

Input contribution for
Global Migration Group Symposium
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Working group B: Building partnerships for identifying, assisting and protecting vulnerable and stranded migrants

Some German experiences

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- **Which key stakeholders need to work together at the national and international levels to ensure access to and assistance for vulnerable and stranded migrants?**

Irregularly resident migrants: NGOs act as intermediators and inform vulnerable and stranded migrants about legal situation and possibilities). Cooperations of socially committed NGOs (e.g. refugee boards) and church organizations together with researchers address politicians (members of parliament) and provoke slow changes (e.g. easing of school access for irregular resident children) partly through measures below the level of laws and regulations (e.g. administrative instructions). Round tables on the local level for easing access to health services.

Unaccompanied minors: Cooperation and exchange of experiences between enforcing administrations, local administrations (Youth Welfare Office) and NGOs and/or international organizations with respect to the clearing procedure (determining to what extent youth welfare needs to be granted) and with respect to the asylum procedure (including decision if asylum claim should be lodged).

Activities on European level (member states, Commission, Parliament) for determining best practices (e.g. via European Migration Network study on unaccompanied minors), development of the recent Action Plan; further development of the asylum system with a view to children specific reasons for flight and persecution.

Trafficking: Police and specialized NGOs together with academia (e.g. research project for better identification, investigated from a victims perspective which aspects determine willingness to cooperate with the police for identifying traffickers).

- **What works to tackle gender- and age-specific vulnerabilities of female migrants and unaccompanied minors, and to protect those migrants from exploitation, harassment and abuse?**

Generally: Sensitizing responsible administrations and officials (e.g. policemen) for aspects of children- and gender-specific persecution.

Unaccompanied minors: Creation of local/regional networks for clearing procedures, creation of specialized accommodations, ensure that existing access to youth welfare benefits/schooling/integrations measures is not overruled by measures of foreigners law.

Trafficking: Police and specialized information centers must offer the victims comprehensive possibilities to file charges. They have to be present in the settings, have to have multilingual information sheets. They need high degrees of empathy and intercultural competence (regarding origin, culture and age of the victims). Convince victims that the police is a supporting body.

- **How has the global economic crisis affected the use of unsafe migration routes and the occurrence of smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons? How has it affected the provision of assistance and protection for vulnerable migrants and victims of trafficking?**

Migrations routes towards Germany do not seem to be altered due to the crisis. Numbers of apprehended migrants (smuggled) have only slightly risen compared to 2008 - but have the same level like in 2006. Asylum migration (as indicator) is rising considerably compared to prior years but the countries of origin (Afghanistan, Iraq) do not indicate an impact of the economic crisis on the general level but rather reflect the problems of political instability in these regions.

Proceedings in cases of trafficking and the number of victims show increasing tendency, but numbers are still triple-digit. Apprehended persons are mostly of European origin.

But given rising numbers of unaccompanied minors there may be an increasing trend to “use” child migration as family investment as they are relatively safe from return.

- **How has the international dialogue on migration and development changed the environment for international collaboration and national practices pertaining to vulnerable and stranded migrants?**

Ongoing national discussion on the validity of international law has driven the German Federal Government recently to withdraw the pending reservation in respect of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, stating that the convention could not hamper any provision of the foreigner law.