

## How to recognise labour exploitation and human trafficking?

### What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking is a serious offence directed against a person. The offender takes advantage of the vulnerability, trust or dependency of the victim and subjects him or her to labour exploitation or sexual abuse, for example.



**Labour exploitation** refers to, in its least serious form, violating the terms and conditions of employment and, in its most serious form, misleading or threatening employees or keeping them in conditions that violate human dignity. Serious labour exploitation may constitute human trafficking. Other forms of exploitation include forced marriage and sexual abuse, for example.

Labour exploitation is more prevalent in low-wage sectors and sectors where the use of temporary agency workers, posted workers and subcontractors is common. Many immigrants work in these sectors. Immigrants are often in a vulnerable position. The victims may be reluctant to tell about their treatment for fear of losing their residence permit, for example.

- Recognising abuse requires a receptive way to encounter customers.
- Focus on the customer even more than usually: observe, listen, show empathy and reserve time.
- Tell the customer that you and the interpreter have a non-disclosure and secrecy obligation. Also explain what this means in practice.
- If you suspect that the interpreter is not acting appropriately, agree on a new meeting and order another interpreter.

With these questions, you can assess the situation:

	Yes	No	Maybe
<b>Life situation</b>			
Does the customer <b>live</b> in a shared apartment, at the workplace or at the employer's home?			
Has the customer given his/her <b>passport</b> to someone else?			

<b>Employment relationship</b>			
Is the customer missing an <b>employment agreement</b> ?			
If the customer is working: does someone prevent him/her from <b>resigning</b> ?			
If the customer has resigned from his/her job: has the customer been refused a <b>certificate of employment</b> ?			

<b>Working hours and working conditions</b>			
Does the customer have to work without <b>days-off or vacations</b> ?			
Has the customer been threatened or treated <b>violently</b> at work?			
Has the customer been prohibited from joining a <b>labour union</b> ?			

<b>Pay</b>			
Has the customer been paid unreasonably low <b>wages</b> ?			
Has the customer been refused a <b>payslip</b> ?			
Have wages been paid in cash or have wages been <b>left unpaid</b> ?			
Has the customer <b>had to return</b> a part of wages to the employer?			

If there is even one check mark in the Yes column or two or more check marks in the Maybe column, it is important that you look into the customer's situation more closely.

## Recognition is a process.

It is enough that  
 you observe and listen,  
 try to build trust,  
 respond to the current need for help  
 and refer the customer to other services, if necessary.



## What can I do if there is suspicion that the customer has been subjected to labour exploitation?

- Tell the customer that exploitation is not the victim's fault. There is help available.
- The customer needs immediate support. Give advice and refer the customer to necessary health and social services.
- Take the suspicion of labour exploitation into account when the customer's entitlement to unemployment security is assessed.
  - » Few customers are able to fill in forms or look for and provide additional information independently.
  - » It may be difficult for the customer to obtain from the employer the documents needed for assessing the customer's entitlement to unemployment security.
  - » If the employer threatens the customer with violence or the customer has experienced exploitation, the situation is taken into account in the decision. Tell the customer that he/she should explain the situation during the assessment.
  - » If necessary, more time can be obtained for reporting required information to unemployment security authorities. Advise the customer on how he/she can apply for more time.
  - » If necessary, the customer may request re-processing for an unemployment security decision made by unemployment security authorities.
- If necessary, turn to the assistance system for victims of human trafficking (+358 2954 63177) for advice, without submitting the customer's personal data.
- Refer the customer to assistance system for victims of human trafficking or the Victim Support Finland (RIKU) advisory service. From there, the customer can get support for filing a report of an offence, among other things.

### The assistance system's 24/7 helpline:

+358 2954 63177

[ihmiskauppa.auttamisjarjestelma@migri.fi](mailto:ihmiskauppa.auttamisjarjestelma@migri.fi)

[www.ihmiskauppa.fi/en](http://www.ihmiskauppa.fi/en)

### Victim Support Finland (RIKU) advisory service

for victims of human trafficking and seasonal workers

<https://www.riku.fi/seasonalwork/> in Finnish, Swedish, English and Russian  
multilingual advisory service offers support to seasonal workers during the summer season  
tel. +358 40 664 1707, also SMS service.

- If the customer does not want to be in contact with the assistance system for victims of human trafficking, he/she can be referred to services provided by non-governmental organisations, for example. The so-called **four-leaf clover organisations** in particular help victims of human trafficking. You can also search for services on the website [www.kotoutumisentukena.fi](http://www.kotoutumisentukena.fi) (in Finnish and Swedish).

More information about [human trafficking and labour exploitation](#) to support you in your work.



Ministry of Economic Affairs  
and Employment of Finland



**HEUNI**

YK:n yhteydessä toimiva  
Euroopan kriminaalipoliittikan instituutti



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