

Risk Assessment Matrix for Children who may have been trafficked¹

The Risk Assessment Matrix is a short checklist to assist professionals in using the available information to assess the possibility of child exploitation and or trafficking in a specific case. This may include deciding that the available information is not enough to form a sound judgement about the risk.

The matrix is intended as a tool in order to:

1. Recognize that a child may be trafficked /exploited
2. Assess the risk of trafficking/exploitation in near future.

Recognizing that a child may be trafficked enables you to assess the *current situation* of the youth: What is going on at the moment? Is the child safe or are there indications that imply trafficking in human beings or exploitation?

Risk assessment is about assessing the risks for the child in *the future*: What can happen? Based on descriptions of the current situation you try to assess future harm or threats to the child. Therefore a risk assessment is only possible if you have a clear picture of the current situation.

Scoring of risk factors

The main question is whether there are risk factors for trafficking in human beings or exploitation. The indicators are used to assess how serious the risk is or can be. You don't have to know all the details of the case to be able to signal a risk indicator. Also based on limited information risk can be identified. For each risk factor you tick one of the following options:

- 'Yes': Risk factor is present or presumed present
- 'No': available information clearly indicates that risk factor is not present
- 'Unknown: (as yet) there is insufficient/no information available for an adequate indication

You may have a lot or a very little information indicating that a child has been or is being trafficked. You should look across the whole matrix and tick the descriptions / of the incidents / circumstances which correspond best to the information available at the time. This is likely to mean several descriptions are being ticked.

If the information known to you results in ticks in each of the 2 components of the child trafficking definition: i.e. indicator in “**1. Activity**” and “**2. Purpose Exploitation**”, then there may be reasonable grounds to believe that the child is trafficked. A single yellow indicator is in itself sufficient to suspect child trafficking / exploitation / risk of harm and should lead to immediate referral.

You should always keep in mind the possibility that a piece of information, currently not known, could significantly raise the threshold of risk for a child. If relevant, this information needs to be gathered in the next phase.

Reference

What are the possibilities when there is a presumption of child exploitation? For further consultation and reference please see our National Referral Mechanism or the internal referral mechanism of your organisation.

¹ Child Trafficking is a serious form of child abuse, the Matrix should therefore be used in conjunction with the **Light Tool Risk Assessment Child Safety (LIRIK)**

In case you would like to reach Defence for Children-ECPAT Netherlands for consultation, you can contact our Helpdesk. Mail: info@defenceforchildren.nl (ask for helpdesk child exploitation) of telephone: 071-5160980 (during office hours)

Identified the victim? In case you think a child is a victim of exploitation, you must report this (digitally) to Comensha, see <http://mensenhandel.nl/>

INDICATORS FOR RECOGNISING AN UNDERAGED VICTIM OF HUMAN				
1. Activity (by Trafficker)		J²	N³	O⁴
1	Another person (other than family) has paid for the journey and/or arranged the visa.			
2	The minor doesn't have a passport or any other identity documents.			
3	The minor has a false/fake/look-a-like identity document.			
4	The minor is illegal in the country (or has travelled illegally through the country).			
5	The person who has the minor under its control or supervision, arranges the visa at the request of others or he is guarantor for other persons who apply for a visa.			
6	The minor is part of a group of minors of the same nationality/ethnicity who travels with one or a few adults.			
7	The minor travels with a criminal group in which he/she participates.			
8	Accompanying/intervening adult claims to be family of the child but can't prove this statement.			
9	Accompanying/intervening adult has temporarily/informal authorisation of the parent(s).			
10	Accompanying/intervening adult speaks a different language than the child.			
11	Minor is missing from a youth institution.			
12	The minor doesn't have a permanent address/house/shelter.			
13	The minor is living under unappropriated /unhygienic circumstances, without (enough) food in the house, sleeps (on a matress) on the floor.			
14	The minor constantly works on different locations.			
15	The minor sleeps at his/her working place.			
16	The minor is living as a gang member with adults.			
2. Purpose Exploitation		Y	N	U
17a	The minor is found exploited in prostitution, criminality, labour or services.			
17b	The minor states to be exploited in prostitution, criminality, labour or services.			
18	The minor has an extremely high debt (such as travel costs), in order to pay off this debt he/she must hand over his/her income.			
19	The minor must earn a certain amount of money per day.			
20	The minor is being abused or threatened while working.			
21	The minor is married (child marriage).			
22	The minor is limited in his/her freedom of movement; the minor can't leave the living/working location on its own.			
23	The statement of the minor shows similarities with the statements of others, like the story is studied by heart.			
24	The minor receives unknown/unidentified phone calls whilst in the shelter.			

² Y = yes or presumed

³ N = No

⁴ U = Unknown

25	The income of the minor is handed over to another person.			
26	A third person checks (street) activities of the minor.			
27	A third person intervenes when the minor is being contacted by a social worker.			
28	A third person has the identity documents of the minor.			
29	Family members of the minor are in poor circumstances and are dependent on the income of the minor.			
30	Family members in the country of origin are being blackmailed or threatened.			
31	The minor doesn't speak Dutch despite of the amount of time in the Netherlands, but sometimes speaks a bit of the language(s) of the country (/countries) where he/she has been exploited.			
	Indications isolation and social marginalisation	Y	N	U
32	The minor is living with a group and with this group the minor commits illegal activities.			
33	The minor doesn't know his/her own working address.			
34	The minor doesn't have access to education.			
35	The minor doesn't have access to healthcare.			
36	The minor doesn't have any (social) network outside the group he/she lives or works with.			
	Indications of violence, abuse and neglect	Y	N	U
37	Physical indications of <u>physical violence</u> : scars, damage, burn marks of cigarettes, tattoo's, (old) bone fractures.			
38	Physical indications of <u>sexual violence</u> : sexual transferrable diseases and HIV/aids, infections of the genitals, pregnancy, complications during pregnancy/abortion, breast enlargement, bruises, scratches, wounds (also on the genitals).			
39	Indications of <u>neglect and deprivation</u> such as unsuitable clothing fort he whether circumstances, undernourishment, growth retardation, parasitic skin conditions, untreated wounds and diseases.			
	Behavioural indicators	Y	N	U
40	Drugs- alcohol addiction, sniffing glue (other substances that have a stimulating or numbing effect or lowers inhibitions).			
41	No trust in adults.			
42	Anti-social behaviour.			
43	Fear of commitment (also when it comes to family members and co-workers).			
44	Aggression and outbursts of anger towards him/herself and others, argues or fights a lot.			
45	Dependent on the abusers.			
46	Worry about him/herself, about the impossibility to build a life of its own.			
47	Fear to return to the community, family.			
48	Sleeping- and eating disorders (anorexia, bulimia etc.).			
49	Hyperactivity.			
50	Searching for (contact with) the 'wrong' people (not able to know the difference between the rights and the wrong people).			
51	Flirting, behaving in a sexy way, wearing sexy clothes.			
52	Stealing.			
53	He/she is used to spend a lot of money.			
54	Bullying, abusing, threatening or lying to other children.			
55	Run away from a safe environment.			
56	Feeling powerless and wanting to keep control by always getting their way (outbursts of anger).			
57	Self-harm.			
	Penal circuit	Y	N	U
58	The minor – incl. family members, care takers/guardians – are illegal.			

59	The minor works in prostitution, is forced into criminality such as drugs-, arms trade, shoplifting, growing weed, pickpocketing and burglary.			
60	The minor violates regulations regarding begging, working as a street musician or selling a street newspaper.			
61	The minor is has an 'expensive' lawyer.			

Other possible indicators				