



Novel Strategies to Fight Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Crimes and Protect their Victims

H2020 – 101021801

www.heroes-fct.eu

D5.3 Mapping prisoner re-entry report

Author: Júlia Zomignani Barboza (VUB)

Contributors: Carlotta Rigotti (VUB), Nadine El Dekmak (VUB), Prof. Dr. Paul de Hert (VUB)

Deliverable nature	Report (R)
Dissemination level	Public (PU)
Version	1.0
Date	25 / 02 / 2023



Document Information

Project Acronym	HEROES
Project Title	Novel Strategies to Fight Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Crimes and Protect their Victims – HEROES
Grant Agreement No.	101021801
Project URL	www.heroes-fct.eu
EU Project Officer	Markus Walter

Deliverable	Number	D5.3	Title	Mapping prisoner re-entry report	
Work Package	Number	WP5	Title	Multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary strategies to improve and reinforce prevention programs	
Date of Delivery	Contractual		M14	Actual	M15
Status	Version 1.0			Final	
Nature	R		Dissemination level		PU

Responsible partner	Name	Júlia Zomignani Barboza	E-mail	Julia.zomignani.barboza@vub.be
	Partner	VUB	Phone	
Contributing partners	Carlotta Rigotti (VUB), Nadine El Dekmak (VUB), Paul de Hert (VUB)			
Reviewers	Zoe Colpaert (ICMEC), Stella Cardenas, Nelson Rivera, Zared Garzon, Sergio Rivera (RENACER)			
Security Approval	Julio Hernandez-Castro (UNIKENT)			

Abstract (for dissemination)

The purpose of this task is to obtain, analyse and map data on prisoner re-entry to provide information to the public, government officials, policymakers, service providers, former prisoners and others on the local dynamics of prisoner re-entry. These stakeholders can then draw on this information to improve and refine local policy, service delivery and community responses to re-entry.

Keywords Prisoner re-entry, rehabilitation, victim-offenders, sexual offenders, trafficking in human beings

Disclaimer:

This document contains information that is treated as confidential and proprietary by the HEROES Consortium. Neither this document nor the information contained herein shall be used, duplicated, or communicated by any means to any third party, in whole or in parts, except with prior written consent of the HEROES Consortium.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 101021801. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of the funding body.

Version History

Version	Date	Change Editor	Changes
0.1	05/08/2022	Júlia Zomignani Barboza (VUB)	Literature review and methodology completed
0.2	11/08/2022	Carlotta Rigotti (VUB)	Internal VUB revision
0.3	24/10/2022	Júlia Zomignani Barboza (VUB)	Fieldwork findings added
0.4	25/10/2022	Júlia Zomignani Barboza (VUB)	Completed first draft
0.5	26/10/2022	Nadine El Dekmak (VUB)	Internal VUB revision
0.6	27/10/2022	Paul de Hert (VUB)	Internal VUB revision
0.7	28/10/2022	Júlia Zomignani Barboza (VUB)	Final VUB version for peer review
0.8	8/11/2022	Zoe Colpaert (ICMEC)	Peer review by ICMEC
0.9	24/11/2022	Stella Cardenas, Nelson Rivera, Zared Garzon, Sergio Rivera (RENACER)	Peer review by RENACER
1.0	23/2/2023	Júlia Zomignani Barboza (VUB)	Final version approved by security advisory board

Table of Contents

List of Tables	iv
Executive summary	v
Abbreviations.....	vi
1. Introduction	1
2. Methodology	2
3. The perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and child sexual abuse or exploitation	5
3.1. Perpetrators' experience: an overview	5
3.2. Perpetrators in HEROES pilot countries	7
4. Prisoner re-entry	9
4.1. Prisoner re-entry: an overview	9
4.2. An individualised approach to re-entry in the context of the HEROES project	11
5. Re-entry in the context of the HEROES project: fieldwork findings	13
5.1. Individualised approach	13
5.2. Specific needs of perpetrators and ways to address them	13
5.3. Stakeholders	15
5.4. Evaluation of measures	16
6. Conclusions and recommendations.....	17
References.....	19
Annex A Interview Report (I1)	21
Annex B Interview Report (I2)	24
Annex C Interview Report (I3)	26
Annex D Interview Report (I4)	29
Annex E Interview Report (I5)	32

List of Tables

Table 1: Conducted interviews	2
Table 2: persons convicted for trafficking in human beings in Spain	8

Executive summary

The present deliverable aims to identify the needs of perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and child sexual exploitation or abuse upon re-entering society and the best way to address such needs to prevent recidivism and thus ultimately protect future victims from these crimes.

To obtain these objectives, this deliverable relies on desk research on the relevant topics (namely prisoner re-entry and the specific needs of perpetrators of the abovementioned crimes) as well as interviews with professionals with expertise in the areas of interest. In total, 5 interviews with 8 professionals were conducted.

Desk research showed that perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and child sexual exploitation or abuse are not often the object of research, which focuses more on the victims of these crimes. Existing literature and statistics were able to show that the experiences of perpetrators with trafficking in human beings and child sexual abuse or exploitation vary greatly, from large criminal enterprises to individuals who had very few encounters with criminality. The relationship with the victims also varies, with some perpetrators being family members or using emotional or romantic manipulation to engage victims. It was also noted that trafficking in human beings is a crime that has a higher percentage of female offenders than other crimes (although the majority of perpetrators are still men). In this regard, the victim-offender phenomenon stands out when it comes to trafficking. This relates to victims (often women) who later engage in criminal activity themselves for different reasons, such as, for example, to escape the worse aspects of their exploitation. These victims, when convicted as perpetrators, may have specific needs associated with their victimhood that must be addressed to ensure a successful re-entry.

Literature on re-entry focuses mainly on aspects related to housing, employment, family reunification, and health issues. It often focuses on services available at the local (community) level. While over the years there has been a predominant view that re-entry efforts do not work to reduce recidivism, recent research shows that individualised programmes tailored to the specific needs of perpetrators may have a more positive effect (see e.g. Grommon, E. L., 2013; Visher et al., 2017; Chin & Dandurand, 2018).

These findings were confirmed by the fieldwork, as the professionals interviewed emphasised that the experiences of perpetrators with trafficking in human beings and child sexual abuse or exploitation varied greatly, so it was not possible to speak of offenders as a cohesive group. In this regard, they all supported individualised re-entry interventions, which were believed to be more effective in addressing the specific needs of the perpetrator and thus facilitate a successful reintegration.

Interviewees noted, similarly to the literature, that generally re-entering prisoners may need assistance with housing, employment and family reunification. More specifically, they mentioned that perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and child sexual abuse or exploitation often show a lack of understanding of the wrongfulness of their actions because, for example, they believed they were helping their victims or that they victims had consented. Thus, responsibility and sensibilisation to the victimhood of their victims is frequently something that needs to be addressed upon re-entry.

They also noted that the victimhood of victim offenders needs to be addressed and that mental health intervention is needed to address specific disorders of some perpetrators (e.g. sexual or antisocial disorders).

Considering this great variety of needs, a thorough individual assessment of perpetrators is needed to tailor re-entry interventions to their specific situation. Public investment is needed to ensure the availability of services for re-entering prisoners and the training of professionals working with them. Awareness raising within communities is also necessary to avoid stigmatisation and give perpetrators a second chance.

When measuring the effectiveness of re-entry measures, both quantitative (e.g. recidivism rate) and qualitative data (e.g., evaluation of the programme by prisoners and professionals involved in it) should be used in conjunction.

Abbreviations

EU	European Union
HEROES	Novel Strategies to Fight Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Crimes and Protect their Victims
UN	United Nations
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
VUB	Vrije Universiteit Brussel

1. Introduction

A prisoner's re-entry into society entails reintegration in a range of fields. In this regard, the areas of life most often associated with re-entry are housing, employment and income, substance abuse, health issues (including mental health) as well as reunification with family members (La Vigne et al., 2005). It should be noted, however, that

There is also a need to explore the differential reentry effects experienced by specific correctional sub-populations. An overwhelming majority of prisoners will eventually be released and reentry is commonly used to describe a reintegrative experience that is expected to be similar for all types of offenders. What becomes lost in such a generalized approach is the complex mix of interrelated reentry dimensions that affect transitions into the community for specific types of offenders. (Grommon, E. L., 2013, p. 9)

The present deliverable will thus first provide an overview of the specific experiences of offenders of trafficking in human beings and child sexual abuse or exploitation (section 3). It will then move on to assess the individual needs and vulnerabilities of these sub-groups of offenders during re-entry (section 4). The findings of the fieldwork are then presented (section 5).

The methodology used is explained in section 2 and conclusions, including recommendations, are provided in section 6.

It should be noted that most of the available information on offenders speaks only of trafficking in human beings, which includes trafficking for sexual exploitation (including of children) and trafficking for other purposes. Disaggregated data on perpetrators of trafficking for child sexual exploitation is lacking and so this deliverable will refer to perpetrators of trafficking in human beings as an overarching category that includes trafficking for the purposes of child sexual exploitation. Where information about a specific group of perpetrators (e.g., sexual offenders or victim-offenders) is relied on, this will be made explicit in the text.

2. Methodology

The present deliverable aims to identify the needs of perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and child sexual exploitation or abuse upon re-entering society and the best way to address such needs to prevent recidivism and thus ultimately protect future victims from these crimes.

To reach these objectives, this deliverable relies on desk research on the relevant topics (namely prisoner re-entry and the specific needs of perpetrators of the abovementioned crimes) as well as interviews with professionals with expertise in the areas of interest.

In this regard, the first step was to conclude an initial desk research to identify the specific topics to be addressed during the interviews. The sources of the desk research are listed at the end of this deliverable, in the references section. Once the main issues to be addressed in the interviews were identified, partners of the project consortium were contacted to assist VUB staff members in identifying professionals with the relevant expertise. Organisations outside the consortium working on relevant topics were also contacted.

At the end, the following interviews were conducted:

Table 1: Conducted interviews

Interview code	Organisation	Expertise	Gender	Interview date	Interview length	Language
I1	Trilateral research	Trafficking in human beings, victim-offenders	F	19/08/2022	23 minutes	English
I2	University of Manchester	Offenders of trafficking in human beings (including victim-offenders, sexual offenders and foreign offenders)	M, F	31/08/2022	33 minutes	English
I3	La Touline	Prisoner re-entry	F	5/09/2022	33 minutes	French
I4	Après	Prisoner re-entry	M, M	9/09/2022	1 hour, 21 minutes	French
I5	Centre d'Appui Bruxellois	Rehabilitation of sexual offenders	F, M	20/10/2022	50 minutes	French

All interviewees signed a consent form before participating in the interview and were provided with an information sheet to inform them of their rights regarding their participation. The interviews were recorded to facilitate our analysis. In the present deliverable, interviewees' identity is not disclosed.

The interviews were based on interviewees' own experiences. Thus, interviewees were informed of the topics to be addressed in the interview beforehand (to ensure they had the required expertise) but were not provided with the questions beforehand to ensure the spontaneity of their replies.

The length of the interviews varied according to interviewees' experience on the topics addressed, whether there were one or two interviewees present, and on the language spoken.

The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format. Interviewees were asked the following questions:

1. Could you please describe your position and tasks?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

- 1.1. Have you ever worked on prisoner re-entry?
- 1.2. Have you ever worked on/with perpetrators of trafficking in human beings?
- 1.3. Have you ever worked on/with perpetrators of child sexual abuse or exploitation?
- 1.4. Have you ever worked on/with sexual offenders?

1.5. Have you ever worked on/with victim-offenders?¹

The goal of this question is to understand the expertise of the expert. It was not expected that all interviewees would have expertise in all relevant topics. For example, some interviewees may have great experience in prisoner re-entry in general, but no specific experience on perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and child sexual abuse or exploitation, while others may have experience working with such perpetrators, but have less insight on the topic of prisoner re-entry.

2. In your experience, what are the main challenges to the re-entry of prisoners?

The goal of this question is to assist researchers in identifying the needs of prisoners upon re-entering society after completion of their criminal sentence.

3. How should the needs of prisoners re-entering society be assessed?

The goal of this question is to understand the best methods to identify the specific needs of individual perpetrators.

4. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and perpetrators of child sexual abuse or exploitation?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

4.1. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of victim-offenders?

4.2. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of sexual offenders?

4.3. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of foreign offenders?

The goal of this question is to understand the specific needs of the sub-categories of offenders that are the focus of this deliverable. The question may focus on different sub-group (e.g., only perpetrators of trafficking in human beings or only on sexual offenders) depending on the expertise of the interviewee.

5. In your experience, what are the best ways to address these needs/vulnerabilities?

The goal of this question is to identify measures that can facilitate the re-entry of perpetrators and avoid recidivism.

6. Who do you think is responsible for implementing these measures?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

6.1. Law enforcement?

6.2. Healthcare providers?

6.3. Social workers?

The goal of this question is to identify public services that should be involved in the development of re-entry strategies.

7. What is the role of the community in this process?

The goal of this question is to identify the role played re-entering communities in the successful re-entry of prisoners.

8. What do you believe are the best ways to measure effectiveness of these measures?

The goal of this question is to identify the most effective measures to ensure a successful re-entry.

¹ Nota bene: the concept of victim-offenders refers to victims who later engaged in criminal offences themselves. This concept is further explained below in section 3.

Apart from these questions, follow up or clarification questions may be asked, depending on the answers and expertise of each individual interviewee. Interview reports containing a summary of the main points made by interviewees in each question are included as annexes to this deliverable.

3. The perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and child sexual abuse or exploitation

3.1. Perpetrators' experience: an overview

According to the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (hereafter Palermo Protocol), a person will be a perpetrator of trafficking in persons if s/he engages in

the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. (Article 3(a) Palermo Protocol)

In practice, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) monitors trafficking in person worldwide. Biennially, UNODC publishes a Global Report on Trafficking in Persons. At the time of writing the most recent one is the 2022 report (UNODC 2022), which covers 141 countries and is based primarily on trafficking cases detected between 2017 and 2020. In that period, 38,7% of documented cases of trafficking in human beings were related to sexual exploitation (UNODC 2022, p. 23) and 35% of trafficking victims (for any purpose) were children (UNODC 2022, p. 25).

The second most recent report, from 2020 (UNODC 2020), covers 148 countries and is based primarily on trafficking cases detected between 2016 and 2019. In that period, 50% of documented cases of trafficking in human beings were related to sexual exploitation (UNODC 2020, p. 11) and 39% of trafficking victims (for any purpose) were children (UNODC 2020, p. 16). According to the report, “[A]ctors engaged in trafficking range from organized criminal groups – well-structured groups operating as business enterprises, seeking territorial control – to individuals operating on their own or in small groups on an opportunistic basis” (UNODC 2020, p. 13). More than half of the victims, however, were said to have been trafficked by organised criminal groups.

The UNODC 2020 report also notes that the profile of perpetrators of trafficking in person is varied, mentioning that

While many traffickers have criminal backgrounds and use trafficking as a direct source of income, there are also business owners, intimate partners and other family members involved in human trafficking. Court cases reveal instances of parents facilitating the sexual exploitation of their children or forcing them into street begging. Other cases involve business owners exploiting victims into forced labour. (UNODC 2020, p. 13)

The 2020 report also notes that “[M]ore broadly, almost two-thirds of people convicted of trafficking in persons offences in 2018 were male, although participation of women is higher compared with other crimes” (UNODC 2020, p. 14). In this regard, UNODC data regarding prosecution of trafficking in persons in 2018 (or most recent data available before then where data for 2018 was not available) shows that in that year 4734 men were prosecuted for trafficking in person against 2685 women and 2186 men were convicted for the crime against 1367 women (UNODC 2018). In 2020 (or most recent data available), 40% of those convicted were women, while 58% were men (the remaining 2% were minors), showing that the large percentage of women convicted for the crime remains a constant (UNODC 2022, p. 58). In this regard, UNODC notes that women investigated for trafficking are more likely to be convicted than men (UNODC 2022, p. XIV). According to the Office, “[A] possible explanation for this disparity is the role females play in the recruitment phase of trafficking as

well as in specific activities at high risk of detection (such as collecting money) during the exploitation phase of trafficking for sexual exploitation” (UNODC 2022, p. 58).

Regarding the participation of women in trafficking, however, the UNODC 2020 report raises attention to a specific group, referred to as victims-defendants, also referred to as victim-offenders. These are women trafficked for sexual exploitation who later engage in trafficking activities for different reasons, often being used by their traffickers to avoid punishment. The report notes that this group may not always benefit from the non-punishment principle, which sets that victims of trafficking should not be punished for the acts they are forced to commit due to their trafficking (UNODC 2020, p. 54). In this regard, it has been said that “[T]he roles that victim-defendants played during their participation in trafficking enterprises covered the full spectrum of engagement, ranging from minor, subordinate roles to a position as the principal trafficker” (Mann, L., 2020, p. 25).

According to Shen, the existing literature on the topic of female perpetrators² indicates that geographical and cultural differences may influence women’s roles and performance in human-trafficking activities (Shen, A., 2016, p. 66). Shen’s work, however, is not limited to victim-offenders but instead looks more broadly on women perpetrators. Her fieldwork focuses on women involved in child trafficking in China. In her sample, women were mostly from a disadvantaged background, coming from low-income families in rural areas, with almost no education and thus might have seen in trafficking an opportunity to earn money³ (Shen, A., 2016, p. 69). She also noted that “the respondents’ involvement in child trafficking was largely opportunistic with little planning and organization. Clearly, they were engaged in the child trade by chance and trafficking in children did not seem to be what they deliberately sought out” (Shen, A., 2016, p. 72).

Regarding the citizenship of perpetrators, UNODC’s report noted that “most traffickers convicted in 2018 were citizens of the country where they were convicted. Around one fourth of those convicted were foreigners, but generally from the same region” (UNODC 2020, p. 39). Denton notes, however, that foreigners play a key role in transnational trafficking in the United States (Denton, E., 2016, p. 54).

Research on the Netherlands shows that the country’s sex trafficking cases follow these wider gender and nationality trends, pointing that “the majority of sex traffickers are men, between 20 and 30 years old, with a Dutch nationality and a foreign background” (Serie et al. 2018, p. 171). The research also highlights the different types of relationships that may arise between traffickers and victims, identifying four categories. The first is a helping relationship in which traffickers see themselves “as someone who merely tried to help a girl/woman by providing her with a place to sleep, giving her protection or taking care of her” (Serie et al. 2018, p. 173). The second is the emotional bond, a relationship which is said to have emotional value, “such as a close friendship or an intimate relationship” (Serie et al. 2018, p. 173). The third is the agreement relationship, which, in the perpetrator’s view, was “based purely on a business arrangement between two equal parties who both wanted to make money”⁴ (Serie et al. 2018, p. 174). Lastly, there is the controlling relationship, in which traffickers use “the victim as a commodity that could be controlled and adjusted to their needs” (Serie et al. 2018, p. 174).

Regarding the specific cases where the offenders are or were victims, another study noted that: “[T]he relationship between victims and their traffickers is often the most significant determinant in whether or not they engage in trafficking” (Mann, L., 2020, p. 31). As for the reasons why victims would engage in trafficking themselves, these were mainly “to alleviate their own levels of exploitation and vulnerability; to secure or

² In the context of the HEROES Project, it is important to note that Shen’s work refers to women who engage in the trafficking of children, but who do not actively abuse them.

³ As in the previous note, it is worth mentioning that this “economic” motivation may not apply to those who may later abuse these children and who are thus outside the scope of Shen’s work.

⁴ The research conducted by Serie et al. presents the findings of interviews made with perpetrators and, consequently, does not present the victim’s views of the relationship. For example, as noted below in section 5.2, it was mentioned in one interview that some perpetrators do not understand the victimhood of their victims because at some point there was consent involved but even if a relationship started as an agreement, it does not necessarily remain so.

maintain affective ties with the trafficker; to rise within an organizational hierarchy; to make money; and where they had no choice but to comply with the trafficker's orders" (Mann, L., 2020, p. 33).

Gotch also looked at the control relationship between victims and perpetrators when highlighting the experience of male perpetrators of domestic trafficking for sexual exploitation in the United States. In her findings, she noted that among the perpetrators in her study, "7% (n = 2) used threats only, 50% (n = 14) used threats and physical violence, 11% (n = 3) had no indication of any use of threats or physical violence and, for 32% (n = 9), control tactics were unknown due to a lack of information" (Gotch, K., 2016, p. 104). Many also mentioned a romantic relationship with victims as a way to involve/control them.

Gotch also looked at the criminal and psychological profile of perpetrators, noting that "[I]n addition to involvement in domestic trafficking for sexual exploitation, 71% (n = 20) had a documented history of intimate partner violence, 64% (n = 18) had a documented history of general violence, and 46% (n = 13) had additional documented sexual violence within their history" (Gotch, K., 2016, p. 105). As for possible psychopathic traits measures, "18% (n = 5) scored within the very high range (score of 34+), 61% (n = 17) scored within the high range (score of 30–33), 18% (n = 5) scored in the moderate-high range (score of 27–29), and 3% (n = 1) scored in the low range (score of 0–18)" (Gotch, K., 2016, p. 105). Overall, she concluded that the data she assessed suggested that her entire sample of perpetrators demonstrated a high likelihood of general recidivism.

Cockbain, in turn, focused on perpetrators of internal child sex trafficking in the United Kingdom when interviewing perpetrators. She interviewed six male perpetrators and one female victim-offender. She noted that male offenders would deny their involvement in the crimes, minimising their participation and often blaming the victims. She noted that "[T]he traffickers interviewed shared negative attitudes to their victims (provocations) and a tendency to minimise the harms involved and blame victims for their own abuse (permissions)" (Cockbain, E., 2018, 122-123). As for the female victim-offender, Cockbain notes that she also denied responsibility for the crimes, regretting that the justice system overlooked the full extent of her role and why she had been placed in that position. Unlike the male perpetrators, however, she recognised the harm done to the victims, indeed recognising them as victims (Cockbain, E., 2018, 121-122).

It should be noted, however, that most of the abovementioned findings is based on data from those who were prosecuted and/or convicted for trafficking in human beings. In this regard, it has been said that

Arrests are more likely to befall the poorly connected, small-time, criminal entrepreneur. When higher profile figures are identified, they are more likely to avoid arrest. When arrested, they are more likely to post bail, to have their case dismissed (through favoritism), to avoid charges in some other way (e.g., corruption), or to even escape. The selection effect for arrestee data is therefore significant. (Choi-Fitzpatrick, A., 2016, p. 5)

Nonetheless, even though data on those prosecuted and/or convicted for trafficking in human beings may not represent the whole universe of perpetrators, those convicted are the ones who may benefit from re-entry programmes and thus are the ones at the centre of this deliverable.

3.2. Perpetrators in HEROES pilot countries

HEROES' geographical scope includes Spain, Greece, Brazil, and Peru. This section thus provides some information on the perpetrators of trafficking in human beings in these countries as practical examples of perpetrators in HEROES pilot countries.

In Spain, the national statistics institute (INE in the Spanish acronym) reports the total number of persons convicted for trafficking in human beings in Spain as well as the nationality of perpetrators. The gender breakdown, however, is not available. In recent years, the INE gathered the information presented in Table 2.

Table 2: persons convicted for trafficking in human beings in Spain

Year	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Total convictions	94	197	54	63	123	103
Spanish nationals	3	54	2	4	N/A	N/A
EU nationals	6	19	6	34	N/A	N/A
Non-EU Europeans	2	N/A ⁵	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Nationals of African countries	26	30	28	7	N/A	N/A

In Greece, according to the United States Department of State (U.S. Department of State, 2022), in 2020, the police investigated eight sex trafficking cases involving 15 suspects. In the same year, 16 defendants were prosecuted (seven for sex trafficking and nine for forced labour) and 19 were convicted in first instance (11 for sex trafficking and eight for forced labour). In 2019, 25 cases involving 148 suspects were investigated, 33 defendants were prosecuted and 15 were convicted in first instance. Regarding the perpetrators, the report notes that they are mainly Greek and Europeans, with fewer being from the Caucasus and Central Asia. As for victim-offenders, the Department of State also notes that there were no reports of victims being penalised for crimes they were forced to commit by traffickers.

In Brazil, the number of cases regarding the enticement and trafficking in persons for the purpose of labour exploitation investigated by the Public Ministry of Labour are as follows: 4.271 in 2020, 4.108 in 2019, 3.872 cases in 2018, and 3.606 in 2017 (Greco Alves, H., 2021, p. 53). The number of cases investigated by the Federal Public Ministry, which acts mainly in international trafficking cases, in turn, are as follows: 27 in 2020 (of which 26 involving sexual exploitation); 28 in 2019 (of which 24 involving sexual exploitation); 45 in 2018 (of which 42 involving sexual exploitation); and 66 in 2017 (of which 65 involving sexual exploitation) (Greco Alves, H., 2021, p. 57). The above numbers, however, are much higher than the number of individuals actually charged and/or convicted with trafficking in human beings by the Federal Police. In this regard, 19 persons were charged with trafficking in human beings in 2020, 64 in 2019, 25 in 2018 and 13 in 2017 (Greco Alves, H., 2021, p. 63). As for convictions, 39 persons were convicted in 2020 for internal (national) trafficking in persons, 10 in 2019, 5 in 2018 and 5 in 2017. Regarding international trafficking, 31 persons were convicted in 2020, 72 in 2019, 13 in 2018 and 16 in 2017. Of those convicted (for both internal and international trafficking) 78% (n=114) were men and 22% (n=32) were women (Greco Alves, H., 2021, p. 63-64). Here, it is noted that most women were involved in international trafficking, which, in Brazil, mainly relates to trafficking for sexual exploitation (while internal trafficking mostly relates to labour exploitation). This seems to suggest that women victims arise to the role of perpetrators (victim-offenders) in such cases (Greco Alves, H., 2021, p. 63).

In Peru, 65 persons were convicted for trafficking in human beings in 2018, 38 in 2017, 30 in 2016, and 26 in 2015 (Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática, 2019, p. 19). Within the prison population, 397 persons were in prison in 2018 for trafficking in human beings, 169 of which had been convicted and 228 of which had been charged (Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática, 2019, p. 20). Among those detained for trafficking in human beings, 49,6% were aged between 30 and 44; 28,7% were between 18 and 29 years old; 18,1% between 45 and 59 years old; and 3,5% were 60 years old or older. No information regarding gender or nationality is available.

⁵ In this table, N/A stands for information not available.

4. Prisoner re-entry

4.1. Prisoner re-entry: an overview

After serving their sentences, convicted traffickers and perpetrators of child sexual abuse or exploitation will return to society. To ensure a successful reintegration and prevent re-offending, re-entry must be supported by various services and measures. For example, some of the challenges re-entering prisoners may face relate to “housing, employment, drug and alcohol addiction, health problems and access to healthcare, and family reunification” (La Vigne et al., 2005, p. 3). Similar areas of concern have been pointed as the main challenges to the specific re-entry of women prisoners by Chin and Dandurand, which highlight challenges related to “childcare and parenting skill development; health-care, counselling and drug dependence treatment programmes; housing and transportation assistance; education, employment and job training services; and social support” (Chin & Dandurand, 2018, p. 102).

In the theoretical realm, Grommon notes that the predominant theory in the field of re-entry, coined in the 1970s, is known as ‘nothing works’, as according to it “correctional rehabilitative programs nearly all fail to reduce future recidivism” (Grommon, E. L., 2013, p. 13). With the passage of years, however, Grommon notes that a new theory began gaining strength and continued development. This is Palmer’s ‘differential intervention’ theory, which advocates for “contextualized interventions – specific correctional sub-populations, in a specific setting, utilizing a specific treatment modality consistent to individualized need” (Grommon, E. L., 2013, p. 16), as a means “to make corrections more effective, scientific, and is in direct response to past notions that nothing works” (Grommon, E. L., 2013, p. 16). Theoretically, the preferred approach to re-entry is to focus on the transition from the controlled environment of a correctional facility to a likely unstructured life in society.⁶ Programmes with this focus would involve the development of a tailored comprehensive planning that “can cover deficits in housing options, employability background, familial relationships, peer relationships, and the possession of necessary identification documentation” (Grommon, E. L., 2013, p. 40). Planning efforts, coupled with availability of the necessary services, would ensure the stability required to readapt to community life. In practice, however, the comprehensiveness of such approach may be its pitfall, as it may make their implementation unrealistic. Moreover, Grommon stresses that re-entry programmes lacked proper evaluation and study, making the reliability of findings in their regard hard to assess and limiting their use in the shaping of future re-entry measures (Grommon, E. L., 2013, p. 49-51).

Building on the idea that a complex intervention is needed in re-entry programmes and focusing on the abovementioned main areas of concern after release, Grommon thus organised a study to assess the influence housing, employment and substance abuse treatment had on each other (e.g. how housing may affect employment; how employment may affect drug abuse treatment etc.) and how they would affect participants’ transition into the community. This was aimed to bridge part of the gap in empirical research in the field of re-entry. Overall, the results of the study “suggest that the stability of housing and employment can directly influence treatment processes and relevant correctional outcome indicators” (Grommon, E. L., 2013, p. 136). More specifically, stable housing was associated with less time in drug treatments, fewer treatment program violations, less chances of absconding and lower likelihood of being re-arrested. Stable employment, in turn, was linked to longer periods in drug treatment, fewer treatment program violations, less chances of absconding, less positive drug tests and lower likelihood of re-incarceration (Grommon, E. L., 2013, p. 136). He notes, however, that despite these findings, “the effects of housing and employment were relatively weak” (Grommon, E. L., 2013, p. 136).

Grommon’s work is partially based on that of La Vigne et al., who indeed consider as the main challenges to prisoner re-entry “alcohol addiction, health problems and access to healthcare, and family reunification” (La

⁶ For example, a challenge related to the social dynamics of community life mentioned in one interview was that often people get involved in crimes due to their personal relations and, once they re-enter society, all their relations are linked to the criminal milieu, which may lead to reoffending (see annex D below).

Vigne et al., 2005, p. 3). In their work, La Vigne et al. look at these challenges through a geographical lens, noting that in the United States prisoner's re-entry is often concentrated in metropolitan areas and specific neighbourhoods within such areas (La Vigne et al., 2005, p. 1). In this regard, they present the development of local mapping initiatives, which would match the places to where prisoners are re-entering with available services, as a way to contribute to informed resource allocation in each location as well as mitigate public risks associated with high concentrations of released prisoners (La Vigne et al., 2005, p. 8).

Maier, in turn, challenges this approach to focus on the local (neighbourhood) level of re-entry. She notes that previous research, including that of La Vigne et. al,

has focused almost exclusively on the situation in the USA and has been primarily concerned with mapping the geographic distribution of released prisoners in US urban centres. This research has found that prisoner reentry tends to be concentrated in a relatively few—primarily poor, racially segregated, and high crime—neighbourhoods within US cities. (Maier, K., 2021, p. 4)

Based on interviews she conducted with former prisoners living in halfway houses in Canada, however, she argues that focusing on the neighbourhood (local) context is not enough to understand the spatial dimension of re-entry, especially as for some individuals the re-entry process will be spread through different neighbourhoods, cities or even regions in the country (Maier, K., 2021, p. 2). She notes, for example, that former prisoners may be placed in halfway houses in cities where they never lived before, due to the limited number of such facilities available in any given region in the country. These interviewees were more likely to see the place they were living as temporary (Maier, K., 2021, p. 4). Overall, she notes that different challenges associated with re-entry may be associated with different time periods and locations. For example, while halfway houses may be associated with employment, as in Canada they are oriented that way, feelings of 'home' and family reunification may be associated with other places in the country at different times. Thus, former prisoners have different ideas of mobility according to their needs and progression of time after release. She notes, however, that studies indicate that the relationship of former prisoners with mobility and halfway houses is different in Canada and in the United States, which may indicate that the spatial dimension of re-entry may vary according to the national context (Maier, K., 2021, p. 14).

These different views of re-entry further show the varied experiences of offenders with re-entry and thus contribute to the idea that the needs upon re-entry are not the same to all and thus individualised interventions may be more beneficial to those re-joining society. Indeed, Visher et al. mentioned that

recent reviews of reentry and rehabilitation research suggest that services directed toward individual change (including education, mental health treatment, drug treatment, and programs focusing on changing cognitive thinking) have greater beneficial effects than services focused on practical needs such as developing a reentry plan, addressing housing difficulties, and receiving employment-related assistance. (Visher et al., 2017, p. 154)

They further note that their study, which looked at recidivism of violent male offenders up to five years post-release, is consistent with this view, as it showed that individual change services had a weak yet beneficial effect on recidivism (Visher et al., 2017, p. 156). UNODC also supports individualised programmes, as it claims that re-entry services "are best delivered as part of an integrated programme designed to address an individual offender's specific issues and challenges" (Chin & Dandurand, 2018, p. 6). They further note the importance of pre-release re-entry plans that identify "the offender's particular needs and circumstances and determines the type of educational or employment programmes that the offender should access in order to maximize his or her chances for successful reintegration" (Chin & Dandurand, 2018, p. 44).⁷

⁷ An individualised approach also allows to differentiate the needs of those who engaged in trafficking without directly abusing their victims and those who actively engage in abusive actions (e.g., sexual abuse), as their motivations may be different (see notes in Section 3.1 above).

The next sub-section thus looks at some of the specific needs of perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and sexual abuse or exploitation.

4.2. An individualised approach to re-entry in the context of the HEROES project

As shown in section 3 above, the experiences of perpetrators with trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation vary greatly, including due to the different subjective tendencies of individuals, and thus it is difficult to identify specific needs for all those involved in those crimes. Nonetheless, based on the findings of section 3, which identifies particular vulnerabilities of the perpetrators of these crimes (e.g., the greater number of women perpetrators), this section will single out some of their particular needs upon re-entry.

For example, regarding sexual offenders, it has been said that

a criminal record can become an almost insurmountable obstacle to their social reintegration, including employment and accommodation. They usually encounter numerous challenges related to the stigma and fears associated with sexual offending, including difficulties related to the fact that they may have been registered as sexual offenders in a publicly available registry. (Chin & Dandurand, 2018, p. 120)

Looking specifically at male perpetrators of trafficking for sexual exploitation, Gotch noted that in her study that:

[B]ased upon all available data, it is suggested that effective response, management, and interventions for male domestic traffickers for sexual exploitation in the United States requires the incorporation of sexual offense-specific and domestic violence concepts, as well as culturally relevant (e.g., ethnicity, experiences of structural inequality or racism, gang culture) and responsivity-based approaches (e.g., adverse developmental/childhood experiences, high psychopathic traits, familial/environmental influences). (Gotch, K., 2016, p. 107)

Female perpetrators also deserve special attention. As mentioned in the first part of this deliverable, women are involved in the trafficking of human beings, especially for sexual exploitation, at a higher proportion than in the commission of other crimes. This is partly due to the victim-offender phenomenon. In this regard, Henderson and Rhodes note that many victim-offenders of sexual exploitation in the United States are forced, manipulated, or put under high pressure to assume the perpetrator role by their traffickers and continue to be the victims of abuse even after they assume the role of perpetrators, sometimes being the most victimised in trafficking operations (Henderson & Rhodes, 2022). Despite this fact, Baxter noted that in criminal cases in Australia, the past experiences as a victim had little weight in terms of sentencing and, instead of being seen as mitigating factors, were considered by judges as a reason to deem that these women should have known not to subject someone to similar conditions to those they had experienced (Baxter, A. L. A., 2020). This position seems to go directly against the non-punishment principle, mentioned in Section 3.1 above, and ignore some of the reasons why victims may engage in crimes. Regardless of the position taken toward victim-offenders during prosecution, however, the experiences as victims should be considered in re-entry programmes, as victim-offenders also need to be rehabilitated from their victim experience (and not only from their perpetrator role) to best reintegrate in society. Indeed, the Palermo Protocol calls on States to implement “measures to provide for the physical, psychological and social recovery of victims of trafficking in persons” (article 6(3) Palermo Protocol). Thus, the role of victims should be acknowledged and addressed in the re-entry of victim-offenders. In some cases, it has been argued that the criminal record relating to crimes committed as a consequence of trafficking should be erased (Emmerson, J., 2019).

Furthermore, regarding the rehabilitation of women offenders more broadly, it has been said that since women represent a small percentage of the prison population, rehabilitation programmes are rarely adapted to their needs. In this regard,

Very often, women in prison do not receive adequate, gender-specific rehabilitation resources or guidance preparing them for release and life after imprisonment, despite the fact that women are often ill-prepared for release from prison. Women in prison are more likely to have a history of sexual and physical abuse, and they suffer from mental illness at a higher rate than male prisoners; moreover, if they have a history of drug abuse, it tends to be different from that of male prisoners. (Chin & Dandurand, 2018, p. 94)

Consequently, special attention should be paid to the needs of women offenders in re-entry programs, to ensure gender-specific services are available. For example, women may face increased stigmatization from society due to the type of crime they committed (such as sexual-related crimes) and may be financially dependent on male family members or relationships, which may lead to increased vulnerability (Chin & Dandurand, 2018, p. 101).

Another noteworthy group is foreign perpetrators. “Foreign offenders face several disadvantages, the most prominent being the language barrier, which may significantly hinder their understanding of the law, the legal process and their rights and obligations” (Chin & Dandurand, 2018, p. 114). In this regard, “[E]ducational, vocational training and other programmes are less accessible to foreigner prisoners, as they are less likely to be able to read or write in the language of the country in which they are imprisoned” (Chin & Dandurand, 2018, p. 114). Furthermore, “[P]risoners who are foreign nationals are often ill prepared for release and may not be eligible for health, welfare and other community-based services” (Chin & Dandurand, 2018, p. 114).

5. Re-entry in the context of the HEROES project: fieldwork findings

5.1. Individualised approach

Interviewees confirmed the findings of section 3 that perpetrators experiences vary greatly and thus there is a need for an individualised approach to re-entry (as suggested in section 4.2) to address the specific needs linked to these different experiences. For example, in I2, it was mentioned that some perpetrators of trafficking for labour exploitation may not need much rehabilitation when re-entering society because they have very little experience with crime but somehow got involved in some kind of exploitative situation. For instance, they may simply be businesspeople or small business owners who did not follow the advice of their legal teams or could not follow new laws, which took their business to a breaking point. In some cases, perpetrators unwillingly entered into these situations, and it ruined their lives.⁸

To identify such specific needs, in all interviews (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5), interviewees noted that a thorough assessment, which will, among others, allow re-entry professionals to understand the different aspects of the perpetrators' involvement in criminal activity, including their psychological traits that may have led to such actions, is needed to target the measures that will be applied upon re-entry to facilitate their rehabilitation. Interviewees suggested that this assessment could be based on interviews with former prisoners, which may go beyond the criminal activity to include different aspects of a perpetrator's life that led to the offending (I1, I4, I5). These interviews may be complemented by questionnaires and tests (I5).

5.2. Specific needs of perpetrators and ways to address them

Interviewees mentioned both general needs of all prisoners re-entering society and specific needs of perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and child sexual abuse or exploitation.⁹

Regarding the general needs, in 2 interviews (involving 2 interviewees) (I1, I3), interviewees mentioned that former prisoners need assistance in obtaining employment upon re-entering society, as being financially independent is essential to prevent them from reoffending.¹⁰ In this regard, if re-entering prisoners do not have a diploma, education (including to improve language skills) and professional training are also needed to increase the chances of finding employment (I3, I4). However, it is important to find training in skills or for jobs that the prisoner is actually interested in, otherwise they may just enrol in a professional programme to fulfil their release conditions, when that is a requirement, but end up abandoning it because they are not interested (I3). Besides lack of formal education or training, having a criminal record was also mentioned as a possible barrier to finding employment (I4, I5). In this regard, interviewees suggested that it would also be good to have rehabilitation paths that allow criminal records to be erased to ensure former prisoners are not limited by the fact that they have a criminal record (I4). In I5, however, interviewees noted that regarding sexual offenders, even the erasure of a criminal record does not guarantee that they will not face certain limitations, as we live in a connected world and sexual offenders are often in the news. This means that even rehabilitated sexual offenders may see their past crimes hunt them since people can still read about them online, which can limit not only their access to employment but also their social interactions.

Housing was also mentioned as one of the main needs of those re-entering society in 3 interviews (involving 5 interviewees) (I2, I3, I4). In this regard, it was noted that those who have family may be able to return to

⁸ These experiences, however, should not minimise the suffering of victims, which, as noted below in Section 5.2, is not always understood by perpetrators and is possibly an issue that needs to be addressed during re-entry.

⁹ These two groups of perpetrators are addressed in this deliverable, as they are both the focus of the HEROES Project, however, as highlighted above, there may be different experiences and motivations between perpetrators who directly abuse their victims, especially those who engage in sexual abuse against children, and those who do not. Some specific needs related to certain types of crime and/or personality traits were mentioned in the interviews and are reported below.

¹⁰ While employment was not specifically mentioned in I2 and I4, the interviewees in these interviews said preventing poverty was important for a successful re-entry, as poverty is often a root cause for criminal activity.

their family home (I3, I4) while others will need assistance in finding a shelter that will host them initially (I3). Landlords may also be unwilling to accept former prisoners, and so they may need assistance to engage with landlords to find a suitable place afterwards (I3).

In 4 interviews (involving 6 interviewees) (I1, I3, I4, I5), interviewees further noted that mental health is an important need of re-entering prisoners. In this regard, it was mentioned that prisoners dealing with substance addiction or who are following mental care treatment (e.g., mentally disabled prisoners) need to have the continuance of their treatment ensured (I4).¹¹

In I4, interviewees also mentioned that there are many administrative procedures that need to be done by prisoners upon release (e.g., signing up to healthcare, obtaining an ID). Furthermore, some prisoners may have debts they need to pay out. Lastly, it was mentioned in I4 that family reunification can also present a challenge in some cases, especially for prisoners who experienced abusive relationships.¹²

As for the specific needs of perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and child sexual abuse or exploitation, in all 5 interviews (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5), interviewees mentioned that often, when it comes to these crimes, perpetrators do not fully understand the wrongfulness of their conduct. For example, it was mentioned that in cases of trafficking for labour exploitation, perpetrators may say that they gave victims a job and a house and that that was not a bad thing (I1). Similarly, it was noted that some male offenders do not always realise that the female sex workers they are exploiting¹³ are victims because at some point there was some kind of consent involved (I2). In I5, interviewees also mentioned consent, albeit in a difference sense, noting that some sexual offenders claimed their sexual interaction, which led to a conviction, was consensual, and thus did not see the wrongfulness of their conduct. The interviewees in I5 also noted that some perpetrators who engage in the consumption of online child sexual abuse imagery may not see how only looking at images that already existed is wrong, claiming they never harmed the children or produced any content themselves.

More concretely, in I3, the interviewee mentioned that she was assisting a foreign prisoner in Belgium who saw his trafficking (for labour exploitation) experience as a way to help his victims by finding them employment. He would claim that even if they faced difficult work conditions, they were better than the conditions in their country of origin. Similarly, in I4, one of the interviewees mentioned that he worked with a prisoner who had been convicted for trafficking in human beings, but that claimed he merely helped people from his country reach Belgium or move around European countries. In his view, he was merely assisting people, but he received money for the activities, which led to his conviction. The interviewee in I3 also mentioned working with a Belgian man in the past, who saw his involvement in sexual exploitation as a business transaction. He would take care of the women and protect them while they did their job and would be compensated for it.

Thus, all interviewees (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5) mentioned that one of the needs of these perpetrators is awareness raising, that is, working on the understanding of their conduct, the wrongfulness of it and the consequences it had on the victims, ultimately taking responsibility for their actions. It was suggested that restorative justice elements, such as pairing victims and perpetrators to discuss the issues surrounding the crime from both perspectives may also benefit in this regard (I1).¹⁴

For victim-offenders, the recognition of their victimhood (I1, I2, I3) and possible needs that derive from it, such as compensation (I1), also need to be addressed.

¹¹ It is important to note that these two examples serve only to exemplify a more general need of re-entering prisoners and there may be other groups that need psychosocial support. Sexual offenders, for example, are also mentioned below as possibly in need of specific treatment.

¹² In situations such as these, return to the family home may also be an issue, which may affect housing and stability during re-entry. Hence, the need to address family relationships and dynamics during the re-entry process.

¹³ In this case, the interviewees were not referring to sexual exploitation, but of a relationship in which perpetrators exploit victims who are engaging in prostitution as procurers.

¹⁴ In the context of the HEROES Project, it is important to note that this may not be an option when children are involved, as it may lead to revictimization.

Regarding foreign offenders, appropriate legal representation (I2) and language assistance (I2, I4) were mentioned as specific needs. It was also noted that their legal status may affect their rehabilitation, as if they do not have legal stay, they may not be allowed to enrol in re-entry programmes or participate in activities outside of prison (I3, I4).

As for sexual offenders, in I5, interviewees mentioned that they face great stigmatisation, which is the main challenge for their re-entry. In this regard, it was noted that sexual offenders are often all stigmatised for being perceived as someone with a sexual disorder, but that this generalisation does not correspond to reality, as their experiences vary greatly (I5). For those who do present a sexual disorder, this may need to be addressed through specific treatment. Among those with sexual disorders, however, not all will need intense treatment, as some do not risk “taking action” and thus can safely live with their disorders. Some, however, may offend due to other reasons, such as antisocial behaviour, and not fall into the stereotype associated with sexual offenders (I5).¹⁵

In I4, for example, the interviewees mentioned that, in their experience, when it comes to child sexual abuse, especially in the online domain, perpetrators will need to address the psychological issues behind their sexual offence. Apart from these psychological issues, however, these perpetrators may actually have fewer needs to be addressed, as they may come from a higher social status. This means that overall, they may be better integrated in society (e.g., they have a job and social relations) and have fewer needs to successfully reintegrate (apart from the abovementioned psychological needs). In this regard, in the interviewees’ experience, most of those who engaged in child sexual abuse had been themselves abused when they were young.

5.3. Stakeholders

In 4 interviews (involving 6 interviewees) (I1, I2, I3, I5), it was mentioned that the development and implementation of the abovementioned measures need buy-in from politicians as governmental action and public investment is needed to ensure the necessary programmes are available to re-entering prisoners. Regarding sexual offenders, it was suggested that due to the stigma that they carry, there is not much interest from politicians to provide aid to them (I5).

In terms of implementation of the programmes, there should be a multistakeholder approach, including social services (e.g., housing), mental health, probation officers, the judiciary, frontline workers... (I1, I3, I4). This consequently requires the training and sensibilisation of the professionals involved (I3, I5).

When it comes to the role of the community, in 3 interviews (involving 4 interviewees) (I1, I3, I4), it was mentioned that the community has an important role to play, so that former prisoners do not feel socially excluded or stigmatised (I1) and so it is important to raise awareness so that former prisoners are not simply labelled as perpetrators, but are instead given a second chance (I3, I4).

It was also noted in one interview that when one feels part of a community (sense of belonging) it is less likely that they will become a criminal offender again, as they are less likely to want to damage a community that they are a part of (I1).¹⁶ In this regard, bottom-up initiatives (e.g., football games, cooking classes) should be organised and funded so that prisoners can interact and build a trust relationship with community members (I1). Similarly, in I4, interviewees mentioned that creating new relationships through culture (e.g., theatre, music) or sport can help prisoners in their reintegration and in finding their value and place in society.

¹⁵ In this regard, interviewees clarified that to determine the therapeutic needs of each perpetrator, an individual assessment is made. This assessment consists mainly of a psychological assessment, which may last several hours, in which possible psychological conditions are diagnosed. The psychological assessment may also be complemented by questionnaires and tests to obtain a greater understanding of the perpetrator and identify the appropriate therapeutic treatment (see Annex E).

¹⁶ At the same time, it is worth noting that it has been said in literature that “[I]ndividuals are more likely to be trafficked by members of their own community than they are by strangers. This finding holds true whether the trafficking event occurs domestically or internationally.” (Choi-Fitzpatrick, A., 2016, p. 12)

Interviewees with expertise in the rehabilitation of sexual offenders mentioned, however, that while this type of initiative (in which former prisoners interact with community members) was a possible way to demystify some of the stigma around sexual offenders in other countries, they believed that in Belgium (the country where they act) the stigma is still too strong to allow for such initiatives to succeed (I5).

It was further mentioned that the community plays a big role in preventing exploitation, which includes identifying victims, but also ensuring that care is available for those who need it and that, for example, sex workers are protected and looked after, but this needs government support, which is often lacking (I2).

5.4.Evaluation of measures

Recidivism rates were mentioned as a form of evaluation in 4 interviews (involving 7 interviewees) (I2, I3, I4, I5). In 4 interviews (involving 6 interviewees) (I1, I3, I4, I5), interviewees also mentioned the possibility of having a more thorough assessment of the programmes done through interactions with the (former) prisoners engaged in the programme and the professionals and facilitators involved to have a more complete view. Data sharing (in a data-protection safe way) between stakeholders who interact with the same prisoner was also mentioned as a way to perform a more holistic evaluation of a programme (I1).

Including those involved directly on the crimes, both victims and perpetrators, in research and policy making, to fully understand their experiences was also suggested as a way to evaluate the chances of a successful rehabilitation (I2). In this regard, NGOs acting in the frontlines are well placed to obtain information about how things are being reflected on the ground (I2).

6. Conclusions and recommendations

This deliverable aimed to understand the specific needs of perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and child sexual abuse or exploitation when re-entering society after completion of their prison sentence. The ultimate goal of this assessment was to identify measures that can facilitate their rehabilitation and reintegration and thus reduce recidivism, ultimately reducing the number of future victims of trafficking in human beings and child sexual abuse or exploitation.

As a first step, a literature review of the experiences of perpetrators with trafficking in human beings and child sexual abuse or exploitation was conducted in Section 3. This research showed that perpetrators have very different experiences with these crimes and thus it is not possible to talk about common characteristics that apply to all perpetrators. This finding was confirmed by the fieldwork conducted with experts working on prisoner re-entry and with perpetrators of these crimes (see Section 5).

Consequently, a successful re-entry requires taking into account the individual experience and needs of each perpetrator to develop an appropriate programme to facilitate their re-integration. Some needs (such as housing and employment) may be common to most prisoners re-entering society, but even in those cases an individual assessment must be made as, for example, some may have family that can house them while others may not, and some may have followed professional training already, while others may not.

Some of the needs of re-entering prisoners, however, are directly related to the crimes committed. In this regard, it was noted that perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and child sexual abuse or exploitation often do not understand the wrongfulness of their conduct and the consequences it has on their victims. Thus, one frequent need of perpetrators of these crimes is addressing their responsibility.

To address these different needs, multiple actors need to work together. For example, members of the judiciary need to prescribe relevant conditions of release that facilitate the re-entry of each individual prisoner. The required services (e.g., therapy) need to be available for re-entering prisoners and the professionals involved need to be prepared to deal with the specific situation of the perpetrator. Follow up by all relevant services and a constant evaluation of the re-entry programme are needed to assess what works and what does not. Parallel to programmes designed to assist prisoners, awareness raising campaigns in communities can assist in reducing the stigma against former prisoners and thus facilitate their reintegration. All these efforts require public investment and thus buy-in from authorities is needed.

Based on these findings, the following recommendations can be made:

- Re-entry programmes should start as soon as possible, ideally still during incarceration;
- Re-entering prisoners should go through a thorough individual evaluation to identify their specific needs upon re-entry. Such evaluation should include interviews with the concerned individual to understand their current situation and background, which may explain their relationship with crime and rehabilitation needs;
- A thorough assessment should allow the identification of perpetrators who were previously victims. Where such individuals are identified, their victimhood and the consequences of it (e.g., right to compensation, trauma) should be addressed in their re-entry programme;
- Specific psychological treatment must be available to address the individual characteristics of perpetrators (e.g., sexual disorders, antisocial disorders, disabilities);
- Specific sensibilisation programmes should be available for perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and child sexual abuse or exploitation to address their responsibility issues and facilitate the understanding of the wrongfulness of their conduct and the consequences it has on their victims;
- Training must be available for professionals providing care to former prisoners;

- Re-entry programmes should be evaluated both through quantitative (e.g., recidivism rates) and qualitative methods (e.g., interviews with prisoners and professionals involved in the programmes) and identified weaknesses should be addressed;
- Awareness raising campaigns with employers, health care providers, landlords and the community in general are needed to ensure perpetrators are given a second chance and are not further stigmatised when seeking care or employment or trying to engage in social activities;
- Prisoner re-entry should be considered a priority for policy makers and receive the necessary investments to ensure its success.

References

- (Baxter, A. L. A., 2020) Baxter, A. L. A. (2020). When the Line between Victimization and Criminalization Blurs: The Victim-Offender Overlap Observed in Female Offenders in Cases of Trafficking in Persons for Sexual Exploitation in Australia. *Journal of Human Trafficking*, 6(3), 327–338. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2019.1578579>.
- (Chin & Dandurand, 2018) Chin, V., & Dandurand, Y. (2018). *Introductory Handbook on The Prevention of Recidivism and the Social Reintegration of Offenders*. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.
- (Choi-Fitzpatrick, A., 2016) Choi-Fitzpatrick, A. (2016). The Good, the Bad, the Ugly: Human Rights Violators in Comparative Perspective. *Journal of Human Trafficking*, 2(1), 1–14.
- (Cockbain, E., 2018) Cockbain, E. (2018). *Offender and Victim Networks in Human Trafficking* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315628578>.
- (Denton, E., 2016) Denton, E. (2016). Anatomy of Offending: Human Trafficking in the United States, 2006–2011. *Journal of Human Trafficking*, 2(1), 32–62. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2016.1136540>.
- (Emmerson, J., 2019). Emerson, J. (2019). State Report Cards: Grading Criminal Record Relief Laws for Survivors of Human Trafficking. https://scholarworks.law.ubalt.edu/all_fac/1079.
- (Gotch, K., 2016) Gotch, K. (2016). Preliminary Data on a Sample of Perpetrators of Domestic Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation: Suggestions for Research and Practice. *Journal of Human Trafficking*, 2(1), 99–109.
- (Greco Alves, H., 2021) Greco Alves, H. (2021). Relatório Nacional sobre Tráfico de Pessoas: Dados 2017 a 2020. Ministério da Justiça e Segurança Pública. https://www.gov.br/mj/pt-br/assuntos/sua-protecao/trafico-de-pessoas/publicacoes/relatorio-nacional-trafico-de-pessoas_2017-2020.pdf.
- (Grommon, E. L., 2013) Grommon, E. L. (2013). Prisoner reentry programs: Penetrating the black box for better theory and practice, p. 9. LFB Scholarly Pub.
- (Henderson & Rhodes, 2022) Henderson, A. C., & Rhodes, S. M. (2022). “Got Sold a Dream and It Turned into a Nightmare”: The Victim-Offender Overlap in Commercial Sexual Exploitation. *Journal of Human Trafficking*, 8(1), 33–48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2021.2019530>
- (Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática, 2019) Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática (2019). Perú: Estadísticas de Trata de Personas, 2012-2019, p. 19. https://www.inei.gob.pe/media/MenuRecursivo/boletines/boletin_trata_de_personas_4.pdf.
- (La Vigne et al., 2005) La Vigne, N. G., & Cowan, J. (2005). Mapping Prisoner Reentry: An Action Research Guidebook: (717392011-001) [Data set]. American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/e717392011-001>.
- (Maier, K., 2021) Maier, K. (2021). ‘Mobilizing’ prisoner reentry research: Halfway houses and the spatial-temporal dynamics of prison release. *Theoretical Criminology*, 25(4), 601–618. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480619896371>.
- (Mann, L., 2020) Mann, L. (2020). Female Victims of Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation as Defendants—A Case Law Analysis. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. https://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/2020/final_Female_victims_of_trafficking_for_sexual_exploitation_as_defendants.pdf.
- (Palermo Protocol) Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. (2020). United Nations.

- (Serie et al., 2018) Serie, C. M. B., Krumeich, A., van Dijke, A., de Ruiter, E., Terpstra, L., & de Ruiter, C. (2018). Sex Traffickers' Views: A Qualitative Study into Their Perceptions of the Victim–Offender Relationship. *Journal of Human Trafficking*, 4(2), 169–184. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2017.1337439>.
- (Shen, A., 2016) Shen, A. (2016). Female Perpetrators in Internal Child Trafficking in China: An Empirical Study. *Journal of Human Trafficking*, 2(1), 63–77.
- (U.S. Department of State, 2022) 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report: Greece. (2022). U.S. Department of State. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-trafficking-in-persons-report/greece/>.
- (UNODC 2022) United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2023). Global report on trafficking in persons 2022.
- (UNODC 2020) United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2020). Global report on trafficking in persons 2020.
- (UNODC 2018) United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Persons investigated and convicted of trafficking, by sex and age, 2018 (or more recent). <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/data-and-analysis/glotip.html>.
- (Visher et al., 2017) Visher, C. A., Lattimore, P. K., Barrick, K., & Tueller, S. (2017). Evaluating the Long-Term Effects of Prisoner Reentry Services on Recidivism: What Types of Services Matter?, *Justice Quarterly*, 34(1), 136–165.

Annex A Interview Report (I1)

1. Could you please describe your position and tasks?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

1.1. Have you ever worked on prisoner re-entry?

1.2. Have you ever worked on/with perpetrators of trafficking in human beings?

1.3. Have you ever worked on/with perpetrators of child sexual abuse or exploitation?

1.4. Have you ever worked on/with sexual offenders?

1.5. Have you ever worked on/with victim-offenders?

The interviewee works at trilateral research, in a department tasked with finding answers to complex questions using both social science and technology. The department itself often works on trafficking in human beings and, on top of that, the interviewee has in previous positions engaged in multiple projects focusing on trafficking in human beings. Lastly, her PhD research focused on victim-offenders. In this regard, she also worked as an expert in court cases, helping identify victims of trafficking who may be treated as offenders.

Regarding re-entry, the interviewee worked in a prison, counselling prisoners on communication skills.

2. In your experience, what are the main challenges to the re-entry of prisoners?

The main challenge according to the interviewee is employment, as being economically independent is essential to not fall back into crime and to be able to obtain other things, such as housing. Furthermore, former prisoners are known to be a "recruitment pool" for offenders. Thus, there should be programmes to help re-entering prisoners obtain the skills needed to join the job market.

3. How should the needs of prisoners re-entering society be assessed?

Needs could be assessed through a risk assessment, but this must be done carefully to ensure it does not turn into a simple box-ticking exercise. For example, this could be done by pairing the prisoner with a mentor or buddy, who would meet with the prisoner multiple times to get to learn their life story, which goes beyond their criminal involvement.

4. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and perpetrators of child sexual abuse or exploitation?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

4.1. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of victim-offenders?

4.2. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of sexual offenders?

4.3. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of foreign offenders?

The interviewee was involved in a project in which multiple perpetrators of trafficking in human beings were interviewed. During these interviews, it became clear that many perpetrators did not feel remorse, as they did not understand what they had done wrong. She said that while perpetrators who had engaged in the trafficking of multiple victims who were kept in appalling conditions were more likely to understand the wrongfulness of their conduct, those involved in the trafficking of a small number of victims and whose exploitation was less violent would not see that what they were doing was wrong. For example, she mentioned that in cases of trafficking for labour exploitation, perpetrators may say that they gave victims a job and a house and that that

was not a bad thing. In this regard, one of the needs of these perpetrators would be awareness raising, that is, working on the understanding of their conduct and the wrongfulness of it.

Another important need is addressing mental health or personality issues. For example, they noticed in the above-mentioned project that many perpetrators had narcissistic tendencies. Thus, some behavioural or psychological aspects linked to the offending could probably be addressed through good mental healthcare.

It is also important to raise awareness amongst the prison staff about the mislabel of prisoners. Some of them, indeed, are also victims with specific needs (related to their victimhood). In this latter case, one of their needs is also compensation, which victims of trafficking in human beings rarely receive.

5. In your experience, what are the best ways to address these needs/vulnerabilities?

The interviewee believes the best way to address the abovementioned needs would be to have a multidisciplinary programme divided into different modules, for example, one addressing awareness and understanding of their crime and the wrongfulness of it; one focused on behavioural therapy and sociological disorders... It may also be interesting to include restorative justice elements, such as pairing victims and perpetrators to discuss the issues surrounding the crime from both perspectives. Group discussions should also be a part of the programme, that is, group sessions with other perpetrators so they learn from each other.

Overall, she also noted that vulnerability traces back to a lack of choices in life (e.g., poverty). This means that a well-functioning welfare system is also necessary.

6. Who do you think is responsible for implementing these measures?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

6.1. Law enforcement?

6.2. Healthcare providers?

6.3. Social workers?

First of all, what is needed is the buy in from top policymakers as unless this is a priority at the top levels, it will not be a priority at the local level either.

In terms of implementation, there should be a multistakeholder approach, including social services (e.g., housing), mental health, probation officers...

7. What is the role of the community in this process?

The social community plays a pivotal role, so that the former prisoner does not feel socially excluded, stigmatised, and so forth. When one feels part of a community (sense of belonging) it is less likely they will become a criminal offender again, as they are less likely to want to damage a community that they are a part of. In this regard, bottom-up initiatives should be developed (e.g., football games, cooking classes) and funded so that prisoners can interact and build a trust relationship with community members.

8. What do you believe are the best ways to measure effectiveness of these measures?

When re-entering prisoners are involved in multi-layered programmes, they are interacting with the involved stakeholders on a regular basis, so what is needed is to share information among these different stakeholders in a data-protection safe way. This requires strong case management to allow a holistic view of the former prisoner's engagement (e.g., if they are attending their medical appointments but not their education ones,

this issue should be identified and addressed). If this happens, the evaluation will happen in an organic manner. Again, this should not turn into a box-ticking exercise, but should be based on actual interactions with those in the programme.

Annex B Interview Report (I2)

1. Could you please describe your position and tasks?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

- 1.1. Have you ever worked on prisoner re-entry?
- 1.2. Have you ever worked on/with perpetrators of trafficking in human beings?
- 1.3. Have you ever worked on/with perpetrators of child sexual abuse or exploitation?
- 1.4. Have you ever worked on/with sexual offenders?
- 1.5. Have you ever worked on/with victim-offenders?

Both interviewees (a man and a woman) are academics who work on the topic of modern slavery in the UK. They recently interviewed 30 people convicted in the UK under the modern slavery act for an upcoming book. Their interviewees included victim-offenders, sexual offenders, foreign offenders and two former police officers who were involved in enduring criminal enterprises across borders. In this regard, they highlight the differences between offenders and their experiences and the impossibility to talk about perpetrators of trafficking in human beings as a coherent group.

2. In your experience, what are the main challenges to the re-entry of prisoners?

Poverty, homelessness and destitution were mentioned as challenges faced by former prisoners, especially women. Stable housing is thus an important challenge after release.

3. How should the needs of prisoners re-entering society be assessed?

The full relationship of individuals with their offending needs to be considered to understand possible needs they may have when re-entering society.

4. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and perpetrators of child sexual abuse or exploitation?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

- 4.1. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of victim-offenders?
- 4.2. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of sexual offenders?
- 4.3. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of foreign offenders?

The different experiences surrounding trafficking in human beings was again highlighted. In this regard, it was mentioned that some perpetrators may not need much rehabilitation when re-entering society because they have very little experience with crime but somehow got involved in some kind of exploitative situation. For example, they may simply be businesspeople or small business owners who did not follow the advice of their legal teams or could not follow new laws, which took their business to a breaking point. In some cases, perpetrators unwillingly entered into these situations, and it ruined their lives. In these cases, it may be unlikely that they will reoffend.

Other groups, however, may have specific needs. In this regard, the interviewees noted that many perpetrators interviewed by them had previous experiences of victimhood, which often contributed to their offending, and so their experiences as victims would need to be addressed to ensure a successful re-entry.

Regarding foreign offenders, it was noted that they have an earlier need, that comes before re-entry, which is appropriate legal representation, especially as they may not speak English fluently and may not understand the UK criminal justice system. In this regard, the interviewees mentioned that they interviewed offenders who pled guilty to things expecting that at the end of their case they would have the opportunity to explain to a judge why they did what they did, but since they had plead guilty, they had no chance to do that. In some cases, this meant that their own victimhood may not have been brought forward.

5. In your experience, what are the best ways to address these needs/vulnerabilities?

The interviewees noted that when it comes to perpetrators of trafficking in human beings, considering the different experiences they have with the crime, it is hard to see them as a cohesive group and so it is hard to see how a specific program could address them.

For specific groups, it was mentioned that those who have experiences as victims need to have their victimhood addressed.

It was also noted that, in some cases, awareness raising about perpetrators' actions and the consequences they have on their victims. In this regard, it was noted that some male offenders do not always realise that the female sex workers they are exploiting are victims because at some point there was some kind of consent involved. Thus, it was noted that the criminal justice system needs to work with these perpetrators to ensure there is some acknowledgement of the wrongfulness of the actions. This may also be the case for young people who did not have a family home or a proper guardian and turned into offending as a way of socialising or as a way of finding someone to care for them.

6. Who do you think is responsible for implementing these measures?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

6.1. Law enforcement?

6.2. Healthcare providers?

6.3. Social workers?

Often, re-entering prisoners need a strong support network and that is hard for agencies to act on.

Overall, it was said that measures should not focus on re-entering prisoners, as they only represent a small number of those involved in the offences. Instead, the focus should be on addressing the causes of exploitation in the first place to prevent it from happening.

7. What is the role of the community in this process?

The community plays a big role in preventing exploitation, which includes identifying victims, but also ensuring that care is available for those who need it and that, for example, sex workers are protected and looked after, but this needs government support, which is often lacking.

8. What do you believe are the best ways to measure effectiveness of these measures?

Looking at reoffending is a straightforward way but a more in depth would need including those involved directly on the crimes, both victims and perpetrators, in research and policy making, to fully understand their experiences and see whether there are chances happening or not. In this regard, NGOs acting in the frontlines are well placed to obtain information about how things are being reflected on the ground.

Annex C Interview Report (I3)

1. Could you please describe your position and tasks?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

1.1. Have you ever worked on prisoner re-entry?

1.2. Have you ever worked on/with perpetrators of trafficking in human beings?

1.3. Have you ever worked on/with perpetrators of child sexual abuse or exploitation?

1.4. Have you ever worked on/with sexual offenders?

1.5. Have you ever worked on/with victim-offenders?

The interviewee is a social assistant at the organisation La Touline. She works with prisoners and victims of crime in Wallonia, Belgium. Her work with prisoners includes preparing their re-entry plan (e.g., by finding adequate programmes that they can follow when they leave prison and that can assist in their re-entry).

She is currently working with two prisoners whose specific profile D5.3 focuses on. The first one is a Chinese man who was brought from China to Belgium as a victim of trafficking in human beings. After arriving in Belgium, however, he got involved in recruiting victims, both minors and adults, for labour exploitation.

The second one is an Iraqi man, who received subsidiary protection in Belgium. Later on, he was involved in the transport of a child from Iraq to Europe. According to him, he did that to help the child and the child's family, but he was convicted for trafficking in human beings together with several other perpetrators who were part of a known scheme of trafficking in human beings.

In the past, she also worked with a Belgian national who was recruited as a minor by an Albanian man to work as security to protect victims of sexual exploitation. In the end, he got involved in the exploitation himself e.g., by organising the victims' exploitation (such as the girls' schedules, their security, health checks) and taking part of the money.

2. In your experience, what are the main challenges to the re-entry of prisoners?

A general challenge is finding employment, which is mainly due to lack of diploma. Some prisoners did not finish fundamental school and thus it may be challenging to find professional training that is adapted to their level of education. Often prisoners may also not be interested in following training, especially basic education, as they would like to work straight away but without education or specific skills it is hard to find employment.

3. How should the needs of prisoners re-entering society be assessed?

The re-entry plan needs to be personalised as every prisoner's needs are different and so it is not possible to create a programme that suits everyone.

For employment, their previous education and professional training needs to be taken into account but that is not all. It is also important to find training in skills or for jobs that the prisoner is actually interested in, otherwise they may just enrol in a professional programme to fulfil their release conditions, when that is a requirement, but end up abandoning it because they are not interested.

Regarding housing, needs are also different as those who have family may be able to return to their family home while others will need assistance in finding a shelter that will host them initially. Landlords may also be unwilling to accept former prisoners, and so they may need assistance to engage with landlords to find a suitable place afterwards.

In some cases, psychological treatment is also needed.

4. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and perpetrators of child sexual abuse or exploitation?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

- 4.1. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of victim-offenders?
- 4.2. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of sexual offenders?
- 4.3. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of foreign offenders?

For foreign perpetrators, a big issue is their resident status. If they do not have the right to stay in the country where they were convicted, they may not be allowed to access any service. In Belgium, that is the case. In practice, they are not even granted leave to attend activities outside of prison as they are considered a flight risk.

For previous victims, it is important to have psychological support to deconstruct their experiences with the crime to allow them to see that a different path is possible, especially for those who have been involved in the criminal milieu since they were children. Psychological support can also help address their experiences and possible traumas as victims.

For perpetrators of trafficking in human beings, it is also important to address the victimhood of their victims, as many perpetrators do not see the wrongfulness of their conduct. For example, the Chinese man the interviewee is working with saw his experience as a way to help his victims by finding them employment. He would claim that even if they faced difficult conditions, they were better than the conditions in China. Similarly, the Belgian man she worked with in the past saw his involvement as a business transaction. He would take care of the women and protect them while they did their job and would be compensated for it. Thus, awareness raising about the crime and the suffering of their victims may be needed in these cases.

5. In your experience, what are the best ways to address these needs/vulnerabilities?

The interviewee noted that in Belgium there are no specific programmes to address trafficking in human beings and exploitation (although there are programmes for sex offenders) but that there should be, considering the particular characteristics of the crimes, especially the lack of understanding of victimhood mentioned above.

6. Who do you think is responsible for implementing these measures?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

- 6.1. Law enforcement?
- 6.2. Healthcare providers?
- 6.3. Social workers?

A multitude of service providers need to come together to ensure a successful re-entry. For example, the judiciary has a role to play in selecting the conditions of release and following up on whether detainees are complying with such conditions.

Furthermore, it is the psychological services linked to the judiciary that evaluate whether a person is a high risk or low risk of recidivism, a decision that impacts release and so these professionals need to be properly trained, considering the great power they have.

Services provided by NGOs or other organisations working directly with prisoners need to be further strengthened through government funding and training, as they are the ones that are often better positioned

to assist prisoners re-entering society due to their close contact with them. For example, as was mentioned previously, they are the ones who can assist detainees choose training programmes that match their professional interests, as the courts usually do not go as far in determining conditions of release.

Psychologists working with prisoners also need to be properly trained, for example, to address the issues related to sex offences. Furthermore, some prisoners have mandated psychological treatment, and psychologists should be trained to address such situations, as the patient may not be willing to be treated.

7. What is the role of the community in this process?

At the community level, the most important thing is awareness raising so as to avoid possible prejudices. For a successful re-entry, it is important that former prisoners are not labelled as perpetrators, as that may hamper their resocialisation.

8. What do you believe are the best ways to measure effectiveness of these measures?

One of the ways is to look at recidivism rates. Another way is to obtain feedback from prisoners themselves about the services they receive and way to improve them. However, it is important to take into account that depending on who reads such feedback, it may not be entirely honest (that is, if former prisoners fear negative consequences). Lastly, psychologists who accompany former prisoners may also form an (anonymous) opinion about the success of the programme and whether those participating in it have had positive changes.

Annex D Interview Report (I4)

1. Could you please describe your position and tasks?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

- 1.1. Have you ever worked on prisoner re-entry?
- 1.2. Have you ever worked on/with perpetrators of trafficking in human beings?
- 1.3. Have you ever worked on/with perpetrators of child sexual abuse or exploitation?
- 1.4. Have you ever worked on/with sexual offenders?
- 1.5. Have you ever worked on/with victim-offenders?

The interviewees are two social workers who work in a not-for-profit organisation (Après), which focuses on the professional reinsertion of prisoners in Brussels. However, they do not limit themselves to the professional domain, but instead try to understand more globally the needs of re-entering prisoners and, if needed, refer them to other organisations that can help address other needs. The work of the organisation is based on a personal approach, which is based on individual interviews with prisoners.

They work with prisoners who are still detained, with those who were recently released (with or without conditions), as well as with those who were convicted of crimes but did not have to complete a prison sentence.

2. In your experience, what are the main challenges to the re-entry of prisoners?

The needs vary according to the background of the prisoners. Housing is one of the main needs, however, it does not apply to all prisoners, as some may have family who can house them. There are also many administrative procedures that need to be done (e.g., signing up to healthcare, obtaining an ID). Many prisoners also have debts (e.g., related to their criminal procedure) when they are released, which need to be addressed, also to prevent a poverty trap. Family reunification can also present a challenge in some cases, especially for prisoners who experienced abusive relationships. At the same time, there is a need to redefine family roles (e.g., the role of father/mother) after a time away from the family home.

Education is also challenging, as some prisoners have very low levels of education and thus need to start by improving their language skills before following other courses, which will allow them to follow professionalising courses. Having a criminal record is also sometimes a challenge to finding a job as some employers do not wish to hire former prisoners, even for jobs that do not legally require a clean criminal record.

Prisoners dealing with substance addiction or who are following mental care treatment (e.g., prisoners with mental disorders) also need to have the continuance of their treatment ensured.

Overall, re-entering prisoners need stability, which can take the form of having trusted persons around them (sometimes workers of organisations that assist them) or, for some, through having a stable employment, which can work as a “rock” in their resocialisation.

3. How should the needs of prisoners re-entering society be assessed?

The interviewees conduct semi-structured interviews with the prisoners they assist, and they find this to be useful tool to assess needs. These interviews include not only questions about their current situation, but also about their background and future aspirations, to have a good overview of the individual and their needs. In this regard, it is important to create a safe environment, where individuals do not feel judged and are free to share their experiences.

4. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and perpetrators of child sexual abuse or exploitation?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

- 4.1. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of victim-offenders?
 4.2. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of sexual offenders?
 4.3. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of foreign offenders?

For foreign prisoners, language can be a challenge, as it is hard to access services when you do not master the local language. Similarly, legal stay is often needed to access services, which may be a challenge to resocialisation. Furthermore, they are rarely allowed to leave prison to attend courses or obtain services and they are also rarely granted conditional release.

Regarding trafficking in human beings, one of the interviewees mentioned that he worked with a prisoner who had been convicted for trafficking in human beings, but that claimed he merely helped people from his country reach Belgium or move around European countries. In his view, he was merely assisting people, but he received money for the activities, which led to his conviction.

Regarding some prisoners, including sexual offenders, it was mentioned that they sometimes do not understand the limits of life in society, that is, they do not fully understand the consequences of their actions on others - the wrongfulness of what they did. In these cases, they may have specific psychological needs to address these issues.

When it comes to child sexual abuse, especially in the online domain, in the interviewees' experience, perpetrators may actually have fewer needs to be addressed, as they may come from a higher social status. This means that overall, they are better integrated in society (e.g. they have a job and social relations) and have fewer needs to reintegrate, apart from addressing the psychological issues behind their sexual offence. In this regard, in the interviewees' experience, most of those who engaged in child sexual abuse had been themselves abused when they were young.

5. In your experience, what are the best ways to address these needs/vulnerabilities?

A good social welfare system would be needed to ensure people do not go back to a precarious situation. In this regard, the best way to address their needs is to address the root causes of their criminal activities, which is often linked to poverty or being in a precarious situation.

There should be investments in keeping young people in school, as often ruptures in education may lead to a life of crime, as it may be hard to find employment without education, and so crime is seen as an easy way to obtain money.

In rehabilitation, it is also important to empower prisoners through positive reinforcement, that is, showing that they have value and can contribute to society. Thus, reinforcing societal values and the person's own value in society.

Social relations must also be addressed. Often people get involved in crimes due to their personal relations and, once they re-enter society, all their relations are linked to the criminal milieu and so efforts must be taken to weed "bad" relationships out and build/reinforce "good" ones. In this regard, creating new relationships through culture (e.g., theatre, music) or sport can help in the reintegration and in finding one's own value and place in society.

It is also important to start rehabilitation in prison. In this regard, better prison conditions would be needed, as when a person does not have access to basic services such as adequate healthcare while in prison, they may

be frustrated with society, which may impair their re-entry. Thus, prisons should be facilities that enforce the deprivation of liberty, but not the deprivation of other rights. In this regard, for example, prisoners' work should be better remunerated so that prisoners can see their value and the value of "honest" work. Also, quality mental and physical healthcare should be available. It would also be important to have cultural activities in prison and other efforts that reduce the differences between the prison environment and life in society.

It would also be good to have rehabilitation paths that allow criminal records to be erased to ensure former prisoners are not limited by the fact that they have a criminal record.

6. Who do you think is responsible for implementing these measures?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

6.1. Law enforcement?

6.2. Healthcare providers?

6.3. Social workers?

There are multiple actors that need to work together to ensure a successful reintegration: prison staff (including social workers), the judiciary (including parole officers), frontline workers (such as not-for-profit organisations)...

In this regard, more cooperation and synchronisation between all these actors would be needed as, in the interviewees' experiences, their work (as frontline workers) is not always recognised or facilitated by prison staff or parole officers, which limits the cooperation and, at the same time, can be challenging for the prisoner, who is followed by multiple workers, who work following different methodologies.

It would also be important to invest in building capacity both in prisons (e.g., more social workers) and in not-for-profit organisations so they can assist more people and better address their needs without being overburdened.

Investing in halfway houses is also important to facilitate the transition between prison and society.

7. What is the role of the community in this process?

The society plays a role in re-entry, which is mainly based on how they see re-entering prisoners. In this regard, it is important to raise awareness at the community level, so that former prisoners are not judged, but instead are given a second chance. It is also important to raise awareness with employers, so that former prisoners can find employment.

8. What do you believe are the best ways to measure effectiveness of these measures?

Recidivism rates are a useful measure. The rate of former prisoners in employment, in comparison to the average in society, can also be used. Other indicators are housing and societal reintegration. Regarding the latter, personal interviews with former prisoners would be needed to understand how they see their own reintegration and how integrated in the society they feel.

Annex E Interview Report (I5)

1. Could you please describe your position and tasks?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

1.1. Have you ever worked on prisoner re-entry?

1.2. Have you ever worked on/with perpetrators of trafficking in human beings?

1.3. Have you ever worked on/with perpetrators of child sexual abuse or exploitation?

1.4. Have you ever worked on/with sexual offenders?

1.5. Have you ever worked on/with victim-offenders?

The interviewees (a man and a woman) work for an organisation created by Belgian law to facilitate the rehabilitation of sexual offenders (centre d'appui Bruxellois), mainly by assessing therapeutic needs of sexual offenders and ensuring they have access to therapeutic treatment, which is often prescribed by courts as a condition of release. Those assisted may be directed (by the judiciary) to the organisation from the start of the criminal procedures (thus before conviction), or after. According to the interviewees, about 2/3 of the sexual offenders they assist have offended against children.

Among others, they also organise training sessions for professionals working with sexual offenders, conduct studies on the matter, and organise broader discussion and awareness raising events (e.g., in November 2022, they will host a study day on sexual crimes and the digital world).

2. In your experience, what are the main challenges to the re-entry of prisoners?

Stigmatisation. According to the interviewees, the main challenge faced by prisoners, especially sexual offenders, is the fact that they are highly stigmatised and become "untouchable" upon release. That is, they find themselves in a situation where no one wants to interact with them, which reflects not only on their social contacts, but also on their ability to find a job (especially as they often need to present a clean criminal record) and also to receive care, as even care providers sometimes are not interested in assisting this category of offenders.

3. How should the needs of prisoners re-entering society be assessed?

In the interviewees' experience with perpetrators of sexual crimes, they mentioned that perpetrators are not all the same and may have very different needs. For example, some may have learning disabilities, which require adapted therapy. Others may fit the stereotype for this kind of offender and present sexual disorders that need to be addressed through specific treatment. Among those with sexual disorders, however, not all will need intense treatment, as some do not risk "taking action" and thus can safely live with their disorders. Some, however, may offend due to other reasons, such as antisocial behaviour, and not fall into the stereotypes associated with sexual offenders. Thus, before starting therapeutic treatment, an assessment of each perpetrator is made. Such assessment consists mainly of a psychological assessment, which may last several hours, in which possible psychological conditions are diagnosed. The psychological assessment may also be complemented by questionnaires and tests to obtain a greater understanding of the perpetrator and identify the appropriate therapeutic treatment.

4. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of perpetrators of trafficking in human beings and perpetrators of child sexual abuse or exploitation?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

- 4.1. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of victim-offenders?
- 4.2. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of sexual offenders?
- 4.3. What do you believe are the main needs/vulnerabilities of foreign offenders?

Apart from stigmatisation (mentioned above in Q2), sexual offenders often do not accept responsibility for the acts they committed as they do not see them as wrong. For example, interviewees mentioned perpetrators who claimed their sexual interaction, which led to a conviction, was consensual. Others, who engage in the consumption of online child sexual abuse imagery, may not see how only looking at images that already existed is wrong, claiming they never harmed the children or produced any content themselves. These perpetrators may need specific types of therapeutic intervention to address their responsibility. It was noted, however, that not all sexual offenders have sexual disorders that need to be addressed. Sometimes, the offence comes from antisocial behaviour and thus therapeutic treatment for sexual disorders would be of little use. This is why an evaluation of the specific needs (as mentioned in Q3 above) is required to ensure proper care to each individual.

5. In your experience, what are the best ways to address these needs/vulnerabilities?

The interviewees believe that appropriate therapeutic intervention works well and should be privileged over long prison sentences, which often do not contribute to rehabilitation. As mentioned in Q2 above, however, sexual offenders do not always have the same needs and thus the individual characteristic of each perpetrator needs to be assessed before any intervention is made.

6. Who do you think is responsible for implementing these measures?

Probe (in case not explicitly mentioned):

- 6.1. Law enforcement?
- 6.2. Healthcare providers?
- 6.3. Social workers?

As mentioned above, the interviewees believe therapeutic intervention is a crucial aspect of the rehabilitation of the sexual offenders, which requires the work of psychologists (health professionals). However, according to them, the provision of these services to perpetrators, including the training of professionals, should be ensured by the government. They claim more investment is needed to ensure all perpetrators can receive the care they need as currently there is a shortage of professionals and organisations that can provide assistance to perpetrators. They believe the main reason for this is that assisting perpetrators is not “sexy” in the political sphere, as voters have little sympathy for them.

7. What is the role of the community in this process?

The interviewees find it hard to envisage any form of community engagement due to the abovementioned stigma that is associated with sexual offenders, especially today when sexual offenders are often in the news and thus even after rehabilitation their acts may still hunt them, as people can easily find information about them online. They believe this makes it harder for sexual offenders to engage with the community than other offenders in Belgium. They mentioned that in other countries they know that events such as jogging or other day activities including both perpetrators and members of the community are organised, which is a way to demystify some of the stigma around sexual offenders. While this was mentioned as a good initiative, they believe such actions cannot yet take place in Belgium, due to the current stigma that exists. In this regard, they said more awareness raising among the general population is needed. They also said that increasing care and possibilities for

perpetrators and making these efforts more public may also be a way to reassure the population that they are being rehabilitated.

8. What do you believe are the best ways to measure effectiveness of these measures?

In practice, the risk of recidivism is the most used tool to measure effectiveness and, in this regard, they see that those who complete a rehabilitation programme (that is, those who do not abandon it), including therapeutic treatment, greatly reduce the risk of recidivism. Apart from that, they mentioned that during the programme, they have periodic meetings with perpetrators to assess their treatment, during which it is possible to see the evolution on a more personal level. Lastly, shortly before the end of the treatment, another assessment meeting, as well as a clinical evaluation, are made to evaluate the progress made during treatment.