

Awareness Raising Campaigns against Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation: Simply Adding Males or Redefining a Gendered Issue?¹

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Abstract

In its ongoing anti-trafficking-campaign in the Russian Federation the International Organization for Migration (IOM) addresses potential migrants of both genders. For years women were generally conceptualised as vulnerable to trafficking, whereas men were mostly considered as smuggled. Including men and boys may be perceived as IOM's response to the gender blindness of previous anti-trafficking interventions. In its current poster-campaign the organisation abstains from sexualised strategies of representation. IOM no longer shows eroticised pictures of naked, mistreated women as in previous campaigns in the Baltic States or in South-East Europe. The new promotional material no longer fixes stereotypes of beautiful but naïve Eastern European women and thus prevailing gender asymmetries and (re-)traditionalised gender orders in the public space. It uses stylizations and depicts potential victims of human trafficking as sexless and genderless puppets. In order to scrutinize these changes in detail, in this paper I ask the following questions: What kind of gendered constructions persist or originate despite seeming to be gender/sex neutral representations? What are the underlying institutional attitudes and practices of anti-trafficking campaigns and projects? Does focusing on both genders shift perspectives from the regulation of sex-work and female migration to that of more broad exploitation and questions of decent work? And finally, does the new attention to men and boys distract from the fact that trafficking in women is part of a gender specific and gender hierarchic political, economical, and social order?

IOM's Anti-Trafficking Campaigns in the Russian Federation

"Don't leave home or you will get raped," is, according to anthropologist John Davies (Davies 2002:5), the primary message of several poster campaigns initiated by the International

Organization for Migration (IOM). IOM started its so-called ‘emergency’-campaigns (Andrijasevic 2007) in the late 1990s to combat trafficking of women in Eastern and South-East Europe. With its campaigns the organization advised young women who intended to migrate against the risks of trafficking in human beings. Additionally, arranged ‘empowerment’ campaigns reputedly aimed at enabling young females to be active in the decision making process and stay informed about migration. But as Rutvica Andrijasevic, who has worked extensively on IOM’s “regime of representation,” describes, differences between the two types of campaigns were virtually nonexistent, because both used similar visual and textual practices of representation (Andrijasevic 2007:150).

All in all, Andrijasevic argues, the IOM’s anti-trafficking-campaigns produced victimizing pictures of female bodies as passive objects of male violence, and staged the trafficking of women as an eroticized and voyeuristic spectacle (Andrijasevic 2007). These images were accompanied by traditional ideas about femininity and masculinity, which were not only intended to discourage women to migrate, but also supposed to keep them in their place, both in the “home” and in their nation of origin. The promotional material no longer shows eroticized pictures of naked, mistreated women as in previous campaigns in the Baltic States or in South-East Europe. It has also ceased reinforcing stereotypes of beautiful, but naïve Eastern European women and thus, prevailing gender asymmetries and (re-) traditionalized gender orders in the public space. Thus, these highly stereotypical and symbolic constructions reveal the interconnectedness of mobility, citizenship and gender (Andrijasevic 2007).

More than five years later, the IOM in its first big anti-trafficking-project in Russia, called “Prevention of Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation,” seeks to educate people, and not exclusively women, with posters and other assorted informational material. Hence, in these current campaigns the organization abstains from sexualized strategies of representation. The organization now uses stylizations and depicts potential victims of human trafficking as puppets without sex, in order to call on men and women, who are planning to migrate.

In this essay I will scrutinize the scope and substantiality of the new informational strategies of the IOM, with regard to the following questions: What kind of gendered constructions persist or originate despite seeming to be gender/sex neutral representations? What are the underlying institutional attitudes and practices of anti-trafficking campaigns and projects? Does focusing on both genders shift perspectives from the regulation of sex-work and female

migration to that of more broad exploitation and questions of decent work?³ And finally, does the new attention to men and boys distract from the fact that trafficking in women is part of a gender specific and gender hierarchic political, economical, and social order?

In order to answer these questions I will focus on two crucial elements of the current awareness-raising-campaigns of the IOM: representations of gender and risk. I explore the ways gender and risk are intertwined, mutually constituting and shaping each other, thus, unfolding their potential and influencing migrant's decisions. The message of trafficking risk and how to avoid this risk is usually spread through print media; therefore posters, leaflets and various informational materials included in IOM's trafficking prevention campaign will be scrutinized. In order to grasp institutional practices and attitudes, I will not only draw from interviews and the organization's conceptual material, such as expert manuals, but also from the project's reports.

Before I turn to analyze the IOM's modes and strategies of representation, I would like to discuss the political and legal background against which the changes in IOM's current anti-trafficking campaigns in the Russian Federation take place, in order to explain the explicit focus on men as a target group of anti-trafficking-prevention.

The Russian Federation is a regional destination for an estimated 7–9 million migrant workers. The majority of them come from the countries of the former Soviet Union. According to official statistics 85% are males, and 15% are females.⁴ Due to restrictive and militarized immigration policies, these migration processes have been largely irregular in recent years, but the increasing allure of the Russian Federation as a destination for labor migrants, despite the precarious conditions of residence and work, has bolstered the risk of being exploited or becoming a "Victim of Trafficking" (VoT). This is evidenced by a report written in 2005 on behalf of the International Labor Organization (ILO) by Elena Tyurykanova.⁵ She found that migrant workers in Russia predominantly face exploitation in poorly regulated segments of the labor market, such as construction, market sales, domestic service or entertainment (Tyurykanova 2004:50). The most common forms of exploitation are: lacking social benefits (92%), overtime working (62%), and delays in payment (39%). Often migrants were forced against their will to perform work or services (38%). They experienced forms of coercion such as physical violence, psychological pressure or debt bondage. Some were put under various threats or were deprived of their freedom to move (Tyurykanova 2004).

In 2007, in light of the “demographic crisis” and a steadily rising need of workforce, Russia installed new provisions to regulate labor migration. The provisions for migrants from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to stay in the country and take up work were simplified in order to offer incentives for the so called “gastarbaitery”⁶ in Russia, primarily on a temporary basis. Citizens from the CIS countries Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and the Ukraine are allowed to enter the Russian Federation without visas and are permitted to stay and work for 90 days.

The IOM gives the following details about its efforts to provide services also to men: The organization came across the phenomenon of trafficking in men over the past 8 years. Trafficking in men occurred in various regions of the world, amongst them also the countries of the former Soviet Union (International Organization for Migration 2007). Since that time, the IOM, which focused mainly on trafficking in women and girls, became aware of the need to use a gender-sensitive approach, in order to correct the “genderblindness” of its anti-trafficking-projects, so that men would make use of their services, too. During the last 5 years the IOM has started to review its policies and is striving to deal with trafficking in a gender-sensitive way. The two main objectives of a gender sensitive approach are to allocate funding for projects which allow tackling trafficking of women and men and hence to enlarge the organization’s thematic focus (Serojtdinov 2010).

In order “to [...] provide reasonable arguments” and to convince donors, who were used to support campaigns focusing on women and girls, about the necessity to fund “mixed” anti-trafficking-projects, the IOM has started to research this phenomenon in post-Soviet and African states.⁷ A report conducted for the IOM by Rebecca Surtees on the basis of information from the IOM explores conditions, forms, and specifics of the traffic in men from Belarus and Ukraine. It closes with recommendations on how to design projects in order to meet the needs of trafficked men and stresses the need of anti-trafficking interventions that provide for the gender specific needs of men and boys (Surtees 2008).

But two more motivations can explain why the IOM started to include men in their campaigns. One is the organization’s concern with social scientists’ critique of the IOM’s eroticized anti-trafficking-campaigns.⁸ The poster-campaign started by the IOM in 2002 in the Baltic states sparked a profound discussion on the stop-traffic emailing list. Human rights lawyer Ann Jordan and Laurentiu Ciobanica, head of the IOM mass information unit, disputed about the

pictures in the campaign portraying young women as marionettes with fishing hooks in their skin. Whereas Jordan asked IOM to “pull these pictures and replace them with other images,” Ciobanica argued that anti-trafficking campaigns would “need a certain degree of visual and literal bluntness” in order to arouse society on the whole. She further claimed that actual trafficking experiences would be by far more shocking than the images of the campaign. Therefore anti-trafficking visuals had to be strikingly fierce, in order to be effective in outreach. Concerned that a large audience did not understand the context and subsequently was offended, the IOM recalled the posters.⁹ Richard Danziger, head of the IOM’s Anti-Trafficking unit, showed a similar reaction in a discussion 2007 with Rutvica Andrijasevic. Acknowledging Andrijasevic’s criticism of IOM’s sexualized poster campaigns, he admitted that the IOM had to rethink the conceptualization of its anti-trafficking work (Andrijasevic and Anderson 2009).



Figure 1. Text reads: You will be sold like a doll.
(Source: Poster created for the 'Prevention of Trafficking in Women in the Baltic States information campaign © IOM 2000, photo by Susanne Schatral)

According to Barnett and Finnemore, International Organizations (IO) expand their activities due to their nature as bureaucracies-authorities. They are expected by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and by states to perform “as experts and as moral agents” (Barnett et al. 2004:44). Alternatively, the IOM’s steadily growing interest to include male migrants as a target group of anti-trafficking-prevention and assistance might be also explained by the organization’s funding policy. Due to a funding system based 96% on “projectization”¹⁰ the organization is not only dependent on donor funding but also constantly pressurized to identify new areas of activity in order to sustain its financial plan.¹¹

With all of these facts put together, it can be noticed that the IOM’s anti-trafficking campaign in Russia primarily corresponds to the fact that Russia is a sending, destination, and transit country. Different groups and genders of migrants have to be addressed. In addition to this, the IOM has to meet the prevailing interests of the Russian migration authorities to introduce the new rules to CIS migrants, and call on them to comply with these new provisions. At the same time framing men and boys as target audiences of anti-trafficking publications is evidence of the IOM’s ambitions to open up new fields of activity, thus widening the scope of the organization’s responsibilities and influence.

Putting the Prevention of Trafficking into Practice: Posters and Manuals

The campaigns implemented by the IOM usually are twofold: The IOM uses posters or billboards in order to raise awareness and to advertise their free counseling services. It also distributes manuals produced in cooperation with the Federal Migration Service (FMS) of the Russian Federation, which provide more than 100 pages of information on how to migrate legally.

The design of the current campaigns follows the make-up of previous anti-trafficking promotional materials, which are all made up of two portions: one part for use in emergencies and the other for information. Staged emergencies on posters, stickers and billboards call on potential migrants to inform themselves about “safe” migration. The representations show contingent risks linked to migration as catastrophes with fatal results rather than options with uncertain or perhaps even positive outcomes. The poster campaigns depict potential victims either as puppets without discernible sex or gender; they use drawings of (young) men and

women or stylized representations of women in order to call on different risk groups and the general public.

As in former campaigns a central representational pattern is the dichotomy of victim and perpetrator, fixing seemingly clear-cut roles in a “drama of risk” (Beck-Gernsheim 1999). Criminals are lurking from behind. Depicted as black stains, which symbolize a ubiquitous depersonalized menace, they are not easily to be grasped, spoiling the colorful and bright lives of young people. Female, as well as male bodies run the risk of being commodified. Once the catastrophe happens, they are trapped as puppets, completely defenseless and incapable of action, sitting in a barred box, which is labeled: “Human beings, caught in a trap.” As wooden puppets they are fully dehumanized. Merely human spare parts, limbs and organs may be removed and sold separately.



Figure 2. Text reads: Protect yourself and people close to you! Inform yourself to prevent falling victim to human trafficking! Free calls from Russia on Weekdays from 8:30-18:30. Text above the barcode: [People to sell.] (Source: <http://www.no2slavery.ru>)



Figure 3. Text reads: Protect yourself and people close to you! Inform yourself to prevent falling victim to human trafficking! (Source: <http://www.no2slavery.ru>)



Figure 4. Text reads: Attention-Trafficking of Human beings! Text on the small yellow sign: Organs to sell. (Source: informational booklet for college students from IOM 2009)



Figure 5. Text reads: Are you planning to go abroad, for work or for study? Are you planning to work illegally in Russia? The Federal Migration Services and IOM advise: Be aware of dubious job agencies. (Source: <http://www.no2slavery.ru>)

Further pictures in the series show prospects for gain, instead of damages and deprivation. Persons willing to migrate who make use of information services are guaranteed to avoid the risk of being trafficked. The stylized representation of a woman who is breaking chains suggests that through information migrants will be empowered to protect themselves against exploitation and discrimination. They are not meant to appeal only to women. The female figures on posters and stickers rather symbolize *the migrant worker* who is freed from slavery. In order to meet the ideal of the stickers, female as well as male migrants are supposed to inform themselves about the risks related to migration.

The IOM's posters also explicitly call on third persons to take responsibility for the migration projects of their friends or relatives. Sentences like "protect yourself and your loved ones" remind them of their duties. Again, the key-remedy on risks of migration is getting credible information; to make use of counseling services, hotlines and the manuals, provided by

the IOM and the FMS (Andrijasevic and Anderson 2009). Such an approach takes into consideration that the decision to take a risk always depends on family, friends, colleagues or neighbors giving their advice. Decisions are not the result of lonely rational choices, but products of social and cultural processes of negotiation (Douglas 2003:12). Simultaneously, these calls offer, against the backdrop of gendered relations of dependency and inequality, legitimation and identification to intervene as protectors. Hence, irrespective of all their potential to exercise control over their lives, potential migrants are ascribed an identity of wards. This calls for a spectrum of protectors of both genders, including well-meaning paternalistic husbands, fathers, brothers, mothers, friends, or vigilant neighbors to influence the migration plans of their relatives or friends by good advice but maybe also by violence and force.

The illustrations demonstrate IOM's efforts to create representations, to advance the inclusion of men as beneficiaries of IOM's services, too. In the campaign, trafficking is staged as a risk which allegedly affects women and men in the same way. This strategy avoids highlighting the gendered aspects of trafficking. But using risk as the central discursive and representational category entails a number of gendered implications, which inform the messages transported by these representations. As Kelly Hannah-Moffat notes, risk is not a gender neutral concept. In fact, risk and gender are two mutually consistent categories:

Gendered knowledges, norms and hierarchies are linked with understandings of what constitutes a risk; the tolerance level of risk; the extent to which risk consciousness will be accepted or denied in public discourse or self-image; and whether risks are to be avoided and feared, regarded just one of the cost of a certain lifestyle, or even valued as an experience and valorized as an opportunity for displays of courage and strength. (Hannah-Moffat 2007:5)

In order to take a closer look at the various intertwinings of gender and risk in the IOM's prevention campaigns, further social constructions of "at-risk" groups and risky identities set up by the organization have to be scrutinized. Hence, I will explore expert knowledge, which sustains assumptions about: Who in particular should be targeted by prevention measures? Which individuals or groups are considered to be "at-risk?" And what factors and categories constitute being "at-risk?"

Attributing Risk

Knowledge of “at-risk” groups in the IOM’s prevention campaigns was produced in the framework of the so-called baseline study, realized in three pilot regions: Moscow, Astrakhan and the Republic of Karelia. The regions were selected based on the following criteria:

Firstly, the pilot regions were chosen due to their geographical positions: The locations in the Center (Moscow), in the West (Karelia) and in the South (Astrakhan) allow for studying different routes of trafficking. Whereas from Karelia, which is situated close to the European border, people mainly migrate to the West, through its proximity to Central Asia, Astrakhan functions as a transit point for migrants from this region. The capital Moscow is Russia’s biggest hub of in- and out-migration, attracting migrants from all over the post-Soviet region (Office of the International Organization of Migration in the Russian Federation 2008:5f).

Secondly, the pilot regions were chosen according to their socio-economic structure in order to study different forms of trafficking in human beings and exploitation. Moscow, the country’s fast-growing center of services, is characterized by the nearly complete absence of unemployment and an average income nearly twice the country’s average. In Karelia, unemployment is at 8%, but infrastructure and transport are marginally developed. Industries are mainly resource based and incomes are 13% below the Russian average. In Astrakhan, unemployment is at 12%. The region’s economy is based on gas-, oil- and fish-processing industries and the agrarian sector; labor in the fish industry and the first sector is for the most part informal (Office of the International Organization of Migration in the Russian Federation 2008:93).

Thirdly, the pilot regions were chosen according to the establishment of anti-trafficking structures. In Karelia, NGOs were already working on the issue, organizing information campaigns and running a shelter for victims of trafficking. Not so in Astrakhan, where nearly no activities were taking place before the project started. In Moscow, a number of NGOs were for years involved in counter-trafficking and implementing projects, but, according to IOM, needed coordination (Office of the International Organization of Migration in the Russian Federation 2008:5f).

The report identified and scrutinized “at-risk” groups, risk-factors and risky behavior. The aim was to gather comprehensive knowledge about groups that are supposedly high “at-risk”

and therefore the main addressees of IOM's anti-trafficking campaigns. Furthermore, the researchers tried to produce more detailed accounts of the extent and the reasons of trafficking and to find out how much "at-risk" groups and the general public know about the phenomenon (IOM Moscow 2008; Office of the International Organization of Migration in the Russian Federation 2008:5).

The researchers implementing the study defined vulnerability of social groups on the basis of age, gender and/or ethnicity.¹² They interviewed school and university graduates, labor migrants from CIS countries, youths from problem-families and persons experienced in working abroad. The interviewees were asked about their family relations, their favored job options, and their choices of employment. Other questions enquired about their willingness to migrate and work illegally.

Based on the findings gathered from these interviews, the study distinguished individual risk factors such as poverty, sporadic income, low level of education, missed opportunities for training and high risk-behavior. It also classified structural risk factors like informal labor markets, unemployment, irregular migration and ineffective protection schemes for the socially deprived (Office of the International Organization of Migration in the Russian Federation 2008:87). In a second step these factors were tied back to the groups of respondents and their social-structural features. In doing so causal connections between e.g. gender, sporadic income, and an increased vulnerability to trafficking were established (Office of the International Organization of Migration in the Russian Federation 2008:87f.).

Putting the results of the baseline study in a nutshell, "at-risk" behavior can first be categorized as the readiness to migrate illegally and to accept various kinds of informal or marginal occupations, such as informal employment in the construction and agricultural sector, the sex-industry or the illegal manufacturing of all kinds of pirated goods (Prevention of Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation). On the project's website, the migrants' willingness to accept precarious work is presented in the following way:

Gradually the at-risk behaviour becomes their normal behaviour pattern and the rational behaviour categories become distorted, which is manifested by so-called "consent to exploitation" or "voluntary slavery." Their perception of the normal social behaviour pattern expands beyond the limits acceptable to the human rights

opinion and the level of humankind development. (Prevention of Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation)

In this short text the actions of the members of so called “at-risk” groups are rendered as “exotic and separate from the norms and activities of the mainstream” (Glick-Schiller et al. 1994:1341). Glick-Schiller et al. identify this strategy as the usage of a “vocabulary of distance” (Glick-Schiller et al. 1994:1341) to set up images of potential migrants whose lifestyle and behavior do not match the cultural ideals of society. In this case “risk behavior” is framed as “pathology,” stressing on the one side the deviances from the social norm as “abnormal” and justifying on the other side special interventions of anti-trafficking stakeholders like the IOM.

The concept of pathological behavioral patterns is reinforced by the discovery that members of “at-risk” groups frequently do not meet a central cultural ideal: a functional family (see Glick-Schiller et al. 1994: 1341). The report stresses that falling victim to trafficking is closely linked to the fact that VoTs stem from defective or problematic families with common occurrences of violence and depreciated (family) values. They are orphans, single mothers, and children of alcohol or drug abusers. Thus, due to lacking social stability and orientation they are considered by the researchers as being predestined to fall prey to traffickers (Prevention of Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation).

The baseline study identifies besides “vulnerable” and “deviant” groups such as the unemployed, disabled persons, children without parental guidance, drug-users and sex-workers also larger groups of population who are vulnerable to trafficking due to poverty, scarce economic options or dissolving family ties: the poor, youths who start working, migrants, and other “socially disintegrated groups” (Office of the International Organization of Migration in the Russian Federation 2008:7). The groups stand for the key social categories of age, ethnicity, class, locality, sexuality, and gender. Gender is recognized as a central social category, which accounts for social, cultural and economical discrimination. Mutually interconnected, entangled and intertwined with each other, these categories influence and reinforce the different structural and individual “risk factors” as mentioned in the report. In this sense, gender operates as an interdependent category, producing (gendered) subjects positioned in a multidimensional matrix of power (Walgenbach 2007:62).

Applying Walgenbachs findings to the results of the baseline study implies that gender

doesn't function as *the* exclusive determinant of trafficking risk. Or in other words, there is no generalized notion of vulnerability due to gender. Instead the baseline study describes "being at risk" as a combination of certain risk factors, suggesting that only certain groups of women or men are prone to become a victim of trafficking. But on the other hand, while identifying a huge number of risk factors, the study can hardly paint a more detailed picture of who definitely is at risk. The expertise leaves open the question of in what way the single categories of risk relate to each other, attenuate or aggravate one another. It rather comes to the conclusion that nearly everybody is at risk (Office of the International Organization of Migration in the Russian Federation 2008:7), a speculation that hardly can be proved as a fact, because when reading the report closely certain groups of the population are missing, first of all the group of male Russian citizens of middle age.

Simultaneously examining "risk groups" shifts the research focus from macro structural factors fostering trafficking to a perspective that centers on the behavior of individuals of certain groups. Hence, the research of trafficking becomes the research of the behavior of these groups (Glick-Schiller et al. 1994:1338). The baseline study indeed points out the structural, cultural and social dimension of the problem. Besides, the finding that poverty and gender inequalities are amongst the so-called root causes for trafficking is common sense in international organizations and other transnational arenas. The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto recommends poverty reduction and the implementation of initiatives to improve "at-risk" groups' social-economical standards of living,¹³ but the majority of anti-trafficking activities does not approach the root causes of trafficking in a sustainable and thorough way.

Exploring root causes through a gender sensitive lens implies that women and men are affected by root causes in a gender specific way. Women's and girls' vulnerability to trafficking and various forms of exploitation constitutes a complexly tied package of manifold intertwined aspects of gender asymmetries in social political and economic systems. Accordingly the European Commission lists on its website "[...] the feminization of poverty, gender discrimination, lack of educational and professional opportunities in their countries of origin" as the main reasons why women are prone to fall victim to trafficking (European Commission Justice and Home Affairs N.d.). Thus, scientists analyzing trafficking from a gender critical point of view point out that trafficking in women perpetuates and deepens the unequal status of women

in numerous societies (Locher 2002:62). On a global level, many governmental, non-governmental and international actors favor models aiming at individualized problem solutions or mitigations. This seems to be a self-fulfilling prophecy as targeting personal behavior constructs the issue that is in need of regulations on a socio-structural level as an individual problem. Therefore, research that focuses on the behavior of “at-risk” groups also helps to make solutions acceptable which target the individual rather than the society.

How to Migrate Safely? Brochures for Prudent People

A next step in order to explore the relations between gender and the risk of trafficking is to take a closer look at the informational material of the campaign, particularly the manual *Pamyatka*, published by the IOM in collaboration with the FMS. The brochure seeks to address migrants coming to Russia as well as emigrants from the Russian Federation. Different sections are tailored to provide information essential for each group. As already shown in the baseline study, some sections in the *Pamyatka* perceive gender as one risk factor amongst others, respectively dependent on other factors. In a short introduction providing background knowledge on the phenomenon, female migrants from and into Russia are listed as the primary persons who are especially “at-risk” of being trafficked for purposes of sexual exploitation. Moreover, they are also presented as being prone to labor exploitation, while poverty is stressed as a root cause concerning both genders.

Risk prevention in the manual is outlined mainly from a migration perspective: “Lawful migration lowers, unlawful migration increases the risk of trafficking,” reads the simple recipe for trafficking prevention. How to enter the country legally, how to organize a lawful stay and how to get an official work permit is explained to migrants from the CIS countries on over 80 pages in the manual. In addition to having pictures of all documents necessary for entry, work, and stay, the manual also offers a large section dedicated to various services, with an extensive collection of vital addresses and other information that facilitate to contact authorities, employment agencies, relief organizations, embassies and hostels.

A far shorter section—around 15 pages—focuses on Russian citizens who are planning to migrate. They are warned not to accept non-legal work. The style of fictitious newspaper announcements is dismantled and explained, in order to provide readers with means to

differentiate between secure and insecure job offers. Checklists record the things to pay attention to when marrying or working abroad. An emergency package on the last pages compiles the contacts of advisory and counseling boards in Western Europe.

In- as well as out-migrants are reminded to adhere to the regulations on the pain of financial penalties. Short and unambiguous slogans continuously warn the readers of the brochure about the serious consequences they will face when violating Russian laws on immigration or residence or those of other destination countries.¹⁴ Additional checklists advise migrants to bear in mind all the things indispensable to organize their migration safely.

Women and men are not addressed separately, but the gendered character of risks linked with migration becomes obvious especially in the *Pamyatka*'s section relating to Russian citizens. The recommendations mostly refer to risks associated with sex-work, marriage migration, model and marriage agencies, etc. A number of precautions are recommended, such as verifying the reliability of employment/marriage agencies and job offers or not accepting unofficial jobs (International Organization for Migration 2007:83–100). Interpreting this approach from a gender sensitive point of view, means, that through these instructions women get the chance to avoid criminal victimization in a gender specific way: they are requested “to organize their lifestyle in ways that avoid ‘high risk situations’” (Hannah-Moffat 2007:2). Hence, the campaign's emphasis on risks associated with out-migration from the Russian Federation aims at producing risk-conscious women, whose migration projects are structured by risks differently than those of male Russian migrants.

The success of anti-trafficking prevention campaigns is difficult to verify, but experts have pointed out that legal norms and regulations are only followed when they take into account the motivations and interests of their addressees (Popova 2007). So the manual has to be judged according to its ability to take into account the situations of migrants in order to make them comply with migration and labor legislation. Furthermore, to align the practical requirements of migrant workers and constructions of migrants' desired behavior made by the IOM in its trafficking prevention campaigns, allows us to study these models and to ask to what extent decent work is identified as a regulative idea. Local and international human/women rights organizations provide insights into the difficulties of female migration and work from the CIS countries. In their reports they take into account the kind of information which would serve them best. Since most female workers from former Soviet Republics migrate independently,¹⁵

UNIFEM CIS describes the lack of information about labor markets and employment opportunities in destination countries as one of the most important problems facing migrant workers. Female CIS migrants are considered especially in need of assistance and counseling regarding questions on labor legislation, pre-departure information and vocational training (UNIFEM 2009).

A startling report published by Human Rights Watch (HRW) informed in 2009 about the situation of male workers from CIS countries being increasingly confronted with various forms of labor exploitation and slavery in the construction sector. The study's provocative title "*Are You Happy to Cheat Us*" stresses that in times of a booming Russian economy migrant construction workers had not only to cope with unsafe working conditions and substandard on-site accommodation, but also with physical abuse and deceit of wages. According to HRW the linchpin to improve working and living conditions of migrants is to establish and to enforce complaint mechanisms for migrant workers irrespectively of their migration status (Human Rights Watch 2009:6f). The knowledge about the scandals of exploited construction workers, due to HRW's expertise, has circulated widely on a national as well as on an international level. But the situation of female migrant workers is still a matter discussed exclusively by experts.

Migrant women from the CIS countries coming to the Russian Federation are largely invisible due to their work in the domestic or other parts of the "service" sphere. On average they are poorly paid and subjected to violence and human rights violations¹⁶ (European Women's Lobby 2009). Unlike male "guestworkers" women migrant-workers from various CIS countries often try to realize their respective projects individually (Ivakhnyuk 2009). Due to high levels of xenophobia amongst the Russian population and an often only poor command of the Russian language, female migrant workers are frequently barely integrated into society and face various difficulties in everyday or bureaucratic life.

As is the case with their male counterparts, the female migrant workers have little legal recourse available and as a result they are badly protected and legally excluded, because they work without binding contracts and live in the Russian Federation without proper residence permits (UNIFEM 2009). On the occasion of CEDAW's¹⁷ 30th anniversary, regional and international women's organizations¹⁸ have formulated recommendations to improve the situation of female CIS migrant workers. In addition to strengthening the implementation mechanisms for CEDAW and reviewing national policy, especially, measures to ensure the

rights of migrant women workers were considered most important. In this context legally binding contracts for migrant domestic workers are put forward as a crucial tool for inhibiting abuse, discrimination and exploitation of migrant women due to legal exclusion (European Women's Lobby 2009; UNIFEM 2009).

Without a doubt, the *Pamyatka* is an indispensable compilation of the various modalities concerning work and immigration, but the migrant's decisions about his/her own migration project follow a different rationality¹⁹ than the one promoted by the IOM. That is why the factual value of the manual has to be questioned. Its primary objective is not just to inform migrants in a comprehensive way, so that they are able to weigh the risks or chances of (illegal) migration. It rather functions as a tool to coerce migrants from CIS countries, but also from the Russian Federation, to make sure that they are holding the necessary "tokens of trust" (Munster 2009:105), like passports and visa, work, and residence permits. "Tokens of trust" reassure migrants not to be considered an immigration risk, who will subsequently be fined or deported. Lacking "tokens of trust" implies the opposite.

Information manuals like the *Pamyatka* are meant to turn risky subjects into *prudent* and careful persons, who avoid risks like irregular migration. The legal scholar Pat O'Malley referred to this form of social regulation as *prudentialism* (O'Malley 1996): individuals ought to manage risks instead of relying on social securities. Each individual has to care for his/her well-being, a "duty to be well" (O'Malley 1996). In this context risk works as a moral program (O'Malley 1996), which aims at individual behavior and links "specific positions or behavioral prescriptions to larger issues of identity and worldview" (International Peace Research Institute). The moral character of risk and its use becomes vividly manifest in the IOM's quarterly newspaper *Migration*: "The consequences of not doing one's homework properly can be dire. People can either end up as victims of human trafficking, lured by false promises of jobs or end up in poorly paid jobs with similar working conditions" (Lu McGill 2005:24).

Individuals supposed as being risky are labeled by denominators. Denominators classify certain social groups as "at-risk" groups and discriminate their members from the rest of the population (Glick-Schiller et al. 1994:1337). Members of "at-risk" groups are "Others" (Yuval-Davis 1997) in terms of gender, class, age, and sexuality. Socio-structural features are not the only characteristics that indicate being "at-risk." Socio-structural differences distinguishing "at-risk" groups manifest themselves in behavioral patterns, which are presented as incompatible

with forms of “normal” social behavior.

This causal entanglement of risk and individual behavior is crucial for trafficking-prevention campaigns which concentrate on (re-)educating and normalizing potential victims as *prudent subjects* (O'Malley 1996). With its anti-trafficking messages, the IOM calls on every single migrant, holding him/her responsible to be careful, to avoid unnecessary risks and to organize his/her migration project in a safe way. In doing so the IOM acts on the assumption that migrants act based on information. However, according to the IOM, potential migrants mostly lack reliable and trustworthy information (Nieuwenhuys et al. 2007). Nevertheless, with its prevention campaigns and counseling services the organization tries to overcome these persistent informational deficits (Nieuwenhuys et al. 2007).

How these assumptions translate in practice can be illustrated amongst other examples in the campaigning work of the IOM during a rock concert against trafficking. The event was organized by IOM and took place in fall 2007 in Petrozavodsk. The IOM distributed promotional material, which called on young people “to make the right choices about their future” (IOM Moscow 2008). Such slogans create the impression of migration being simply a rational choice of individuals because the various power relations that usually underlie the decisions to migrate are masked. Such handy formulas disguise the behavioral rationality pushed by the IOM as well as the fact that the organization primarily represents the interests of its member states, who usually want migrants to obey the legally fixed regulations in order to be able to safely control migration.

The gendered nature of the project of steering and managing migration becomes prominent when looking at the recommendations formulated for target groups in the *Pamyatka*. According to the instructions offered, addressees of the IOM's and the FMS' education-information material can be roughly differentiated in three main “at-risk” groups: youth of both genders migrating from Russia, female Russian out-migrants, and mainly male labor migrants coming to the Russian Federation from other CIS countries. Looking at the IOM statistics of VoTs assisted in its ongoing project in the Russian Federation sheds light on the gendered character of migration management, too. The majority of the 423 affected persons were women (63%). 53% of them were trafficked for purposes of sexual exploitation (IOM Moskau 2008).

The Institutional Practices of Migration Management

The political approach the IOM elaborated to assist its member states in steering migration is the concept of migration management. Devised by Jonas Widgren, the former director of the Vienna-based think tank International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and long-standing consultant for the IOM, migration management tries to accept the realities of (im)migration and strives to regulate migration in a reasonable and beneficial way. To this end, migration management has, according to Widgren, to pursue two overarching policies: on the one hand “preventing mass movements from occurring” and on the other “the creation of orderly migration channels between continents and nations” (Widgren 1994:17). In the middle of the 1990s, migration management emerged as the IOM’s key political concept and was formulated as follows: “The IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. It does so by providing services and advice to governments and migrants” (International Organization for Migration 2009).

As the emphasis of IOM’s work is to provide operative services in the realm of migration policies—the organization is mandated by its member states to transport migrants—(International Organization for Migration 1951/1989, art. 1) an inherent part of its anti-trafficking work is the provision of direct assistances to VoTs. Central elements of IOM’s victim assistance are the programs for the so-called “voluntary return.” Embedded in the organization’s core concept of migration management and in compliance with its mandate, the IOM facilitates the movement of migrants who due to various legal reasons are not allowed to stay in a state, back to their countries of origin. Analyzed through a gender sensitive lens—trafficking-returnees for years usually were women—a few highly gendered aspects of IOM’s return policies have to be stressed. According to Jacqueline Berman, who researched the phenomenon in the Balkans and Poland, the term “return” implies that female migrants go back to where they naturally belong, where they get back their orderly status as citizens that they previously held (Berman 2003:60). The gendered and symbolic character of return policies becomes manifest when trafficking victims are sent back “home.” After an arranged return trip, women may be confronted with traditional and patriarchal ways of living and the need to take up their roles as proper daughters or wives—a life that female migrants often try to escape. Berman’s findings translate to the Russian context, although in a moderated way. When looking at a UNDP

survey²⁰ (Abdullaev 2008) asking Uzbek women to assess their temporary work stay in the Russian Federation, 90% of migrant women interviewed assessed the results of their activities positively. Besides improvement of their families' financial situation, they also stressed that they liked the different attitudes towards women:

Most of all I like the way they treat their women. I could rarely see such treatment here. My husband humiliated me from the first day of our marriage, as well as all his family; they treated me as if I wasn't a human being (*Woman-migrant, urban area, Tashkent*) (Abdullaev 2008:175).

To consider return as a suitable solution for former VoTs and therefore as an obligatory component of anti-trafficking policies, is deeply rooted in the IOM's organizational culture. As the IOM staff in Moscow repeatedly affirmed, the only wish of a victim would be to return back home (Interview with IOM project assistant in Moscow, September 23, 2008). This suggestion, which exploits the victim's desire for trust and protection, justifies policies of migration management as "voluntary" return being the most "natural" principle. Thus rendering "voluntary" return programs as "natural" helps to hide its genuine political character. Return policies, on the contrary, often entail stigmatization, if once returnees come back to their "home" countries they will be exposed as victims of sex-trafficking or at best labeled a failed migrant (Pearson 2002).

In addition to return policies' contribution to maintain a gendered structure of migration, experts continue to have serious doubts that a migration management approach is capable of combating trafficking. As Liz Kelly argues, a migration management approach doesn't target the root causes of trafficking (Kelly 2005): the social, political and economical marginalization of women and girls from socially valued groups and the social construction of these women "as the natural or ideal occupants of the lowliest positions in domestic or sex work" (Anderson et al. 2003:42).

A migration management approach primarily meets the security concerns of states and societies (International Organization for Migration and the Federal Office for Migration 2005). In particular, since September 11, 2001, trafficking which is deemed to be a form of irregular migration that intersects simultaneously with other control and security issues such as

prostitution, illegal work, organised crime or terrorism is considered not only as a menace to potential migrants, but even more as a problem which has subversive effects on societal and state security.

Against this backdrop, identifying men and boys as a new target-group of anti-trafficking activities in the Russian Federation does little to further political discussions and initiatives for revising the regulatory frameworks for the employment of migrants or designing more effective complaint mechanisms for abused workers. Moreover, it rather contributes to holding on to a problem solving strategy that was tested on female VoTs for years. Seen from this angle, males are a new segment of the population to whom the IOM may extend its prevention and assistance activities, thus securing the organization's "anti-trafficking branch" a sustainable and prosperous future.

Conclusions

The IOM's prevention strategies and its practices of returning VoTs to countries of origin, illustrate how the organization frames the problem; namely, the IOM shifts migration risks from the structural to the individual level (Aradau 2008:99). Likewise the prevention's primary aim is to educate men and women "at risk" as *prudent* subjects, who avoid the risks associated with migration. Hence *prudent* behavior, according to "at risk"-group-denominators, is also gender specific behavior. Against this backdrop, I will answer the questions formulated at the beginning.

Due to their social, cultural and economical positions female migrants are exposed to risks differently than men. Women migrants frequently face a double risk of exploitation: they might become a victim of labor as well as of sexual exploitation (O'Connor 2009). Similarly they repeatedly have to cope with sexual harassment in "ordinary" jobs (Abdullaev 2008). They often, but not always, have a limited number of job opportunities and of legal migration channels at hand (Tyuryukanova 2002:150). In their respective countries of origin migration, work, and risk taking for women is culturally not regarded as in the same way acceptable as for men (O'Connor 2009). Or as in the case of Uzbekistan, it suits only certain groups like widows or unmarried and single mothers to migrate (Abdullaev 2008:154). In this context, women who are looking for work migrate on an individual basis, whereas their male compatriots are recruited to

travel and work in groups (brigades) (Ivakhnyuk 2009).

As Rebecca Surtees puts it “being a man (or a woman) in many environments may create conditions which make one particularly prone to migration and, by implication, potentially at risk of trafficking” (Surtees 2008:97). Hence framing migration as a risk aims at bringing about prudent subjects. Hence normal behavior is, according to a risk-group-denominators, also gender specific behavior.

The three prominent migrant identities within the IOM discourse are the prudent female out-migrant and the male and female CIS migrant worker. The *prudent* female out-migrant avoids gender specific risks associated with sex work or marriage migration. The prudent male and prudent female CIS migrant worker possesses all necessary “tokens of trust.” Holding the right documents and obeying the regulations of migration and work are of key importance. It is the central duty migrant workers of both genders are expected to fulfill.

The IOM’s campaign against trafficking focuses on individual risk and individual behavior, aiming to change the behavioral patterns of individual migrants. Tackling the so-called root causes was not intended as a priority in the project “Prevention of Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation.” In neglecting to address the structural dimension of trafficking through applied prevention measures and at the same time discursively shifting the responsibility for falling victim to the individual, IOMs anti-trafficking campaigns fail in providing useful information for men and women as well as improving migrant workers’ livelihoods and promoting their rights.

When staged risk scenarios imply that virtually anybody may fall victim, the risk of trafficking becomes an amorphous menace, a threat you can barely defend yourself against. The only means to obviate the risk suggested by the IOM’s campaign is: If you can’t follow the rules of the game, don’t leave home.

Notes

¹ Many thanks to Olga Bueva for her editorial assistance with this article.

² Susanne Schatral is a PhD student at the Centre for Gender Studies of the University of Bremen (Germany). The title of her PhD thesis is: “Women/Human Rights and the Fight against Traf-

ficking in the Russian Federation and Germany: The Role of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Implementing Migration Policies of the European Union.”

³ The term *decent work* was coined by the International Labor Organization (ILO). *Decent work* is one of the organization’s main aims. It implies: workers’ “aspirations for opportunity and income; rights, voice and recognition; family stability and personal development; and fairness and gender equality” (International Labor Organization N.d.). In order to implement conditions of decent work the organization’s working program aims at four strategic goals: to push fundamental principles and rights at work and international labour standards on a global level; to create employment and income opportunities; to guarantee social protection and social security; and to promote social dialogue and tripartism (International Labor Organization N.d.).

⁴ Migration researcher Irina Ivanykh suggests that the number of female migrants tripled during 2004–2007. She calculates the share of female migrants between 30 and 40% (Ivakhnyuk 2009).

⁵ The report was based on in-depth interviews conducted with 442 migrants in three Russian regions (158 in Moscow, 140 in Omsk and 144 in the Stavropol region). The migrants, mainly from CIS countries (92%), were selected according to sex (27% female, 73% male), age (14–68 years), nationality and country of origin.

⁶ The Russian word “gastarbeitery” stems from the German expression “Gastarbeiter” [guest worker]. In order to resolve their shortage of labor, German companies recruited foreign manpower from 1955 to 1973. The German government made bilateral agreements with various states of the Mediterranean on temporary work in Germany. “Gastarbeiter” were supposed to work a certain period of time and afterwards return to their countries of origin. Various linguists, sociologists and writers consider the term “Gastarbeiter” as a euphemism, masking the hostility against the social integration of foreign workers, by using the word “guest” (Polenz 1999:184; Krüger-Potratz 2005:191).

⁷ Source: email from Anvar Serojtdinov, anti-trafficking unit IOM Geneva, to author, March 13, 2010.

⁸ The IOM was criticized in workshops and at conferences, which it (co-)organized around the topic, such as the European Conference on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, from 18–20 September 2002 in Brussels, and the The United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UNGIFT) from 13–15 February 2008 in Vienna.

⁹ The e-mail exchange can be found in the annex of Andrijasevic’s dissertation (Andrijasevic 2004:228–233).

¹⁰ “Projectization” is “the practice of allocating staff and office costs to the operational activities/projects to which they relate” (IOM 2008). For example, the regional office of the IOM in the Russian Federation is 100% “projecticized”(email from Enrico Ponziani, head of IOM Moscow, to author, March 5, 2010).

¹¹ Further analysis of the relations between the IOM's expanding activities and its financial plan is provided by Fabian Georgi (Georgi 2010).

¹² These factors were set as given, assuming that people who fit in these categories are prone to risk.

¹³ See article 9 paragraph 4 of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime: States Parties shall take or strengthen measures, including through bilateral or multilateral cooperation, to alleviate the factors that make persons, especially women and children, vulnerable to trafficking, such as poverty, underdevelopment and lack of equal opportunity (United Nations 2000).

¹⁴ Внимание! Без регистрации Ваше пребывание в России становится незаконным.[Attention! Without a residence permit your stay in the Russian Federation becomes unlawful] (International Organization for Migration 2007:22).

¹⁵ According to UNIFEM every third woman from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan migrates on her own. 25% percent come with their husband, or together with husband and children (20%). 9% migrate on their own accompanied by their children (UNIFEM 2009).

¹⁶ In her study Tyurykanova asserts, that "[...] female migrants are more often subject to the worst forms of exploitation, including economic, but also physical, psychological and other types of violation and exploitation such as debt bondage, compulsion to work without consent and restricted mobility. Twenty-five per cent of women for instance reported restricted mobility, as compared with 17 per cent of men" (Tyurykanova 2004: 75). Similarly, Dmitriy Poletaev (2002) in his survey of 815 irregular migrants (735 male, 115 female) found that 20–25% of his female respondents had to work overtime (68%) or harder (44%) without additional payment. Moreover, women migrants faced physical or mental violence or were forced to perform sexual services (Poletaev 2005).

¹⁷ The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination of Women (CEDAW), adopted 1979 by the UN General Assembly, is the only instrument to protect women's rights on an international level.

¹⁸ These organizations were the NGO networks Wide (Women In Development Europe) and the European Women's Lobby as well as the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

¹⁹ Assumptions of rational behavior systematically disregard individual migration strategies that temporarily tolerate coercive and exploitative circumstances (Andrijasevic 2004; Sharma 2003) in order to improve one's life in the long-term.

²⁰ The survey was conducted in 12 Uzbek regions and the city of Tashkent. On the basis of contact interviews 1,512 persons were asked about their experiences migrating abroad, mainly to Russia. Amongst the interviewees were 47.2% men and 52.8 % women.

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