Toolbox

EUCPN
EUROPEAN CRIME PREVENTION NETWORK

Part 2

TOOLBOX ON

Work-related crime

Labour exploitation: situational prevention

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This Toolbox makes a case for the situational prevention of labour exploitation by creating an environment in which it is riskier and less rewarding for offenders to engage in this type of crime.

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The two parts of this Toolbox, alongside videos and factsheets, are available for download at www.eucpn.org/toolbox-workrelatedcrime.

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Key Takeaways

» **1.** There are different prevention strategies for work-related crime. The most-implemented strategies focus either on exploited workers or the buyer of goods or services produced by exploited labour. Overall, however, prevention strategies in these two categories have not had the desired effect, or they are so costly that they have not been implemented on a significant scale. This Toolbox makes a case for the situational prevention of labour exploitation by creating an environment in which it is riskier and less rewarding for offenders to engage in this type of crime.

» **2.** The administrative approach is a non-criminal justice approach to preventing and disrupting serious and organised crime. By enhancing administrative enforcement, tuning the regulatory environment and enhancing the exchange of information between different administrative bodies, administrative authorities can hinder or frustrate the activities of organised crime and keep crime groups from exploiting the legal infrastructure.

» **3.** Two methodologies for devising situational prevention interventions for work-related crime are crime scripting and barrier models. Although both approaches start from a thorough analysis of the crime, there are significant differences. Crime scripting takes pre-crime stages (motive and planning) into account, but does not automatically lead to the identification of preventive action and prevention stakeholders. A major benefit of the barrier model methodology is that it involves all the relevant stakeholders from the outset. Their experience provides valuable input for the model, and it creates a strong sense of shared responsibility and a common understanding of the preventive action to take.

» **4.** In order to maximise effectiveness, barrier models should be specific to particular type of criminal activity (e.g. labour exploitation in the construction sector) as well as the legal and regulatory environment. Still, a framework barrier model as presented in this Toolbox can guide stakeholders in developing their own barrier models and provide inspiration.

» **5.** Every barrier model looks at five aspects of criminal activity: the facilitators, the opportunities, the indicators, the partners in preventive action, and the barriers, or the specific actions that can be taken to prevent or disrupt a step in the criminal process. For labour exploitation, the seven steps are recruitment, entry into the country, housing, transportation to and from the jobsite, labour itself, identification of workers, and generating profit.

01

Situational prevention of trafficking in human beings and labour exploitation

In labour exploitation, there are three actors: the exploiter, the exploited worker, and the buyer of goods or services produced by exploited labour. Prevention efforts can focus on each of these. In Part I of this Toolbox, we listed the main benefits and shortcomings of different prevention strategies.

In the category of victim-oriented prevention, we distinguish three main strategies. The first is raising awareness on the dangers and mechanisms of trafficking and exploitation in vulnerable groups, which is ubiquitous in the field. There is little evidence of suggesting that such strategies are effective, as is the case for most awareness-raising initiatives[2]. The second strategy is to address the root causes (poverty, poor access to job market, inequality) themselves. Here, the problem is not that such strategies do not work—they do—but they require enormous amounts of resources and time. The third is to enhance victim identification and assistance. Victims have the right to adequate care, assistance, and protection, and the general consensus is that, with proper support, victims will be more willing to report and testify in court, which in turn may have a preventive (deterrent) effect. Perhaps the biggest obstacle for effective victim-oriented prevention is the virtually endless supply of potential victims.

Buyer-oriented prevention of labour exploitation usually refers to raising consumer awareness and discouraging both private and business buyers from buying any goods and services produced by exploited labour. Additionally, businesses and governments may adopt normative frameworks and invest in compliance and due diligence, perform risk-assessments for exploitation in their supply chains, and develop strategies to mitigate that. For private consumers, however, it is hard to imagine how we can go beyond mere awareness efforts.

Part I of this Toolbox, therefore, made a case for the situational prevention of trafficking in human beings and labour exploitation: making it harder, riskier, and less rewarding for traffickers and exploiters.

Rather than working against the conditions that give rise to problems with trafficking and exploitation into and within the European Union, situational prevention strategies take these conditions (the "situation") as a starting point, to then raise the question: How can we manipulate the situation to make trafficking and exploitation harder?

Situational crime prevention is a theory and approach focused on reducing the opportunities for crime to occur by altering or manipulating the immediate environment.[3] It is based on the idea that crime can be prevented by making changes to the physical or social context in which it occurs. This theory suggests that crime is often opportunistic and influenced by the environment, so modifying that environment can significantly impact criminal behaviour.

Five categories of situational crime prevention

Situational crime prevention strategies can be divided into five main categories, each aimed at altering the immediate environment to prevent or discourage criminal behaviour:

Increasing the Risk: This category involves implementing measures that increase the perceived risk for potential offenders, making it less likely for them to commit a crime. By increasing the perceived risk, individuals may reconsider engaging in criminal behaviour due to the fear of being caught or facing consequences.

Increasing the Effort: Making it more difficult for individuals to commit crimes falls under this category. By increasing the effort required to commit a crime, potential offenders might be deterred as it becomes less convenient or feasible.

Removing Excuses: This category aims to eliminate or reduce the justifications or excuses individuals might use to rationalise their criminal behaviour. By removing excuses, potential offenders are left with fewer reasons to engage in criminal activities. Strategies here might involve clear communication of rules and consequences or implementing policies that remove legal 'grey areas' for certain behaviours.

Reducing Provocations: Measures in this category focus on minimising situations or triggers that might provoke or prompt criminal behaviour. By reducing incentives, potential offenders are less likely to be incited to commit crimes.

Reducing the Rewards: This involves reducing the potential gains or rewards that offenders might obtain from committing crimes. By reducing the attractiveness of criminal activities, individuals are less motivated to engage in illegal behaviour.

02

Administrative approaches to labour trafficking and exploitation

2.1. The administrative approach to serious and organised crime

The administrative approach (AA) is a non-criminal justice approach to preventing and disrupting serious and organised crime. It can be a powerful tool in the fight against organised crime, complementing the traditional instruments of the criminal justice system. The administrative approach pivots around administrative and regulatory mechanisms and takes a multidisciplinary approach by including public administrative authorities at the national, regional and local level, alongside private actors and non-governmental organisations.

The approach champions the exchange of information and data, with respect to data protection regulations if protected administrative or personal data is concerned, yet freely when non-sensitive, non-protected information is concerned. By exercising their specific powers, in compliance with the administrative and legal framework, administrative authorities can hinder or frustrate the activities of organised crime and keep crime groups from exploiting the legal infrastructure.

Administrative actions may take several forms. Persons known to be involved in criminal activities can be prevented from using the legal administrative infrastructure for criminal purposes, for instance by denying them permits, tenders and grants. Premises where illegal activity is taking place can be (temporarily) closed by invoking public nuisance regulations, or targeted by all kinds of applicable inspections (food safety, tax, labour). A success formula in AA is the organisation of multi-stakeholder, integrated inspection, where a range of competent authorities (tax, fire safety, labour, food safety, etc.) subject a business or property to inspections.

More information on the administrative approach

The European Network on the Administrative Approach is an exchange platform for knowledge and experiences regarding AA. Its Third Handbook on the Administrative Approach (2020) offers an introduction to AA. This handbook and other resources on AA in the European Union are available at the Network's website: www.administrativeapproach.eu

A concise overview of AA is also available at the UNODC's Sherloc knowledge platform: www.sherloc.unodc.org/cld/en/education/tertiary/tip-and-som/module-4/key-issues/Administrative-approach.html

2.2. Barrier models

The preferred way to map organised crime problems and identify preventive and disruptive solutions is to create a barrier model. A barrier model maps a complex form of crime in a transparent manner by identifying the steps criminal organisations have to take to be able to commit a crime. It also highlights which parties (crime service providers, facilitators) and opportunities make the crime possible. This helps to identify which barriers can be erected, by public and private partners, to effectively disrupt the work of the criminals. The barrier model can also be applied when mapping out potential abuses in a business process.

The Netherlands-based Centre for Crime Prevention and Safety has been a pioneer in devising barrier models for the Netherlands, and was closely involved in developing the first two European Barrier Models in 2019 on synthetic drugs and organised property

crime.[4] These EU models demonstrate that barrier models are very effective for mapping cross-border, international crime, and helping to identify potential preventive or disruptive action in different Member States.

Barrier models are constructed by a taskforce, a group of stakeholders who are all familiar with the criminal phenomenon under scrutiny. In other words, unlike crime scripts (discussed below), they are based on stakeholders' collective knowledge of the issue, not on specific cases. The models are represented in a table. The columns represent the different process steps or phases of a criminal enterprise. It starts at the left, with steps taken in the planning phase (e.g. identifying victims, or recruiting co-offenders) and ends at the right with the proceeds of the crime (e.g. money-laundering or fencing). How many steps are required, depends on the crime phenomenon.

For each of these process steps, the rows list the following five aspects:

- **1. Facilitators or service providers:** the persons involved in completing this step.
- **2. Opportunities:** the situational factors, infrastructure, loopholes in the law, and so on, that make it possible to complete this process step.
- **3. Indicators:** signs that point to possible criminal activity.
- **4. Partners:** the actors and institutions, private or public, that can throw up barriers. In a coordinated administrative approach, these actors will all play a role and thus become partners.
- **5. Barriers:** the specific actions that can be taken to prevent or disrupt a step in the criminal process.

A major benefit of the barrier model methodology is that it involves all the relevant stakeholders from the outset. Their experience and knowledge provide valuable input for the model. This creates a strong sense of shared responsibility and ownership, as well as a shared understanding and acceptance of the actions to take according to the barrier model.

2.3. Crime scripting

Narrative crime scripting is a methodology used in criminology to understand criminal behaviour by analysing the sequential steps involved in committing a crime. It involves breaking down criminal acts into a series of stages or events, much like a script in a play or film. This method assists with understanding the decision-making process and actions of offenders, aiding law enforcement in crime prevention and investigation strategies.

The process typically begins with the formation of criminal intent or motive. For example, in a burglary, the offender may initially contemplate targeting a specific location due to perceived vulnerability or potential gain. This initial contemplation represents the first stage in the crime script.

Following the formation of intent, the offender proceeds with planning the crime. This stage involves gathering information about the target, assessing security measures, and devising a strategy to commit the crime successfully. This phase may include considerations such as the time of day, entry points, tools needed, and potential risks.

The next stage involves the execution of the crime itself. This is where the offender puts the plan into action, gaining access to the target location, committing the theft, vandalism, or other criminal acts planned earlier. During this phase, the offender may encounter unexpected obstacles, requiring adaptation to the situation.

Post-crime activities constitute another crucial part of the script. This includes activities such as disposing of stolen goods, covering up evidence, or fleeing the scene. Offenders may take steps to avoid detection or apprehension, which could involve changing appearance, altering transport methods, or hiding evidence.

The limits of police interviews

Unlike the barrier model, which is based on the collective knowledge and intuition of stakeholders and frontline workers, crime scripts are based on concrete cases—they are usually fed from police interviews and court proceedings.

While this may seem more objective at first, it may also be problematic, given that police and court data may be biased. In the United States, for instance, black men are relatively more likely to be incarcerated for trafficking in human beings than white men.

Meta-analyses in the United States have shown that police data is biased, and may thus lead to a distorted understanding of traffickers and modus operandi. Therefore, researchers emphasise the importance of a continued focus on traffickers in the community, as opposed to traffickers in the criminal justice system.[5]

Understanding these sequential stages provides valuable insights into criminal behaviour, which can be used to develop preventive measures, enhance security protocols, and anticipate criminal patterns. By recognising common patterns across different crimes, authorities can implement targeted interventions to disrupt these scripts and deter potential offenders. However, it is important to note that not all crimes follow a rigid script. Some offenders may deviate from these stages, and external factors or situational changes can alter the sequence of events. Moreover, individual motives, experiences, and circumstances can significantly influence how a crime unfolds.

The practical use of a crime script depends on the script's level. High-level scripts, e.g. dealing with trafficking in human beings in general, is likely to only enable identification of generic steps in the running of a human trafficking scheme, like identification and recruitment of victims, transport of victims, and so on. Lower-level crime scripts, built on information from cases of a particular type of THB in a particular jurisdiction will be much more detailed.[6]

There are many parallels between crime scripts and barrier models. A major difference, however, is that the crime script itself does not contain pointers for preventive or disruptive actions, whereas this is an essential part of a barrier model.

Example: an internal child sex trafficking crime script

To illustrate the potential to boost criminal investigations and crime prevention, crime scientists at University College London have used police data to build a crime script of child sex trafficking within the UK.[7] The data they used comprised video recordings of interviews with both victims and offenders, case summaries and mobile phone data (messages, video), and covered 25 offenders and 36 victims. This allowed them to generate a crime script that transcends general phases (e.g. recruitment, abuse), but rather offers insights into concrete actions ("receive request for girls", "ask about friends", etc.) and key decisions ("worth pursuing?"). The crime script also incorporates different starting points.

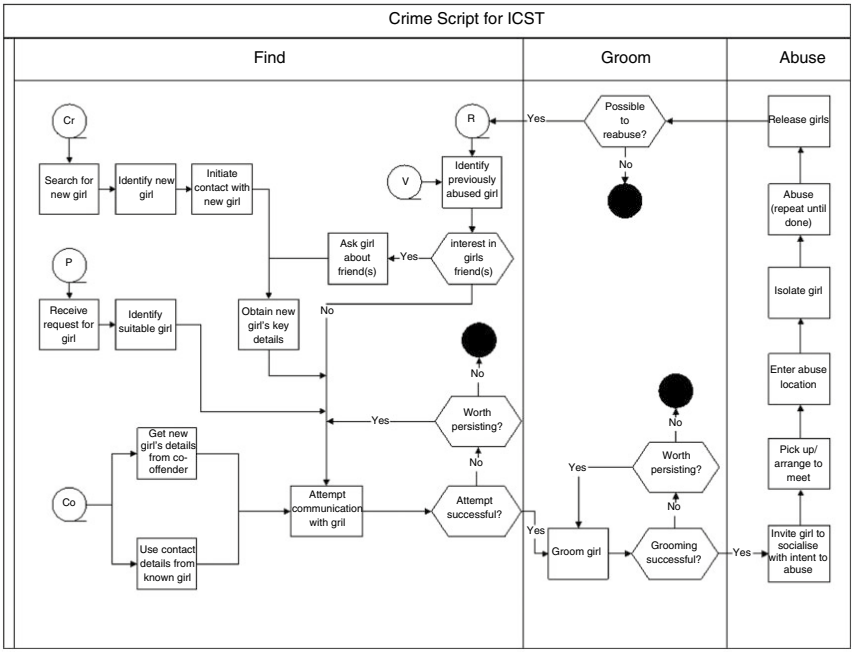

Figure 1. Crime script for internal child sex trafficking as developed by Brailey, Cockbain and Laycock (2011: 136). White circles indicate the starting points of different tracks, rectangles and hexagons represent actions and decisions respectively.

In the next phase, the researchers attempted to identify potential interventions for each of the actions defined in the crime script. They based this exercise on the five types of situational crime prevention action.

Increase effort	Reduce rewards	Remove excuses
Encourage hotels and B&Bs to refuse entry to men checking in with unrelated underage girls	Focus on Offence: Retributive justice emphasises the offence itself and the appropriate punishment, rather than the harm caused or the needs of those affected	Run warning campaign educating facilitators about their liability to be prosecuted if abuse occurs in their property
Pursue hotels and B&Bs who do not comply		Raise awareness of Section 15 of SOA2003 (meeting a child following sexual grooming, etc.) and associated charges

Table 1. Ideas for interventions in the abuse phase, based on the crime script (above) and five types of situational crime prevention (according to Brailey, Cockbain and Laycock (2011: 140). Note that no preventive action is suggested in the categories of reducing provocations and increasing risks.

The exercise showed that the crime script was a convenient tool to help identify preventive actions. Table 1 shows the results for the abuse phase and illustrates very well how an adequate understanding of the crime based on a crime script may inspire preventive action. For instance, if the crime script shows that abuse often takes place in hotels or B&Bs, we may look into ways of making it much harder for men to check into a hotel with unrelated minors (Column 1).

03

Framework barrier model for trafficking in human beings and labour exploitation

The goal of this section is to present a general framework for a barrier model on THB and labour exploitation. As indicated above: barrier models and crime scripts are more useful when devoted to specific crime types and specific to a particular legal, regulatory, and institutional framework. This is to reflect the reality that, for instance, the procedure to apply for a residence permit differs from one EU Member State to the next, and that traffickers exploit them differently or even choose one country over the next for this reason.

The different process steps in the framework barrier model may not all be present in all cases, but at least some will be present in every labour exploitation scheme. These are the steps in the framework barrier model:

- 1. Recruitment
- 2. Entry into country of exploitation
- 3. Housing
- 4. Transportation to and from jobsite
- 5. Labour
- 6. Identification
- 7. Generating profit

This list of process steps illustrates that these are not successive phases: some steps are continuous or reiterative, like housing and commuting.

	Indicators
Recruitment	• International recruitment firms (esp. in high-risk industries); • Firms offering multiple services (e.g. recruitment and housing); • Sectors with elevated risks (e.g. construction).
Entry	• Irregular residence status; • Third-country nationals; • Visa sponsorship by someone with the same nationality; • Worker is accompanied by someone who speaks on their behalf, holds their personal documents; • Suspicious activity at resident registration (e.g. person assisting several others).
Housing	• Poor housing conditions; • Housed in buildings not intended for residence; • Too many residents at the same address; • House owned by employer.
Transport	• Employer-organised commute.

Labour	• Violations of work safety rules and regulations; • Irregularities in working hours and paid leave; • Missing documentation (employment contract, insurance contracts); • Suspicious behaviour at workplace inspection (e.g., people trying to flee); • Sectors with elevated risks (e.g. construction).
Identification	• Repeated loss of ID or permits; • Worker does not carry ID; • No residence permit.
Profit	• Irregular and/or insecure wages; • Illegal or excessive recruitment fees; • Workers have high debts (for recruitment, housing); • Cash payments; • Complicated and transnational business structures (subcontracting chains).

When using a barrier model to drive preventive and disruptive action at the national and local level, these indicators should be specified in order to reflect the national or local reality. For instance, any signs pertaining to documents and permits are contingent on the local regulations. A barrier model should also, as far as possible, incorporate and reflect the specific situation. National or regional differences may be obvious, such as when countries have different risk sectors. It is also well-known that different nationalities are prevalent in labour exploitation across the EU Member States. However, the differences may also be in the details: in some exploitation schemes, excessive working hours (forced overtime) are common, whereas in others we may rather see suspiciously low working hours, possibly because the remaining hours are undeclared.

3.1. Indicators

High-risk sectors

Labour exploitation can occur in various sectors and contexts within the European Union due to several factors:

1. **Agriculture:** Seasonal agricultural work often attracts migrant workers who may be vulnerable to exploitation due to their temporary status, language barriers, and lack of awareness about their rights. Long hours, low pay, poor working conditions, and exploitation through recruitment agencies are common issues.
2. **Construction:** The construction industry, with its demand for labour, frequently employs migrant workers who may face exploitation in terms of unpaid wages, dangerous working conditions, and lack of proper contracts or safety measures.
3. **Domestic Work:** Domestic workers, often migrants, may face exploitation due to their isolated work environments, lack of legal protection, and dependence on their employers. They might be subjected to long hours, low pay, and sometimes physical or emotional abuse.
4. **Hospitality and Tourism:** Hotels, restaurants, and entertainment venues can exploit workers by underpaying them, violating working hours regulations, and denying benefits. Migrant workers or those on temporary visas are particularly vulnerable.
5. **Textile and Garment Industry:** Within the EU, some garment factories may exploit workers, especially undocumented migrants or those working informally, by offering extremely low wages and poor working conditions.
6. **Transportation and Logistics:** Workers in transportation and logistics, including truck drivers and warehouse workers, may face exploitation through long working hours, insufficient breaks, and inadequate pay.

7. **Exploitation of Vulnerable Groups:** Vulnerable populations such as refugees, asylum seekers, and undocumented migrants are often at higher risk of exploitation due to their precarious legal status, lack of social support, and fear of deportation.
8. **Temporary Work Agencies:** Some unscrupulous temporary work agencies take advantage of workers by providing insecure employment, low wages, and inadequate safety measures, while skirting legal responsibilities.

3.2. Facilitators

Facilitators play key roles in complex crime phenomena. They are not the masterminds or leaders, but rather provide services or perform actions that in one way or another contribute to the crime. Sometimes, these services are of crucial importance, and without them, the whole operation would fail.

In trafficking in human beings and labour exploitation, facilitators play a wide variety of critical roles that enable and perpetuate the exploitation:

- **Recruitment:** They often act as intermediaries between employers and workers, facilitating the recruitment process. In some cases, they might deceive or coerce individuals into employment situations under false pretences, promising better wages or working conditions than what is actually provided.
- **Documentation and Permits:** Facilitators might handle documentation and permits necessary for employment, manipulating or falsifying documents to exploit workers who may not have legal status or understanding of their rights.
- **Debt Bondage:** In many instances, facilitators arrange loans or debts for workers, trapping them in cycles of debt bondage. Workers might be forced to work

indefinitely to pay off these debts, which are often inflated and impossible to repay.

- **Transportation and Housing:** They might oversee transport to work sites and provide substandard or overpriced housing, further exploiting workers by deducting excessive amounts from their wages for these services.
- **Isolation and Control:** Facilitators sometimes isolate workers from their families or communities, making it harder for them to seek help or report exploitation. They might exert control through threats, violence, or confiscation of identity documents.
- **Evasion of Regulations:** Facilitators might help employers evade labour regulations by operating in the black economy, avoiding legal responsibilities like providing fair wages, safe working conditions, or benefits.
- Profit Sharing: Facilitators often benefit financially from the exploitation, receiving a portion of the wages or fees paid by the workers or employers.

Addressing labour exploitation also involves targeting these facilitators alongside holding employers accountable to prevent exploitative practices. However, not all facilitators are criminals or acting in bad faith. Administrative authorities issuing documents like (temporary) residence permits and (foreign national) resident cards, ID cards, labour permits, etc. may all play a small role in trafficking and exploitation schemes. Authorities and law enforcement bodies may also encounter victims, perpetrators, and situations of labour exploitation, but fail to realise it, and so allow the exploitation to continue.

	Facilitators
Recruitment	• Criminal networks; • Social media; • Family; • Recruitment firms, employment agencies.
Entry	• Illegal migrant smuggler; • Document forgers (crime as a service); • Transport sector; • Authorities (visas and licences).
Housing	• Employment agencies; • Employers; • Landlords.
Transport	• Employment agencies and employers; • Criminal networks; • Public transport and car rental.
Labour	• Employer (especially in high-risk sector); • Recruitment firms; • Colleagues and supervisors; • Insurance companies.
Identification	• Police and border guards; • Illegal migrant smuggler; • Document forgers; • Immigration services and local authorities (issuing documents and IDs).
Profit	• Accountant; • Banks and financial institutions; • Family & friends; • Notary.

3.3. Opportunities

Opportunities are the infrastructures and regulations that allow trafficking and exploitation to take place. It is of key importance to be aware of these opportunities, because it assists with understanding how exploitation works, how offenders think, and with identifying possible preventive or disruptive action. For example, in many cases traffickers will house victims in places and buildings that are not intended for residential use. By keeping labourers at the jobsite (i.e., in industrial buildings), they may be able to escape not just the social control of the neighbourhood, but also remain under the radar of housing authorities. Another trick that offenders sometimes use is to accommodate workers in recreational buildings such as holiday parks. It is clear that in such cases, making sure that park staff keep proper records and are aware of the problem can provide a solution.

In other cases, however, the opportunities cannot simply be eliminated, because they relate to fundamental rights and freedoms of Europeans. For instance, the complexity of labour markets coupled with the movement of people across borders within the EU creates opportunities for unscrupulous employers and facilitators to exploit workers who might be unaware of their rights or too fearful to report abuses. Similarly, family reunification rights may be abused for sham marriages, and the freedom of entrepreneurship gives rise to bogus self-employment. In such cases, there is no straightforward way to remove the opportunity. Instead, the focus should be on closing any regulatory gaps and enforcement of existing laws and regulation. Awareness of these issues can ultimately help to design infrastructures that are more resilient against exploitation.

Some opportunities are EU-wide, such as the freedom of movement, but others are specific to one industry, country, or even municipality. Paper documents may be easier to forge than robust electronic documents. On the other hand, certain electronic administrative procedures that no longer require face-to-face interactions with public officials can potentially be abused by traffickers. For instance, citizens of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) can apply for and obtain work visas online.[8] While it is clear that there are many benefits to more streamlined administrative procedures, if they turn out to create opportunities for traffickers, they should be adapted. In conclusion, when devising a barrier model, it is crucial that the framework offered here is supplemented with relevant elements at the national level.

	Opportunities
Recruitment	• Demand for (unskilled) labour; • Job ads, esp. via social media.
Entry	• Free labour market; • Family reunification - sham marriages; • Asylum procedures; • Lack of awareness.
Housing	• Asylum and refugee centres; • Lack of formal/informal social control.
Transport	• Freedom of movement; • Unmanned border crossings.
Labour	• Foreign labourer's lack of awareness of labour rights; • Freedom to conduct a business; • Lack of legal access to labour market; • Flexible employment contracts.
Identification	• Restrictions on, or lack of, ID checks; • Electronic submissions.
Profit	• Cash transactions; • Complex corporate structures (subcontracting); • Banking secrecy (outside EU).

3.4. Partners

The partners in a barrier model are the actors and institutions, private or public, that can throw up barriers, i.e. take action that will make the illegal activities of offenders more risky and less rewarding. Usually, these include a host of government agencies. Law enforcement officers are a key factor in the fight against crime. However, a barrier model also indicates more specifically in which respect partners can help create barriers, even by performing routine activities.

During routine traffic controls and ID checks, for instance, police and border guards could identify signs of trafficking or exploitation. Therefore, it is important that they not only perform these checks, but also that they are trained in the indicators of trafficking and exploitation and know how to act on them. Labour inspectors also play a key role in the fight against trafficking for labour exploitation, as do tax inspectors. Tax authorities can and should note suspicious transactions related to both the declared income of workers and the money-laundering and tax evasion strategies employed by the perpetrators. The labour inspectorate has a key responsibility in identifying violations of labour laws (e.g. with respect to holidays and working hours) and work safety regulations.

Non-state actors too can throw up barriers. Hospitals and medical staff treating victims of occupational accidents should report when they sense that the victim or a person accompanying the victim is lying about a work accident, or when the victim cannot provide identification or proof of medical insurance.

	Partners
Recruitment	• Employment agencies; • Asylum centres; • Victim assistance NGOs; • Police; • Contractors and supply chain managers.
Entry	• Airports & sea ports; • Police, border guards & customs; • Chamber of commerce.

Housing	• Police; • Real estate owners; • Fire safety inspectors (fire brigade); • Municipal housing authorities.
Transport	• Police; • (Public) transport companies.
Labour	• Labour inspectorate; • Trade unions; • Migrant/asylum-seeker reception points; • Contractors and supply chain managers; • Medical sector.
Identification	• Police; • Labour inspectorate; • Tax authorities.
Profit	• Banks; • Tax authorities; • Public prosecutors.

Partnerships against labour exploitation

Preventing labour exploitation often requires collaboration among various partners, and these include not only government agencies.

Government Agencies: Government bodies can enforce labour laws, conduct inspections, and create policies to prevent exploitation. They play a crucial role in regulating and monitoring businesses to ensure they comply with labour standards.

NGOs and advocacy groups: Non-governmental organisations and advocacy groups often work on the ground to raise awareness, provide support to victims, and lobby for better labour laws and enforcement.
Trade unions: These organisations represent workers and can negotiate fair labour practices, better wages, and improved working conditions with employers.
Corporate partners: Businesses and corporations can actively engage in ethical sourcing practices, ensuring their supply chains are free from exploitative labour. Partnering with companies committed to fair labour standards can significantly impact the prevention of exploitation.
Consumers and community groups: Consumer demand for ethically sourced products can drive change in the industry. Community groups can advocate for fair labour practices and support businesses that prioritise ethical production.
International organisations: Bodies like the International Labour Organization (ILO) set global labour standards and work with governments, businesses, and NGOs to implement and monitor these standards worldwide.
Legal experts and academia: Researchers, legal experts, and academic institutions contribute by studying labour exploitation, providing insights, and offering recommendations for policy improvements.

Combining efforts across these sectors can create a more comprehensive approach to prevent labour exploitation and promote fair and ethical labour practices.

3.5. Barriers

After identifying indicators, facilitators, opportunities, and partners, a barrier model naturally arrives at the barriers themselves. What can be done to hinder labour exploitation? Which actions would make engaging in, or facilitating, labour exploitation riskier and less rewarding?

A distinction can be made between the introduction of new legislation, procedures, or action on the one hand, and the reinforcement of existing tools and procedures on the other. For instance, in many jurisdictions, a (sham) marriage can be nullified by a judge, and the civil registrar may refuse a marriage under certain conditions. It could be the case, however, that this lever is insufficiently used, possibly because the issue of sham marriages is not considered a priority, or because the signs are not recognised. New actions, on the other hand, could include new obligatory training in labour exploitation for public servants, or new legislation curbing subcontracting chains in government contracts.

	Barriers
Recruitment	• Routine checks employment agencies; • Police nuisance at recruitment sites.
Entry	• Raise awareness in (public) transport sector; • Annul/refuse sham marriages; • Increase surveillance at points of entry (e.g. ports); • Train asylum centre staff and immigration officials to better detect signs of trafficking.
Housing	• Close off premises if residential code is violated; • Raise awareness of local authorities; • Exercise discretionary power to control housing situation; • Enforce requirement for (building) permits and fire safety.
Transport	• Integrated traffic controls (including residence and work permits); • Raise awareness in (public) transport sector; • Identifying suspicious transport at asylum centres; • Police nuisance at resting areas/truck stops.

Labour	• Integrated work place controls: tax, labour, safety, immigration, food safety, fire safety; • Raise awareness in high-risk sectors; • Targeted controls in high-risk sectors.
Identification	• Comprehensive information to immigrants, refugees, asylum-seekers; • In-person registration; • Evidence-gathering protocol for withheld ID documents.
Profit	• Banks check for suspicious transactions and alert authorities; • Authorities alert banks in case of suspected violation of bank loan terms; • Suspend and reclaim grants, benefits.

Identifying construction workers: examples from Sweden and Belgium

ID06

ID06 is a digital identification system used in the Swedish construction industry to enhance security, track attendance, and ensure compliance with labour regulations. It was introduced to combat issues related to unauthorised workers, undeclared labour, and improve overall transparency within the construction sector.

At its core, ID06 revolves around a standardised identification card fitted with a chip that contains personal information, such as a worker's identity, employment status, and relevant certifications. This card serves as proof of identity and employment eligibility at construction sites. It aims to verify that individuals working on these

sites are legally employed and have the necessary qualifications. The system facilitates the monitoring of workforce attendance, allowing employers to track when and where workers are present on-site. This not only ensures that the right personnel are on the job but also helps in accurately recording work hours for payment purposes, reducing discrepancies and potential disputes.

Moreover, ID06 plays a significant role in combating the shadow economy by promoting transparency. By mandating the use of these identification cards, it becomes more challenging for unregistered or undocumented workers to operate within the industry. This helps in preventing tax evasion, underpayment of wages, and other illegal practices.

The implementation of ID06 has become a requirement for access to many construction sites in Sweden. Contractors and subcontractors often need their employees and hired labourers to possess these ID cards to gain entry, demonstrating compliance with labour laws and industry standards.
Additionally, the system promotes a safer work environment by ensuring that individuals on-site have the necessary qualifications and training, reducing the risks associated with unskilled or unauthorised workers.
However, the ID06 system has also faced challenges, including issues related to card distribution, administration, and potential fraud or misuse. Efforts are continually made to address these challenges and improve the effectiveness of the system.

Overall, ID06 serves as a crucial tool in the Swedish construction industry, promoting legality, transparency, and safety while streamlining attendance tracking and ensuring compliance with labour regulations. Its implementation has aimed to bring about a more accountable and secure work environment within the construction sector.

Check In At Work

Check In At Work (CIAW) is a system implemented in Belgium, specifically in the construction industry. It is designed to monitor and register the attendance of employees on works sites. This system aims to combat social fraud, ensure fair competition, and improve safety and working conditions within the construction sector.

Every worker involved in construction activities (both employees and self-employed individuals) must register their attendance on a construction site before starting work. This registration includes providing specific information such as personal details, the duration of work, and the site's identification.
The registration process typically takes place through an electronic system. Workers use their electronic identity card or other approved identification methods to register their entry and exit from the site.

Authorities use this system to monitor the attendance of workers on construction sites. Inspections may be conducted to ensure compliance with labour regulations, including the verification of registered workers against the actual workforce present at the site. Non-compliance with CIAW regulations can result in penalties for both employers and workers. Fines can be imposed for failing to register, incorrect registration, or other violations related to labour laws in the construction industry.

The CIAW system is primarily aimed at promoting transparency, reducing undeclared work, exploitation, and other work-related crimes, and ensuring that workers are properly accounted for and protected within the construction sector. CIAW is also mandatory in the meat sector (slaughterhouses, cutting plants, meat processing industry) to tackle benefit fraud.

Factsheet

TOOLBOX ON

Work-related crime

LABOUR EXPLOITATION: SITUATIONAL PREVENTION

Countering labour exploitation is usually done after the fact, focusing on identifying the victim. Yet so much more can be done to hinder or prevent exploitation.

Administrative authorities can hinder or frustrate the activities of organised crime and keep crime groups from exploiting the legal infrastructure by:

- enhancing administrative enforcement
- tuning the regulatory environment
- enhancing the exchange of information between different administrative bodies
- using two methodologies: crime scripting and barrier models

The administrative approach is a non-criminal justice approach to preventing and disrupting serious and organised crime:
www.administrativeapproach.eu

EUCPN
EUROPEAN CRIME PREVENTION NETWORK

Learn more in our toolbox:
www.eucpn.org/toolbox-workrelatedcrime

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Endnotes

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