is to create a roadmap about the employment of victims of forced labor and we are also aiming to scan potential co-operatives. Do you believe that TE Office could have a part in the roadmap? If yes, what kind of role?