



**Assessing the factors which influence vulnerability to labour trafficking of migrants in the European region: An Integrative Literature Review**

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## **Abstract**

Human trafficking is an alarming human rights violation and has become a focus of increasing international and governmental attention. The phenomena has been described as the “dark side of globalisation”, with its emergence at least partially as a consequence of global migration. Growing evidence highlights that migration itself is a vulnerability factor for human trafficking. However, despite the European Union itself having been described as an epicentre of global migration and with 1 million persons arriving in Europe in 2015, labour trafficking in the region remains under researched. Moreover, there remains insufficient understanding of the factors and vulnerabilities which may lead to labour trafficking of migrants in Europe.

The primary objective of this integrative literature review was to assess the factors which influence vulnerability to labour exploitation, forced labour and labour trafficking of migrants in Europe. A comprehensive search strategy was employed to identify journal articles and grey literature from across 42 countries in the World Health Organisation (WHO) European region. The review used 18 literatures sources which were identified for inclusion.

Thematic content analysis was used to analyse data, identifying 46 separate vulnerability factors. Four broad themes categorised these vulnerabilities which were; individual level factors, workplace and employment related factors, legal and institutional factors at the national and regional level and macro level factors. Sectors which were most commonly noted as harbouring an elevated risk of labour trafficking were domestic work, agriculture, construction, cleaning, hospitality and catering, with four of the included sources focusing exclusively on domestic work.

This research finds that a multi-faceted position of vulnerability exists, comprised by the interaction between numerous factors, rather than one factor alone which contributes to trafficking risk of migrant workers in Europe. The findings of this review should be used to enhance national responses against labour trafficking. Further research should focus on areas such as education and social networks where consensus has not been reached on their effect for migrant risk of trafficking. Without urgent action, the alarming likelihood remains that despite international efforts to reduce trafficking the phenomena in Europe is only likely to significantly increase given the high level of migration.

## 1.Introduction

Human trafficking is an alarming human rights violation which has become a focus of increasing international and governmental attention<sup>1-3</sup>. The emergence of modern day slavery facilitated in part by economic globalisation remains undeterred despite the abolishment of slavery in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>4</sup>. Although human trafficking is a largely hidden crime and remains difficult to accurately quantify<sup>3,5-7</sup>, the International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that the number of trafficked persons worldwide is likely to exceed 21 million persons<sup>8</sup>.

The estimates of the number of trafficked persons globally have increased significantly within the last decade<sup>8</sup> and the geographical scope of the issue is also expanding. The United Nations comments that the international crime affects "almost every country in the world"<sup>9</sup>. Geographically isolated countries are now largely accessible due to globalisation and few countries are immune to the phenomena.

The US Department of State's Trafficking in Persons report lists 9 major forms of trafficking; forced labour and child forced labour, sex trafficking and prostitution and children exploited for commercial sex are amongst the most well-known although bonded labour, debt bondage and involuntary servitude, domestic servitude, child soldiers and child sex tourism are other major forms which should not be overlooked<sup>10</sup>. Until recently, the phenomena of human trafficking was almost exclusively associated with sexual exploitation<sup>1,6,11,12</sup>, with other forms of human trafficking including labour trafficking receiving inadequate attention from researchers, law enforcement and policy makers alike<sup>6,12</sup>. Human trafficking discourse is certainly now expanding, with increasing research focusing on labour trafficking, indeed it is now acknowledged that the majority of human trafficking globally takes the form of forced labour<sup>13</sup>. Estimates provided by the ILO in 2012 indicate that 14.2 million or 68% of the 20.9 million people identified worldwide as being trafficked are victims of forced labour in sectors including agriculture, construction, domestic work and manufacturing<sup>8</sup>.

Growing recognition has established a clear link between migration and human trafficking and more specifically that migration itself is a vulnerability factor for human trafficking<sup>2,14-18</sup>. The phenomena of human trafficking has been described as a "dark side of globalisation" with its emergence at least partially as a consequence of global migration<sup>19,20</sup>. Migrant workers have been identified at elevated risk of labour trafficking, which may be a consequence of potentially insecure and vulnerable situations which manifest prior to

departure, throughout the migration process and in the country of destination<sup>18</sup>. Irregular or undocumented migrants, displaced persons including refugees and stranded migrants are particularly susceptible to exploitation, forced labour and trafficking. Vulnerability of undocumented migrants is defined by irregular status and leaves many migrants susceptible to ill-treatment, victimisation by unscrupulous employers and trafficking<sup>14,21,22</sup>. Consequently, facing a lack of legal employment opportunities and an inability to earn a living with limited or no access to social support services many men, women and child migrants face a heightened vulnerability to exploitation<sup>23</sup>. High vulnerability to exploitation and trafficking is also identified in stranded migrants such as those whose legal entitlement to remain in a country has terminated but are unable to return to their country of origin due to lack of means or face dangers such as conflict, unrest or persecution upon return<sup>14</sup>.

The European region and specifically the European Union (EU) is described as an epicentre of global migration<sup>2</sup>, a factor with an established risk for trafficking. Within the European Union 16.0 million EU migrants were recorded as residing in another EU member state and 20.7 million non-EU migrants residing in an EU member state<sup>24</sup>. Hence non-EU migrants comprise 4.1% of the EU population<sup>24</sup>. Although Europe as a continent exhibits the lowest global prevalence of modern slavery, the number of enslaved persons in Europe is staggering, with over 1.2 million estimated to be enslaved within the region<sup>25</sup>. Within the small proportion of slightly more than 30,000 trafficked persons in the European Union who were formally registered as being trafficked between 2010 and 2012, 65% are identified as EU citizens and 45% non-EU citizens<sup>5</sup>. However, these figures are likely to represent only the tip of the iceberg<sup>26</sup> and additionally largely identify only persons trafficked for sexual exploitation.

The year 2015 marked the highest level of human displacement following the conclusion of World War II, with 65.3 million forcibly displaced persons worldwide<sup>27</sup>. Throughout 2015, 1 million people fleeing persecution, conflict and seeking improved economic opportunities made journeys to Europe with 3,770 persons reported missing or dead as a result of perilous sea journeys used to reach the continent<sup>27</sup>. Migration flows and asylum challenges faced throughout the European region have recently been determined by protracted internal conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa such as those witnessed in Syria, Libya and Iraq<sup>27</sup>.

Importantly, published evidence establishes an association between migrants newly arriving in Europe during the period known as "the European Refugee Crisis" which includes asylum seekers and refugees and vulnerability to trafficking. High vulnerability and risk of

trafficking in migrants by criminal networks has been documented on the extensively used Western Balkan route through Greece, Macedonia and Albania to Europe<sup>22,28</sup>. Moreover, Kemp<sup>29</sup> also highlights a worrying trend of increasing vulnerability to exploitation and trafficking for African asylum seekers in Malta during each stage of the country's complex migration system.

## **1.1 Rationale**

Human trafficking despite increasing attention internationally remains a neglected and overlooked area. In part, this stands due to trafficking's hidden nature and the consequently low levels of identification and documentation which contributes to a lack of baseline data on the crime<sup>30</sup>. This is particularly compounded in situations of acute crisis and low resource settings with a very low number of prosecutions for trafficking in persons (TIP) throughout Europe<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, even the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) admitted that it has not adequately addressed the issue of trafficking in migrant populations despite international legal obligations, such as the Geneva Convention, 1951 which stipulate basic protections<sup>31</sup>.

Despite evidence highlighting that labour trafficking is not only established in Europe but may in fact be expanding in size, little systematic evidence on the topic has been published<sup>32</sup>. Due to little understanding of the factors and elements which contribute to labour trafficking within migrant populations, current measures aiming to prevent the phenomena in this potentially vulnerable population may fail to succeed<sup>32</sup>. This urgent issue requires a comprehensive and focused approach in order to initiate effective anti-trafficking measures. Despite several publications in the form of both peer-reviewed and grey literature sources, no literature review has been performed to identify the factors and vulnerabilities which effect labour trafficking risk of migrants entering the European region, a research gap which this review aims to fill. Therefore, this research will carry out a literature review of factors which influence vulnerability of migrants in Europe to labour trafficking.

## **1.2 Aim and Objectives**

This paper aims to add to the much-needed body of literature on the subject of labour trafficking and the vulnerability of migrants in Europe to this still under researched area of trafficking.

The primary objective of this paper is to explore and better understand the factors which increase vulnerability to trafficking. This has been recognised by the Global Migration Group as essential for both guiding national responses against trafficking and enhancing public awareness of a crime which can be unknowingly close to home<sup>14</sup>. Action against human trafficking which has emerged as one of the most critical human rights issue of the current time is underlined by sustainable development goal 16 and a commitment to combat all forms of organised crimes, including human trafficking<sup>23</sup>.

Specific secondary objectives include:

- Identification of key vulnerabilities and risk factors for labour trafficking of migrants in the European region
- Identification of key employment sectors in which labour trafficking and exploitation are commonly identified

### **1.3 Research Question**

What factors influence vulnerability to labour trafficking of migrants in the European region?

### **1.4 Definitions and Clarification of Terms**

*The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*, widely known as the Palermo Trafficking Protocol defines human trafficking as, "The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threats or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of the 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"<sup>33</sup>. Article 3 of the protocol provided the first internationally accepted definition for the phenomena of human trafficking. Although the protocol has faced criticism for its narrow portrayal of a "victim" as that of a sexually exploited female, the protocol has been ratified by 154 countries and will be employed in this review<sup>11,34</sup>.

The ILO provides the definition for what is accepted as forced labour and notably not the same as trafficking. The Forced Labour Convention No. 29 defines forced labour as that which is firstly, all work or service; secondly, is not voluntary and thirdly, is exacted under the menace of a penalty<sup>35</sup>.

Skrivankova, 2010<sup>36</sup> has pioneered widely cited work which examines the continuum of exploitation in labour and employment. It is widely accepted that a continuum of experiences describes a spectrum between decent work, minor and major violations of labour legalisation and extreme exploitation which may take the form of forced labour. Furthermore, this continuum of experiences underlines the difficulty in establishing which situations may constitute labour exploitation, forced labour or labour trafficking<sup>36</sup>. Therefore, this review will examine vulnerabilities for labour exploitation, forced labour and labour trafficking, considering the inability to separate various exploitative labour situations. This approach should also prevent vital information from being excluded which may be applicable for trafficking vulnerability of migrants for all exploitative conditions.

An understanding of what is meant by the term vulnerability within the field of labour trafficking is important to consistently identify such factors and what influences such vulnerabilities across literature sources and will also allow identification of casual factors<sup>37</sup> p.67. The United Nations (UN) describe the term vulnerability to human trafficking as, "a condition resulting from how individuals negatively experience the complex interaction of social, cultural, economic, political and environmental factors that create the context for their communities"<sup>37</sup> p.8. Therefore, the meaning of this term in this review will identify a wide range of factors which influence trafficking risks of migrants across Europe and will not be restricted to individual level factors. The need to consider this broad range of determinants is underlined further by the UN who assert that the conditions which cause vulnerability are often systematic and may be as a consequence of government enacted policy <sup>37</sup>.

The definition of a migrant varies across international organisations and scholars<sup>38</sup>. For the purposes of this review, an inclusive use of the term was employed, which defined a migrant as any person who is moving or has moved across an international border. This included irregular and undocumented migrants, asylum seekers and refugees among other categories.

## **2.Methods**

### **2.1 Design**

An integrative literature review was employed to address the previously stated research question: What factors influence vulnerability to labour trafficking of migrants in the European region? A integrative review uses a combination of review, critique and synthesis of representative literature to develop new perspectives and frameworks in the given research area<sup>39</sup>.

An integrative review was deemed the most appropriate method to comprehensively answer the research question. With research publications having previously been published in this area, an integrative literature review could be used to synthesise findings in a systematic and consistent manner which provide clarity on vulnerabilities to exploitation and trafficking of migrants in Europe. Furthermore, literature reviews can identify key questions within the research niche which require further study and will be helpful in guiding much needed, future research in the field of labour trafficking in Europe<sup>40</sup>.

### **2.2 Review Sources and Search Strategy**

Given the acknowledgement of a limited state of understanding surrounding the issue of labour trafficking in Europe<sup>41</sup>, the presented literature review makes use of both peer-reviewed journal articles and grey literature. Grey literature sources provide an opportunity to broaden the range and scope of relevant studies, which may produce new ideas<sup>42,43</sup> and therefore the strongest evidence base should include such sources<sup>44</sup>. Despite greater success in identifying grey literature through web based search engines and bibliographic databases identifying sources remains challenging<sup>43</sup>. Therefore, it is recommended to include a specific search strategy for grey literature due to its unique methods of publishing<sup>44</sup>. Books, however will not be included in the review due to limited access, the time required to review the source and as data and information may be significantly back dated due to delays in publishing<sup>45</sup>.

The search for peer reviewed journal articles employed online electronic databases to search for relevant studies. These included but were not restricted to Google Scholar, Web of Science, PubMed, Science Direct, Cochrane Library and Eurostat Data.

The search for grey literature used Google web search, Google Scholar and other online databases such as OpenDOAR.

The search strategy was complemented using a manual snowballing method to identify relevant literature by screening the titles and abstracts of citations. This method still recommended by Cochrane for use in systematic reviews, examines the contents of a source to find all eligible sources of literature<sup>46</sup>. This attempts to ensure that no relevant research is overlooked and helps to identify sources which are inadequately indexed<sup>46</sup>. A detailed overview of the search strategy is provided in *table 1*.

Access to literature was obtained using the Maastricht University Library Service using university credentials or the OpenAccess Database whenever available.

## **2.3 Search Terms**

Key word searching is the most commonly used method for identifying literature and should be considered carefully to ensure terms selected generate relevant literature<sup>45</sup>. Search terms were developed by conducting a preliminary literature scope. An overview of the relevant search terms is summarised in *table 2* and presents all the applied search terms.

## **2.4 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria and Screening**

Literature included for review will:

- Refer to migrants above 18 years of age;
- Refer to migrants entering or residing in the European region or migrating across an international border within the European region as per the definition below;
- Be published between the years 2007 and 2017;
- Be published in the English language;
- Include the term "migrant" OR "asylum seeker" OR "refugee" anywhere in the title, abstract or key words for journal articles or in the title, executive summary or keywords of grey literature;
- Include the term/terms "vulnerabilities" OR "risk[s]" or "factor[s]" anywhere in the title, abstract or key words for journal articles or in the title, executive summary or keywords of grey literature;

- Refer to “labour trafficking”, “forced labour” or “labour exploitation” anywhere in the title, abstract or key words for journal articles or in the title, executive summary or keywords of grey literature;
- Be peer reviewed journal articles or grey literature report sources.

It is vital to clarify the scope of the European region in which literature was sought. This review considered evidence from 42 countries classified as part of the European region for the purposes of this review. These countries include the 53 countries established as members of the World Health Organisation (WHO) European Region<sup>47</sup>, with the exclusion the following 11 countries Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The reason to exclude such countries was made in order to focus the research and reduce complexities which may have been identified in including research from Turkey, the Russian Federation and Israel, countries with large and varying migrant populations which could not be comprehensively studied in the given timeframe. The excluded countries also represent those which may be classified as politically associated with the Asian continent.

Literature was not excluded if it did not contain primary data. Review articles have been included in the review, justified by the previously mentioned limited state of knowledge on labour trafficking in Europe. Where it was not possible to distinguish in a small number of literature sources if factors and vulnerabilities identified applied specifically to migrants leaving the European region or those who remained within the region, studies were not excluded to prevent eliminating potentially valuable sources of literature.

Literature was excluded under a number of additional conditions. These were, if a more recent report series by the same authors was published and available, such as Ollus *et al.*, 2007<sup>48</sup> and if evidence used to report findings of a study had already been utilised by another included literature source in the review, such as Janušauskienė, 2016<sup>2</sup>.

Screening was performed by the author, employing the “first pass” reading assessment identified by Keshav<sup>49</sup>. The method which screens literature using only the title and abstract is used for initial classification for inclusion<sup>45</sup>. At the first pass, a system of over-inclusion was used to prevent exclusion of potentially useful studies, which could be identified as irrelevant at the next screening stage. The “second pass” used the full text of the article or report to apply the complete inclusion criteria to identify the remaining relevant studies for inclusion.

Following the completion of the described search strategy a total of 247 peer-reviewed literature sources were identified through databases, with many more results identified following searches using Google and Google Scholar, which were explored and filtered until page 10 of search results. A summary of the completed search is presented in *table 1*. Searches were tailored for individual databases to enhance the number of search results, in some cases where no results were generated from the full use of search terms, some terms were excluded. This method increased the number of studies found and was employed in order to prevent missing potentially valuable literature. Following screening of titles and abstracts or executive summaries by the described first pass assessment, 40 sources (31 identified through the described search strategy and an additional 9 by reference snowballing) were identified for potential inclusion. Following a more detailed assessment of the remaining studies a further 22 were excluded and 18 retained for inclusion in the literature review following full application of the inclusion and exclusion criteria. All literature was downloaded and organised using Mendeley Desktop version 1.17.10, employed as an electronic reference manager.

## **2.5 Data Extraction and Analysis**

Thematic content analysis was used for the purpose of data extraction and analysis. The advantages of this inductive data analysis approach include the integration of a large amount of extensive literature into a condensed form which otherwise may not be easily interpreted and the establishment of coherent links between review literature and review objectives<sup>50,51</sup>. Concern surrounded the application of a priori framework which introduces a risk that findings are unnecessarily imposed into a chosen framework, which may not accurately represent the findings of the review<sup>50</sup>. Furthermore, the reliance on one source of literature for a pre-defined framework may risk bias in the results, without adequately considering the results of the selected literature<sup>52</sup>.

Thematic content analysis attempts to seek identification of themes which emerge throughout the review literature as important to the description of the research niche<sup>53</sup>. This involves the use of translating, essentially transferring key concepts from one literature source to another by recognition of the concept although these maybe be expressed in different words<sup>50</sup>. This is performed during detailed reading of selected literature, when the evaluator may select segments of text which are important to the phenomena under study and creates a label for the text segment. Following completion of this stage, labels were used to construct categories and sub-categories which were identified into broad themes after careful consideration<sup>51,54</sup>.

The synthesis of data in this manner is alike to that often employed for qualitative research and can be complex. In general, it is less developed than standardised methods used to assess findings from evidence such as randomised controlled trials<sup>50</sup>. However, the strength of this method for the given literature review allows a consistent approach for identification of findings from narrative literature sources which largely employ qualitative methods themselves without imposing the limitations of an applied priori framework<sup>50</sup>.

## 2.6 Scope of the Review

Available time and resources often determine the scope and depth of conducted research<sup>55,56</sup>. This review is no different and due to restrictions in timeframe, decisions to ensure adequate completion of the literature review were taken. These included restricting the literature reviewed in the study to the last decade between 2007 and 2017. Similarly, an in-depth quality assessment of the included studies could not be completed.

*Table 1 Summary of Search Strategy*

<b>Type of literature</b>	<b>Search Engine</b>	<b>Keywords searched</b>	<b>Number of results</b>
Journal articles	PubMed	"migrant" OR "asylum seeker" OR "refugee" AND "labour trafficking" OR "labour exploitation" OR "forced labour" AND Europe	34
	Science Direct	"migrant" OR "asylum seeker" OR "refugee" AND "labour trafficking" OR "labour exploitation" OR "forced labour"	181
	Web of Science	"migrant" OR "asylum seeker" OR "refugee" AND "labour trafficking" OR "labour exploitation" OR "forced labour" AND "vulnerability" OR "factor" OR "risk"	10
	Cochrane Library	"migrant" OR "asylum seeker" OR "refugee" AND "labour trafficking" OR "labour exploitation" OR "forced labour" AND "vulnerability" OR "factor" OR "risk"	0
	Taylor & Francis	"migrant" OR "asylum seeker" OR "refugee" AND "labour trafficking" OR "labour exploitation" OR "forced labour" AND "vulnerability" OR "factor" OR "risk" AND Europe	19

	Integration Encyclopaedia for Migration Law/ Kluwer Law Online	"migrant" OR "asylum seeker" OR "refugee" AND "labour trafficking" OR "labour exploitation" OR "forced labour" AND "vulnerability" OR "factor" OR "risk"	3
<b>Total</b>			<b>247</b>
	Google Scholar	"migrant" OR "asylum seeker" OR "refugee" AND "labour trafficking" OR "labour exploitation" OR "forced labour" AND "vulnerability" OR "factor" OR "risk"	Explored and filtered until p.10 of results
Grey Literature	Google	"migrant" OR "asylum seeker" OR "refugee" AND "labour trafficking" OR "labour exploitation" OR "forced labour" AND "vulnerability" OR "factor" OR "risk"	Explored and filtered until p.10 of results
	Snowballing		9

Table 2 Alternative words and phrases for search terms

<b>Term</b>	<b>Equivalent word/s or phrase</b>
<b>Migrant</b>	"migrant" OR "asylum seeker" OR "refugee"
<b>Labour trafficking</b>	"labour trafficking" OR "labour exploitation" OR "forced labour" OR "human trafficking for forced labour" OR "human trafficking for labour exploitation"
<b>Europe</b>	Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom
<b>Vulnerability</b>	"vulnerability" OR "[risk] factor" OR "factors"

### 3. Results

Eighteen studies met the stated inclusion criteria. Nine research sources were peer-reviewed journal articles and 9 grey literature reports, all published between 2008 and 2017. All tables and figures are presented in section 3.7 (page 22).

A summary of the characteristics of included literature sources is provided in *table 3*. A wide variety of research methods were used by the literature sources. Nine studies employed a combination of various methodologies whilst 5 studies did not detail the employed methodology (see *table 3*). Eleven of the included 18 studies used qualitative interviews either exclusively or to complement other methods<sup>57-67</sup>. The next most commonly employed methodology was the use of desk research by 4 sources<sup>57-59,61</sup>, with Ollus *et al.* and Palumbo<sup>64,66</sup> making use of a literature review as part of the research method and Ollus *et al.* and Papantoniou-Frangouli<sup>64,67</sup> making partial use of documentary analysis. Other methods used included questionnaires<sup>57</sup>, household survey<sup>68</sup>, case analysis<sup>69</sup>, participant observation<sup>63,66</sup> and using qualitative interview findings from other sources<sup>70</sup>. The research sources included were conducted in either one or more than one of the following 19 countries, presented in *figure 1*. This figure details the number of studies conducted in each country and those conducted across the European region in multiple countries.

Four of the included literature sources refer only to the sector of domestic work<sup>58,59,63,70</sup>, with 3 of these studies identified from one special issue of the Journal of Immigrant and Refugee studies<sup>58,59,63</sup>.

Thematic content analysis was employed to classify vulnerabilities and the factors which influenced trafficking risk into themes and categories as described previously. The following four broad themes were identified from the reviewed literature:

- Individual level factors
- Workplace and employment related factors
- Legal and Institutional Factors at the National and Regional level
- Macro level factors.

Each theme was consequently sub-divided into a varying number of categories and sub-categories. A summary of the vulnerabilities and factors which influenced trafficking risk is

provided in *table 4*, which reports the number of authors identifying each vulnerability from the included literature.

### **3.1 Individual Level Factors**

Individual level factors were divided into factors prior to, during or around and subsequent to migration.

#### *Prior to migration*

Various push factors which played an important role in the decision to migrate have been identified in relation to their effect on the risk of trafficking. These are; poverty, unemployment and unfavourable economic situations<sup>57,62,64,66,68,69,71</sup>, a low level of education<sup>59-61,64</sup> and political instability, war and conflict<sup>57,61,66,67</sup>. A willingness to depart and take risks during the migration process is contended to be easily exploitable and is a factor which may subsequently confer vulnerability<sup>68</sup>.

The category of poverty is referred to by 8 of the included sources <sup>57,62,64,66,68,69,71</sup>. Andrees<sup>57</sup> differs slightly in narrative on this issue having asserted that relative deprivation rather than absolute poverty is a substantial risk factor for exploitation. The author explained that only those who have the necessary means to invest in the migration process are able to emigrate<sup>57</sup>. Furthermore, Andrees stated that poverty is worse in those who were victims of labour trafficking than "successful migrants"<sup>57 p. 7</sup>, asserting poverty as not only a crucial factor in migration but trafficking itself.

Agreement on the risk increasing effect of low educational attainment is not unanimous, although education is mentioned as a factor associated with exploitation and trafficking by 4 authors<sup>59-61,64</sup>. In the study of Mahmoud *et al.*<sup>68</sup> which included 1, 679 Moldavian migrants, education was not found to be a significant factor in affecting trafficking risk, although conceded errors of measurement and difficulty in comparing statistics are noted and should be borne in mind.

A situation of exclusion and discrimination was identified by 6 authors as pertinent<sup>57,61,64,67,71,72</sup>. In the country of origin, discrimination and exclusion was identified on account of race and ethnic minority<sup>57,61</sup> and related to female gender<sup>57,72</sup>. Exclusion and discrimination was not restricted to the country of origin, this also applied in accessing the

labour market in the country of destination<sup>67,71</sup>. Members of the Roma community were also identified as particularly susceptible<sup>57,60</sup>.

Gender is a factor identified by 5 authors<sup>57,65,66,73,74</sup>. Both males and females are mentioned although being female is discussed much more widely as conferring vulnerability. Females may be subject to lack of employment opportunities<sup>73</sup> and financial difficulties<sup>57</sup>. The only report of the included literature which exclusively focused on gender is also the only study which discussed male gender<sup>73</sup>. This described that males may be less likely to report being trafficked and may fear being emasculated if they admit being exploited<sup>73</sup>. However, it is worth noting that Mahmoud *et al.*<sup>68</sup> in the Moldovian case study found no evidence that sex significantly affected trafficking risk, however noted limitations were stated.

Family factors which include the need to earn to support family<sup>62,65-67</sup> and households in regions which have a greater awareness of human trafficking<sup>68</sup> are reported to exert a respective increasing and decreasing effect to labour trafficking risk.

#### *During or around the time of migration*

The study of Mahmoud *et al.*<sup>68</sup> conducted in 5 Eastern European countries found that migration prevalence is a key indicator of labour trafficking with the explanation that high emigration flow may encourage departure of more vulnerable migrants.

Five authors cited the use of social networks as a factor in trafficking vulnerability<sup>60,61,63,64,68</sup>, however the effect of this factor is contested. Aligned with the general consensus of existing migration literature a social network used to migrate and find employment in the destination country is contended as exhibiting a harm reducing effect to vulnerability<sup>68</sup>. The findings of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights<sup>61</sup> here are also in agreement. However, Dwyer *et al.*<sup>60</sup> asserted that instead of alleviating risk, trust in social networks or ties through nationality or ethnic minority groups may in fact have led to exploitation and trafficking on arrival. The findings of Mahmoud *et al.*<sup>68</sup> also aligned with this finding, stating that large community migration networks may facilitate an increased vulnerability to trafficking, leaving ambiguous results of the effect of this factor and the need for further research in this specific area.

#### *Subsequent to migration*

Debt<sup>57,60-62,64,67</sup>, communication and language difficulties<sup>59,61,63,64,69,71,74</sup>, unawareness of rights and entitlements<sup>58,60,61,64,70,71</sup>, fear of deportation<sup>57,60,61,64,67,69,70</sup> and fear of losing income and job<sup>61,63</sup> are identified as increasing the risk to trafficking following migration. Lack of knowledge of rights and entitlements can facilitate employers being more readily able to exploit workers with debt being accrued during the migration or due to high recruitment fees charged by recruitment agencies.

### **3.2 Workplace and employment factors**

Workers employed in sectors prone to severe labour exploitation are found at increased risk of trafficking<sup>61</sup>. *Figure 2* presents the number of studies which specifically referred to various employment sectors where trafficking risk is reported as being elevated and trafficking reported commonly. Such commonly identified sectors were domestic work, agriculture, construction, cleaning, hospitality and catering. Four studies focused exclusively on the domestic work sector<sup>58,59,63,74</sup> and vulnerabilities specific to this sector are outlined in section 3.5.

Precarious situations of employment identified by this research include flexibilization and informalisation, bogus self-employment, temporary, posted and seasonal workers and not being a member of a trade union.

Flexibilisation is seen as increasing the fragility of employment<sup>67</sup>, instability, lack of protection, and insecurity<sup>72</sup>, within multiple employment sectors. Furthermore, exploitation is also recognised as more likely to occur within the informal economy where labour rights and social security provisions may not be enforced<sup>57,58,60,63,67,74</sup>. Due to inability to legally enter the labour market, Dwyer *et al.*<sup>60</sup> found irregular migrants at particular risk of informal employment and consequently the associated vulnerability.

Bogus self-employment is also recognised as adding to vulnerability<sup>61,64,69</sup>. This involves an employer labelling workers as self-employed in order to avoid provision of employment and social protection rights. At least one of the following types of workers; temporary, posted and seasonal are mentioned by 7 authors as increasing labour trafficking vulnerability<sup>57,61,62,65,69,71</sup>. A tendency cited by Andrees<sup>57</sup> notes that temporary work is often not regularised due to the short time of stay and that employers may be reluctant to make social security contributions. Agriculture is the sector where seasonal work is most commonly noted<sup>57,61,64,65,67</sup>. Additionally, Papantoniou-Frangouli states a worrying phenomenon that trafficking networks operate "everywhere that seasonal work is demanded" <sup>67 p. 67</sup>. Authors<sup>61,62,69,71</sup> also specifically referred to the potential for exploitation

in posted workers, defined as, “an employee who is sent by his employer to carry out a service in another EU Member State on a temporary basis”<sup>75</sup>.

Sub-contracting, outsourcing and long supply chains is a category identified by 7 studies<sup>59,61,64,66,67,69,70</sup>. Outsourcing and long supply chains make for difficulty in verifying standards according to the report of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights<sup>61</sup>. Here, employers at the top of supply chains may be unaware or claim to be unaware where trafficking of workers does exist<sup>69</sup>. Palumbo *et al.*<sup>65</sup> discussed the role that the size of the producer played, whereby price pressures maybe exerted on small producers and migrants working within such companies who become vulnerable and unable to negotiate for fair wages. Wilkinson<sup>70</sup> implied along the same narrative stating that the growth and “hegemonic power” of supermarkets has exerted considerable pressure on farmers to reduce costs, which may manifest in exploitation for temporary workers in the sector.

Eleven authors referred to social isolation and little contact to the outside world as a factor which is important in increasing vulnerability<sup>59-62,64-67,70,71,74</sup>. Multiple authors described situations of isolated accommodation provided by the employer both within the domestic work sector<sup>59,74</sup> and others<sup>64,67</sup>. Both, Papantoniou-Frangouli and Ollus *et al.*<sup>64,67</sup> described imposed isolation by restricting movements of workers, prohibition of communication and imposition of debts. These barriers deterred exploited and trafficked workers from seeking help, with potential linguistic or cultural barriers making reporting extremely challenging for those who were subjected to such treatment within the domestic work sector<sup>74</sup>.

Identified factors related to the employer included coercion<sup>57,63,64,67,70</sup>, reliance on an agency or employer for example for transport, accommodation and income<sup>58,60,61,66,67,69,71,72</sup>, no provision of a contract or a contract which was not provided in a language of the worker<sup>61,64,69</sup>, withholding wages<sup>60-62,67</sup>, workers not informed regarding entitlements<sup>61</sup>, avoidance of transparency and traceability<sup>61</sup> and being deceived from the beginning of employment<sup>57</sup>.

Other risk factors related to employment recruitment included rushed recruitment, no opportunity to see a written contract, high recruitment fees and unspecified employer obligations<sup>64</sup>

### 3.3 Legal and Institutional Factors at the National and Regional level

The theme of legal and institutional framework emerged as a crucial factor contributing to risk of labour trafficking. The theme contains the following 2 categories; factors which relate to the immigration system and factors which relate to law enforcement and investigation.

Socio-legal status was one of the most widely discussed factors which influenced the risk of labour trafficking across all the identified themes, mentioned by 12 of the 18 research sources<sup>57,59-61,63,67-72,74</sup>. According to Camargo Magalhães<sup>63</sup> despite the protection of human and labour rights for all in Belgium, undocumented domestic workers remained largely unable to accomplish their rights due to their precarious immigration status. This idea is further reiterated by Murphy and Wilkinson<sup>70,72</sup> who stated that precarious immigration status of many migrant workers meant employment protections were in effect illusory, with Wilkinson<sup>70</sup> having asserted the consequent entrapment in a clandestine existence. Both Mahmoud *et al.* and Berket<sup>68,71</sup> contended that precarious socio-legal status conferred a position of vulnerability to labour trafficking through an increased likelihood of smuggling<sup>68,71</sup>. Asylum seekers are identified specifically, where Berket<sup>71</sup> found that asylum seekers whose applications for refugee status may take long periods of time became vulnerable on the "black market" or informal sector of the host country. Failed asylum seekers, who are categorised as irregular migrants are also reported to be at higher risk of labour trafficking<sup>60,67,71</sup>.

The fragility of migrants based on the concept of socio-legal status is not only specific for undocumented migrants and asylum seekers. Dwyer *et al.*<sup>60</sup> extended the issue of socio-legal status to EU citizens migrating within Europe, where complex rules and limited labour market access for A2 nationals (from Romania and Bulgaria) and A8 nationals (from 8 member states who joined the EU in 2004) in the UK also created vulnerability.

The category of restrictive immigration laws is also widely discussed as a vulnerability factor by 9 sources<sup>58,60,61,63,66,69,72,74</sup>. Three authors<sup>60,61,63</sup> described that restrictive immigration systems played a role in increasing vulnerability by creating restrictions to enter the labour market. The United Nations report on domestic workers in Europe identified restricted access to a range of economic and social rights for undocumented migrants who work without adequate legal protections<sup>74</sup>. Countries specifically mentioned for creating such a vulnerability included the UK<sup>60</sup>, Greece<sup>67</sup>, Italy<sup>66</sup> and Belgium<sup>63</sup>. A

situation of complex legal and immigration entitlements is additionally identified as a factor influencing vulnerability<sup>57,60</sup>.

The category of visa and residence linked to work permits is another highly discussed factor, identified by 6 sources<sup>60-62,65,67,74</sup>. Within this domain, an emergence of a dangerous dependency is noted between the worker and the employer both in the case when a worker is tied to a specific employer and where work permits are granted to employers<sup>61,67</sup>.

Vulnerabilities related to law enforcement and investigation included; deficiencies in structures to monitor working conditions<sup>61,63,65,66,69</sup>, lack of effective investigation<sup>61,64</sup>, low risk of prosecution, punishment or compensation to workers<sup>61,65</sup>, legal mechanisms focused on immigration control rather than labour exploitation<sup>57,61,67,69</sup>, law enforcement corruption<sup>57,65,67</sup>, lack of sufficient resources<sup>61,70</sup> and hindered access to justice for victims<sup>61,63</sup>. The meaning of legal mechanisms focused on immigration control explains situations where undocumented migrants who are victims of labour trafficking face the potential threat of deportation and/or law enforcement fail to recognise the worker as having been trafficked.

### **3.4 Macro level factors**

It is agreed upon by 9 authors that both gross economic disparities and increasing global mobility play an important role in creating and facilitating global migration and therefore an exposed risk to exploitation for those working abroad<sup>61,64-71</sup>. Increasing global mobility means workers are increasingly able to move abroad to find employment, entering globalising labour markets across the world.

Demand is mentioned by 10 sources<sup>57-59,61,64,65,67,68,70,71</sup>. Multiple authors described a demand for migrant labour, which is often perceived as cheap and low cost<sup>64,65,70,71</sup>. Three authors reported an unsatisfied demand for migrant workers through legal migration, particularly in high income countries<sup>59,62,68</sup>. Ollus *et al.*<sup>64</sup> also identified a demand for cheap products and services by consumers which may contribute to migration demand. This may play a key role in facilitating undocumented migration, a factor previously identified in this review as conferring vulnerability to trafficking.

### 3.5 Factors specific for Domestic Work

Factors and vulnerabilities identified specific to the domestic work sector included social care regimes, domestic workers in diplomatic households and au pairs, live-in workers, socio-cultural factors, flexibility, demand and relationship with family.

National social care regimes were identified as a pertinent factor conferring vulnerability in migrant domestic workers<sup>59,74</sup>. National governments providing publicly funded support for child and elderly care such as Nordic countries were found to reduce trafficking risk by decreasing demand for migrant domestic workers<sup>74</sup>. The opposite was found to be true in many southern European countries<sup>74</sup> where publicly funded childcare was not as prominent and may contribute to the decision of a household to turn to low-paid and exploitable migrant labour<sup>66</sup>.

Domestic workers in the diplomatic sector and au pairs were reported to be at a higher risk of exploitation<sup>59,60,63,73,74</sup>. The cause of this increased risk is identified to be immunity afforded to diplomatic sector workers and au pairs not being considered as regular workers<sup>59</sup>. Live-in workers additionally are identified at increased risk, where workers work and live in the employer household<sup>59,63,74</sup>.

Informality is reported by 4 authors to contribute to a higher risk of exploitation<sup>58,59,63,74</sup>. The same authors also noted that formal registration of domestic workers may be seen as overly bureaucratic, long and arduous, acting to discourage formality of domestic arrangements<sup>58,59,63,74</sup>.

Socio-cultural factors are also found to be important. Four studies reported a lack of recognition across Europe of domestic work as a legitimate job, consequently domestic workers may not be afforded labour protections<sup>59,63,67,74</sup>. De Volder<sup>59</sup> asserted that evolving gender roles within society have not been met with a simultaneous change in the welfare system. The perception in Greece highlighted by Angeli<sup>58</sup> that domestic care is reserved for women means that the profession may still be seen as a phase of a women's life rather than as a recognised job.

The formation of a bond between the domestic worker and the family has been reported to increase risk of exploitation rather than alleviate the risk. Angeli<sup>58</sup> cited that this has been used as a reason to avoid formal registration of workers.

### **3.6 EU and non-EU migrants**

The findings of the factor of socio-legal status highlighted although irregularity is a crucial risk factor for trafficking, it is not only undocumented migrants who are susceptible<sup>65-67,71</sup>. In both of Palumbo's studies<sup>65,66</sup> it is emphasised that EU migrants are also exposed to exploitation despite citizenship and right to work within the European Union. Papantoniou-Frangouli<sup>67</sup> similarly reported that the rights of "legal" workers are indeed the reason which provide an opportunity for trafficking, since exploitation may make workers unable to exert such protections. Changing patterns of migration have been reported in recent years. It is highlighted that the economic crisis has discouraged non-EU migrants, with more migrants, asylum seekers and refugees migrating to Europe due to situations of forced displacement<sup>66,67</sup>.

### 3.7 Tables and Graphs

Table 1 Characteristics of included literature sources

Author	Year	Title	Literature type	Location	Methodology	Domestic Work Specific	Special Issue in Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies	Identified Vulnerabilities*
Andrees, B.	2008	Forced labour and trafficking in Europe: how people are trapped in, live through and come out. Working Paper.	Report	Europe	Desk research, questionnaire, qualitative interviews			Poverty and financial difficulty Political instability, war and conflict Social situation of exclusion or discrimination Gender Debt Fear of deportation Flexibilisation Posted and seasonal workers Coercion by employer Deceived from beginning of employment Socio-legal status Complex legal and immigration entitlements Legal mechanisms focused on immigration control ** Law enforcement corruption Demand
Angeli, D.	2017	Migrant Domestic Workers and Human Trafficking in Greece: Expanding the Narrative	Journal Article	Greece	Desk research, qualitative interviews (n=16)	✓	✓	Unaware of rights and entitlements Flexibilisation Reliance on agency/ employer Restrictive immigration laws Demand Informality (DW) Not recognised as legitimate profession (DW) Family relationships (DW)

Berket, M.	2015	Labour exploitation and trafficking for labour exploitation-trends and challenges for policy-making	Journal Article	Europe	Not described			Poverty and financial difficulty Social situation of exclusion and discrimination Communication and language difficulties Unaware of rights and entitlements Posted and seasonal workers Social isolation Reliance on agency/employer Socio-legal status Global mobility and economic disparity Demand
Camargo Magalhães, B.	2017	Mind the Protection (Policy) Gap: Trafficking and Labor Exploitation in Migrant Domestic Work in Belgium	Journal Article	Belgium	Qualitative interviews (n=14), participant observation	✓	✓	Social networks Communication and language difficulties Fear of losing income and job Coercion by employer Socio-legal status Restrictive immigration laws Deficiencies in structures to monitor working conditions Hindered access to justice Diplomatic sector and au pairs (DW) Informality (DW) Socio-cultural factors (DW)
de Volder, E.	2017	Trafficking in the Domestic-Work Sector in the Netherlands: A Hidden Phenomenon	Journal Article	the Netherlands	Desk research, qualitative interviews (n=15)	✓	✓	Low level of education Communication and language difficulties Sub-contracting, outsourcing and long supply chains Social isolation Socio-legal status Demand Social care regimes (DW) Diplomatic sector and au pairs (DW) Socio-cultural factors (DW)
Dwyer, P., Lewis, H., Scullion, L., & Waite, L.	2011	Forced Labour and UK immigration Policy: Status Matters?	Report	UK	Qualitative interviews (n=18)			Low level of education Social situation of exclusion and discrimination Social networks Debt Unaware of rights and entitlements Fear of deportation Flexibilisation Social isolation

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights	2015	Severe labour exploitation: workers moving within or into the European Union. States' obligations and victims' rights	Report	EU	Desk research, qualitative interviews (n=616), case study analysis (n=217)	<p>Reliance on agency/ employer  Issues with written contract  Wages withheld  Socio-legal status  Restrictive immigration systems  Visa and residence linked to work permit  Diplomatic sector and au pairs (DW)</p> <p>Low level of education  Political, instability, war and conflict  Social situation of exclusion and discrimination  Social networks  Debt  Communication and language difficulties  Unaware of rights and entitlements  Fear of losing income and job  Sectors prone to exploitation  Seasonal and posted workers  Sub-contracting, outsourcing and long supply chains</p> <p>Reliance on agency/ employer  Issues with written contract  Not informed regarding entitlements  Wages withheld  Avoidance of transparency  Deceived from beginning of employment  Socio-legal status  Restrictive immigration laws  Visa and residence linked to work permit  Deficiencies in structures to monitor working conditions  Legal mechanisms focused on immigration control  Lack of effective investigation  Lack of resources  Hindered access to justice  Demand  Global mobility and economic disparities</p>
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Frangėž, D., & Ručman, A. B.	2017	Specific forms of human trafficking in Slovenia: overview and preventive measures	Journal Article	Slovenia	Qualitative interviews (n=14)	Poverty and financial difficulties Need to earn to support family Debt Seasonal and posted workers Social isolation Wages withheld Visa and residence linked to work permit Demand
International Trade Union Confederation, Anti-Slavery International, & Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe.	2011	Trafficking for Labour Exploitation - Tackling Group Cases	Report	Belgium, Czech Republic, UK, Finland, Sweden, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Romania	Case analysis	Poverty and financial difficulties Communication and language difficulties Fear of deportation Bogus self-employment Sub-contracting, outsourcing and long supply chains Reliance on agency/employer Socio-legal status Restrictive immigration laws Deficiencies in structures to monitor working conditions Focus on immigration control Global mobility and economic disparities
International Trade Union Confederation, Anti-Slavery International, & Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe.	2011	Trafficking for Labour Exploitation-Gender	Report	Czech Republic, Ireland, Austria, Finland, Spain	Not described	Gender Diplomatic sector and au pairs (DW)
Mahmoud, O. T., & Trebesch, C.	2010	The economics of human trafficking and labour migration: Micro-evidence from Eastern Europe	Journal Article	Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine	Household survey (n=5513)	Poverty and financial difficulties Education Need to earn to support family High emigration flow Social networks Socio-legal status Global mobility and economic disparities Demand

Murphy, C.	2013	The Enduring Vulnerability of Migrant Domestic Workers in Europe	Journal Article	Europe	Not described	Social situation of exclusion and discrimination Flexibilisation Reliance on agency/ employer Socio-legal status Restive immigration laws
Ollus, N., Jokinen, A., & Joutsen, M. (Eds.)	2013	Exploitation of Migrant Workers in Finland, Sweden, Estonia and Lithuania: Uncovering the Links Between Recruitment, Irregular Employment Practices and Labour Trafficking	Report	Finland, Sweden, Estonia and Lithuania	Literature review, case law review, qualitative interviews (n= 41), documentary analysis	Poverty and financial difficulties Low level of education Social situation of exclusion and discrimination Social networks Debt Communication and language difficulties Unaware of rights and entitlements Fear of deportation Bog self-employment Sub-contracting, outsourcing and long supply chains Social isolation Recruitment risk factors Coercion by employer Issues with written contract Deficiencies in structures to monitor working conditions Global mobility and economic disparities Demand
Palumbo, L.	2016	Trafficking and Labour Exploitation in Domestic Work and the Agricultural Sector in Italy	Report	Italy	Literature review, case law review, qualitative interviews (n= 42)	Poverty and financial difficulty Political instability, war and conflict Gender Need to earn for family members Sub-contracting, outsourcing and long supply chains Social isolation Reliance on agency/employer Restrictive immigration laws Deficiencies in structures to monitor working conditions Global mobility and economic disparity Social care regimes (DW)

Palumbo, L., & Scieurba, A.	2015	Vulnerability to Forced Labour and Trafficking: The case of Romanian women in the agricultural sector in Sicily	Journal Article	Italy	Qualitative interviews (n=20), participant observation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender</li> <li>Need to earn for family</li> <li>Posted and seasonal workers</li> <li>Sub-contracting, outsourcing and long supply chains</li> <li>Social isolation</li> <li>Reliance on agency/employer</li> <li>Restrictive immigration laws</li> <li>Visa and residence linked to work permit</li> <li>Deficiencies in structures to monitor working conditions</li> <li>Low risk of prosecution, punishment and compensation</li> <li>Law enforcement corruption</li> <li>Global mobility and economic disparity</li> <li>Demand</li> </ul>
Papantoniou-Frangouli, M.	2011	Trafficking for Labour in Greece	Report	Greece	Documentary analysis, qualitative interview		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Political instability, war and conflict</li> <li>Social situation of exclusion and discrimination</li> <li>Need to earn to support family</li> <li>Debt</li> <li>Fear of deportation</li> <li>Flexibilisation</li> <li>Posted and seasonal workers</li> <li>Sub-contracting, outsourcing and long supply chains</li> <li>Social isolation</li> <li>Coercion by employer</li> <li>Reliance on agency/employer</li> <li>Wages withheld</li> <li>Socio-legal status</li> <li>Visa and residence linked to work permit</li> <li>Legal mechanisms focus on immigration control</li> <li>Law enforcement corruption</li> <li>Global mobility and economic disparity</li> <li>Demand</li> <li>Socio-cultural factors</li> </ul>
United Nations Human Rights Office of the	2010	Rights of Migrant Domestic	Report	Europe	Not described	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender</li> <li>Communication and language difficulties</li> <li>Flexibilisation</li> </ul>

High Commissioner.		Workers in Europe				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social isolation</li> <li>Socio-legal status</li> <li>Restrictive immigration laws</li> <li>Visa and residence linked to work permit</li> <li>Social care regimes (DW)</li> <li>Diplomatic sector and au pairs (DW)</li> <li>Informality (DW)</li> <li>Socio-cultural factors (DW)</li> </ul>
Wilkinson, M.	2014	Demonising 'the other': British Government complicity in the exploitation, social exclusion and vilification of new migrant workers	Journal Article	UK	Qualitative interview findings from other studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unaware of rights and entitlements</li> <li>Fear of deportation</li> <li>Sub-contracting, outsourcing and long supply chains</li> <li>Social isolation</li> <li>Coercion by employer</li> <li>Socio-legal status</li> <li>Law enforcement corruption</li> <li>Global mobility and economic disparity</li> <li>Demand</li> </ul>
<p>*Listed in order of appearance in text of results  ** Legal mechanisms focused on immigration control rather than labour exploitation  (DW) Factors which specifically related to the sector of domestic work</p>						

Table 2 Summary of identified vulnerabilities. Number of included authors who cite vulnerability presented.

<b>Individual Level Factors</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Sub-category</b>	<b>Number of authors citing vulnerability</b>	
Prior to Migration	Push factors	Low level of education	4
		Poverty and financial difficulty	8
		Political instability, war and conflict	4
		Joblessness viewed as worse than being exploited	4
	Family Relationships	Need to support family	4
		Households in regions with greater trafficking awareness	1
	Other	Social situation of exclusion or discrimination	6
During or around the time of migration	Other	Gender	5
		High emigration flow	1
		Social networks	5
Subsequent to migration	Fear	Fear of deportation	7
		Fear of losing income and job	2
	Other	Debt	5
		Communication and language difficulties	7
		Unaware of rights and entitlements	6
<b>Number of Vulnerabilities</b>		<b>15</b>	
<b>Workplace and Employment related factors</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Sub-category</b>	<b>Number of authors citing vulnerability</b>	
Precarious situations of employment	Bogus self-employment	3	
	Posted and seasonal workers	7	

	Not being a member of a trade union	8
	Flexibilisation and informality	7
Recruitment risk factors	Rushed recruitment	1
	No opportunity to see written contract	1
	High recruitment fees	1
	Unspecified employer obligations	1
Employer factors	Coercion by employer	5
	Reliance on agency or employer	7
	No written contract or unable to understand due to language	3
	Workers not informed regarding entitlements	1
	Wages withheld	4
	Avoidance of transparency and traceability	1
	Deceived from beginning of employment	1
Other	Sectors prone to severe labour exploitation	1
	Sub-contracting, outsourcing and long supply chains	7
	Social isolation	11
<b>Number of Vulnerabilities</b>		<b>18</b>
<b>Legal and Institutional Factors at the National and Regional Level</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Sub-category</b>	<b>Number of authors citing vulnerability</b>
Legal and immigration system	Socio legal status	12
	Strict immigration law	9
	Complex legal and immigration entitlements	2
	Residence or visa linked to work permits or employer	6
Law enforcement and investigation	Deficiencies in structures to monitor working conditions	5

	Lack of effective investigation	2
	Low risk of prosecution/ punishment/ compensation to workers	2
	Legal mechanisms focused on immigration control*	4
	Law enforcement corruption	3
	Lack of sufficient resources	2
	Hindered access to justice	2
<b>Number of Vulnerabilities</b>		<b>11</b>
<b>Macro level factors</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Sub-category</b>	<b>Number of authors citing vulnerability</b>
	Global mobility and economic disparities	9
	Demand	10
<b>Number of Vulnerabilities</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>Total Number of Vulnerabilities</b>		<b>46</b>
*Legal mechanisms focused on immigration control rather than labour exploitation		

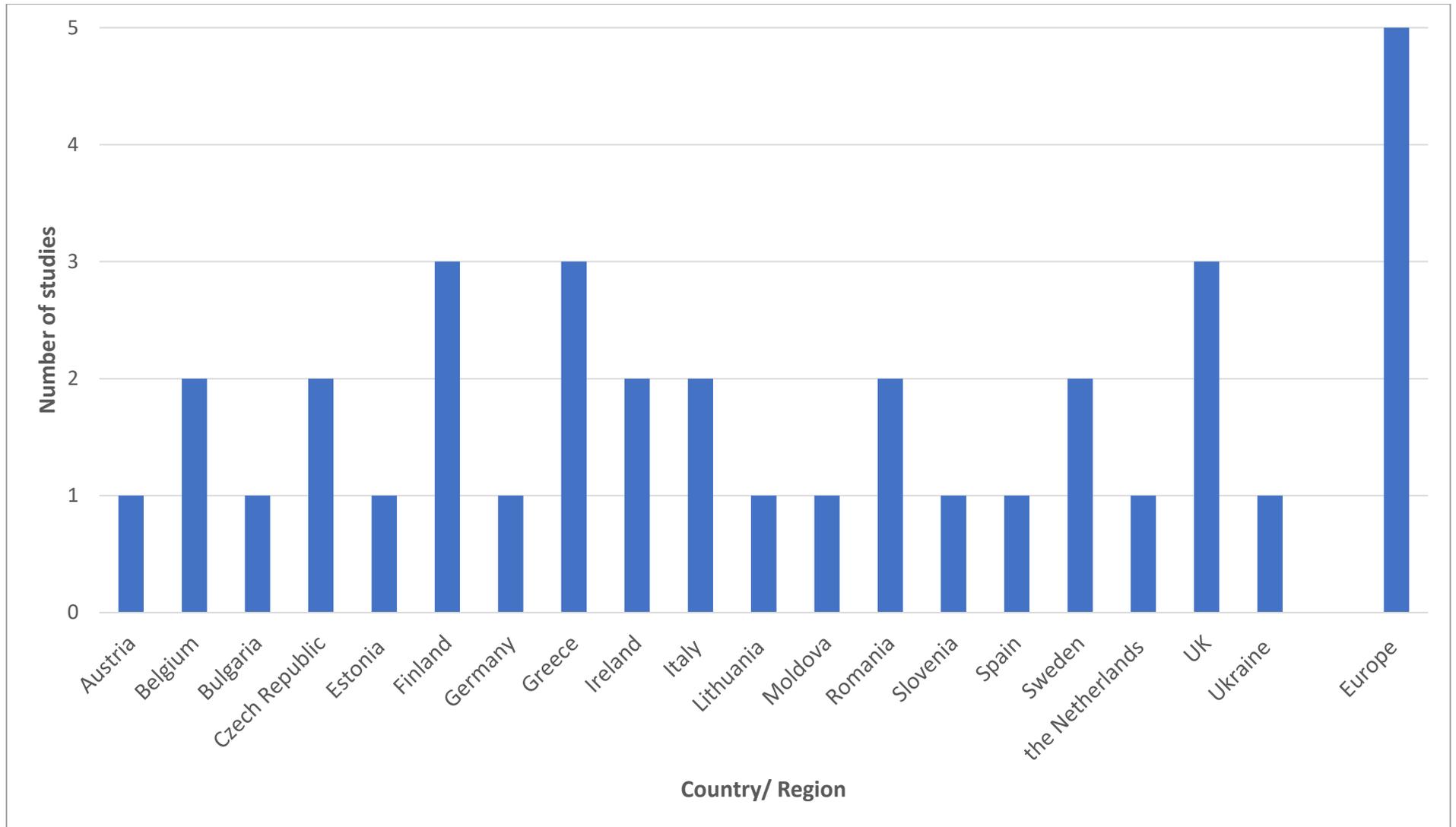


Figure 1 Country Representation. Numbers of studies conducted in part or exclusively in the listed countries and region

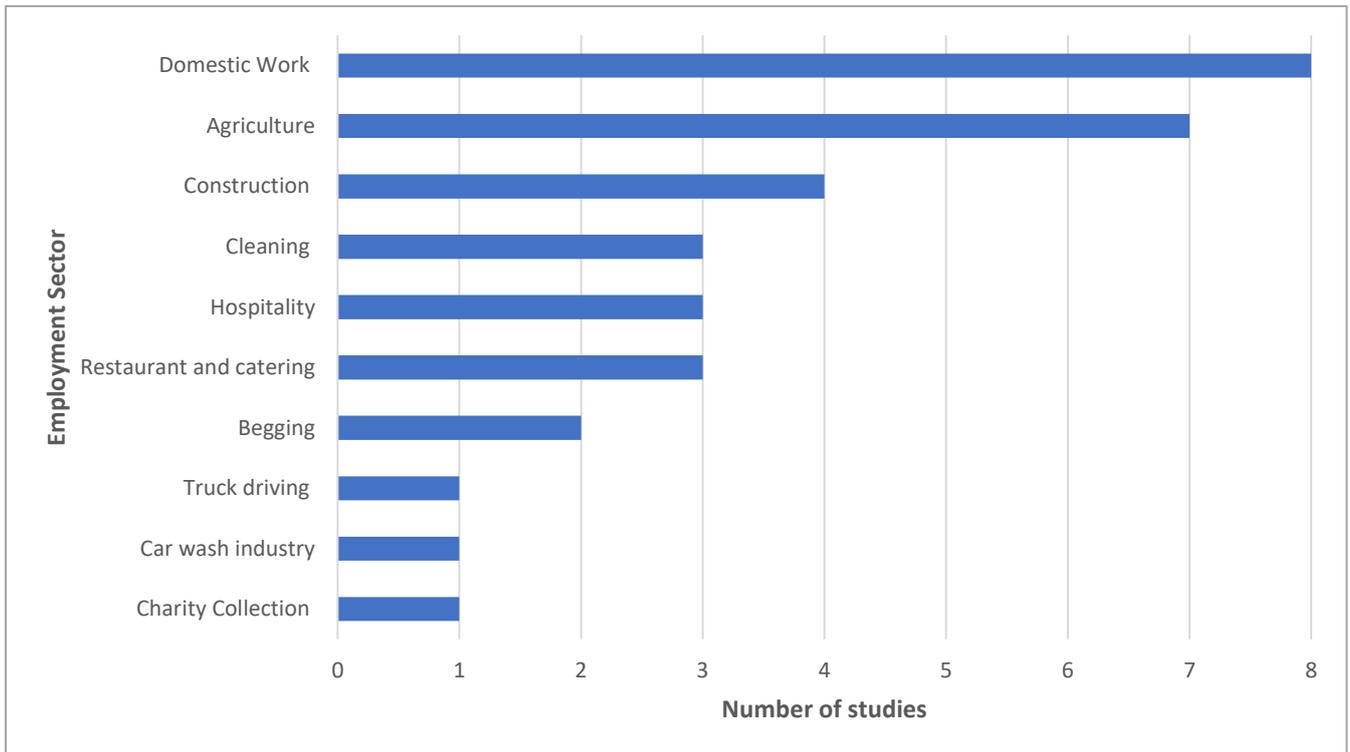


Figure 2 Number of studies which cite sectors identified with an elevated risk of trafficking

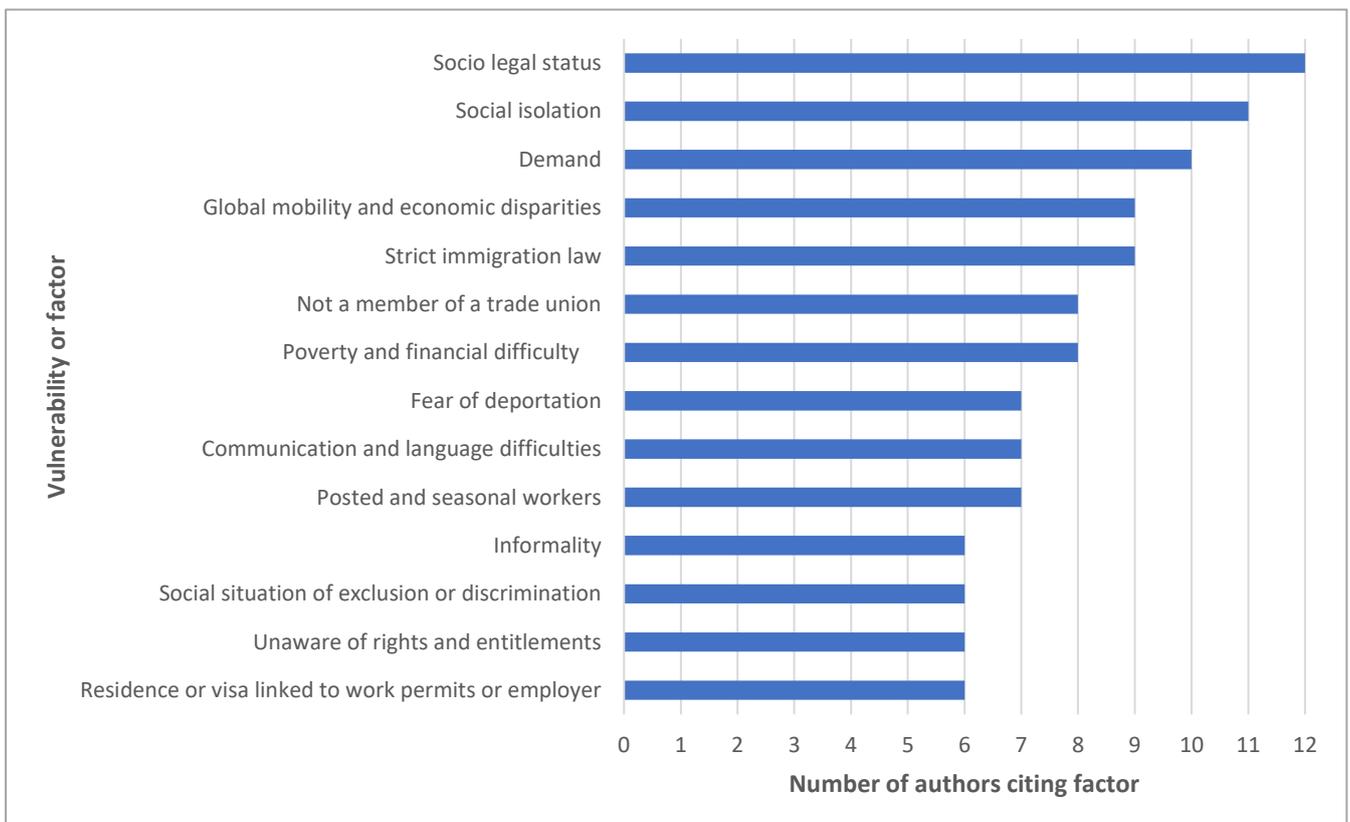


Figure 3 Number of studies which cite identified vulnerability (>n= 6)

## 4. Discussion

A total of 46 separate vulnerabilities were identified as influencing labour trafficking risk of migrants. Thematic analysis of the 18 studies revealed four broad themes which were individual level factors, workplace and employment related factors, legal and institutional factors at the national and regional level and macro level factors. The most commonly identified vulnerabilities were socio-legal status, social isolation, demand, global mobility and economic disparities, strict immigration laws, absence of trade union membership, poverty and financial difficulty, fear of deportation, communication and language difficulties and temporary and posted and seasonal workers.

Of the 18 included studies, exactly half were peer reviewed journal articles whilst the other half were grey literature reports. Nineteen countries in Europe were represented in the review, with studies conducted in either 1 or more than 1 of the following countries; Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands, the UK and Ukraine.

Sectors which were most commonly noted as harbouring an elevated risk of labour trafficking were domestic work, agriculture, construction, cleaning, hospitality and catering. Four of the included studies focused exclusively on domestic work<sup>58,59,63,74</sup> and the following vulnerabilities were noted specific to this sector; social care regimes, domestic workers in diplomatic households and au pairs, live-in workers, socio-cultural factors, flexibility, demand and relationship with family. Both EU and non-EU migrants were found to be at risk of labour trafficking and results also highlighted that it is not only irregular migrants who exhibit vulnerability to exploitation and trafficking.

In drawing valid conclusions regarding the factors which influence migrant vulnerability to labour trafficking in Europe, an important facet which should be underscored is that it is not simply one vulnerability which may result in a situation of labour trafficking. Five of the included authors make specific reference to this salient finding<sup>57,60,61,65,66</sup>. It is in fact a multi-faceted position of vulnerability<sup>57</sup>, comprised by the interaction of various influences which in reality creates vulnerability of migrant workers.

Although 9 of the 18 included studies were conducted exclusively in only one European country, multiple assertions suggest that the findings are largely generalisable across Europe. Firstly, only 12 of the 46 vulnerability subcategories were identified by 1 author

despite the heterogeneity of the research methodologies, focus of studies, locations and employment sectors of the included literature. Ollus *et al.* and Mahmoud *et al.*<sup>64,68</sup> also both specifically refer to consistency of findings across the multiple and different country locations. However, the sectors where exploitation and trafficking risk are found to be elevated and commonly reported may change slightly from one European country to another. For example, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights's<sup>61</sup> report identifies that sectors such as agriculture which are found to be problematic for migrant labour trafficking in Poland and Italy were not found to be as prominently associated with trafficking in Germany. However, despite the usefulness of this finding, it is also crucial to consider that despite some sectors being identified at elevated risk of trafficking that the phenomena is not restricted to particular sectors but may exist anywhere<sup>61</sup>.

Of the 11 studies which used qualitative interviews, 6 studies used empirical data from either domestic workers or victims of labour trafficking<sup>57,58,63-66</sup>. Therefore, one third of the included studies used empirical evidence for their research. This is encouraging considering a lack of empirical evidence for a significant proportion of trafficking research conducted in Western Europe which has previously been noted<sup>76</sup>. However, 5 of the sources used for the review did not state their methodology. There is a need to ensure that the utility of any published literature in this field is enhanced and as such it is important to note the lack of stated methodologies.

Factors which related to the legal and immigration system were socio-legal status, restrictive immigration laws, complex legal and immigration entitlements and visa and residence being linked to employment are collectively mentioned by a significant 17 of the 18 studies<sup>57-63,65,67-74</sup>. The findings of this review regarding the effect of restrictive immigration systems for migrants are also corroborated by other authors. As early as 2000, Koser *et al.*<sup>77</sup> asserted that an increasing proportion of asylum seekers were turning to traffickers in order to overcome restrictive immigration and asylum policies and found that a direct link existed between asylum policies, vulnerability and trafficking. Similarly, and also in the year 2000, Morrison *et al.*<sup>78</sup> asserted that European policy on asylum not only risked exacerbating trafficking but also risked ending the fundamental right to claim asylum. The article also reports that the overwhelming tendency of European states to prevent the entry of asylum seekers and by providing few legal opportunities to access Europe at all, asylum policy forced refugees to use illegal means to enter Europe, consequently developing both sophisticated smuggling and trafficking networks<sup>78</sup>. The restrictive nature of European immigration systems since the publication of both these papers seems only to have developed further. Dwyer *et al.*<sup>60</sup> identifies stricter national

immigration systems throughout the EU and the United Nations report on domestic workers also notes an, “overwhelmingly restrictive approach”<sup>74</sup> p. 10.

Considering the evidence in this review and the above discussed findings of other academics which highlights that restrictive immigration regimes create a detrimental employment environment for many migrants, it does beg the question why states continue to maintain such systems. The answer may lie in the fact that national immigration policies have typically been viewed as critical in maintaining state sovereignty and states have been previously cautious in absolving their policy monopoly<sup>79</sup>.

Four authors recognised the role of political instability, war and conflict in affecting labour trafficking risk of migrants in Europe<sup>57,61,66,67</sup>. Levels of global displacement stand at the highest recorded since the conclusion of World War II<sup>27</sup>. Between the years of 2013 to 2014 and 2014 to 2015, respective increases of 54% and 48% were observed in the numbers of new asylum applications worldwide<sup>27</sup>. Considering this, the factor appears somewhat under-represented with only 4 of the 18 studies mentioning political instability, war and conflict as influencing both push factors for migration and risk of labour trafficking. However, this may not yet be adequately reflected in current literature due to the recent nature of what has been coined “the European Refugee crisis” and may be increasingly reflected in literature soon to be published.

Trafficking risks in mothers with dependent children are explored by Palumbo *et al.*<sup>65</sup>, the only study in the 18 sources to focus in this specific area. This review identified female gender and the need to earn for family members as vulnerability factors for labour trafficking. Palumbo *et al.*<sup>65</sup> also finds that vulnerability to trafficking is heightened by family responsibility, particularly in mothers. These findings along with those of this review may suggest that further research in this area may be useful. Particularly, exploring trafficking risks in pregnant women, an issue which was not mentioned by any review literature maybe warranted.

One important finding of the review is in fact vulnerabilities which have not been recognised by any of the included authors. Two of these such vulnerabilities are the impact of mental health and environmental factors. The impact of mental health is rarely mentioned within the review literature despite an increased burden of mental health disorders recognised in populations of conflict driven forcibly displaced persons<sup>80,81</sup> and represents a potential gap in the literature. Moreover, environmental factors such as drought, flood and natural disasters are not reported as factors which either contribute to push factors for migration

or which influence trafficking even though such associations have been made<sup>82</sup>. This should form an area for future research considering the huge scale of climate induced displacement which has been estimated during this century<sup>82</sup>.

Although this review focuses on vulnerabilities of migrants in Europe to labour trafficking, it is crucial to acknowledge that this should not perpetuate the portrayal of migrants as inherently vulnerable and weak. One such example is highlighted in research conducted by the ILO which finds that some migrants in Turkey were selectively hired due to an ability to speak more languages. Although this review finds that communication and language difficulties can contribute to risk to labour trafficking this factor certainly does not pertain to all migrants. Similarly, it should not be assumed that the other vulnerabilities highlighted in this report universally apply to all migrants in Europe.

The phenomena of human trafficking is inextricably related to globalisation<sup>83</sup>. In this review, the effects of globalisation on the identified factors are clear to see, both in the macro level factors but also the influence of such elements on the individual level factors. Globalisation has facilitated an increasingly interconnected world through technological advances, improved communication and increased ease of global transportation, conditions under which trafficking prospers<sup>83</sup>. Economic liberalism which has accompanied globalisation has integrated an increasing proportion of the global workforce into capitalist labour markets and facilitated the development of a globalised labour market in which workers are increasingly mobile<sup>83,84</sup>. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights<sup>61</sup> also notes that the growth of cross border recruitment and employment services has been facilitated by the internet and has led to a sophisticated recruitment industry, one in which employers may take advantage of the vulnerabilities of migrants when seeking employment abroad.

The concept of neoliberalism certainly should not be dismissed. There is an assertion amongst some academics that the process of globalisation and neoliberalism are in fact synonymous, with the process of globalisation seen as liberalisation<sup>85</sup>. Commodification within a neoliberal ideology and more specifically commodification of human labour has been argued as perpetuating the perception of humans themselves as commodities<sup>83</sup>. A concept which is inherent in modern slavery, a term which is often used interchangeably for trafficking in persons<sup>86</sup>. Trafficking risk as a result of neoliberal ideology is recognised by Wilkinson<sup>70</sup>, who reports that labour market deregulation and liberalisation are important factors which underline vulnerability.

## 4.1 Limitations and Recommendations for future research

It was attempted that the review conducted was as comprehensive as possible within the given timeframe. This included selection of literature across a ten-year timeframe, a systematic search strategy, a full review of vulnerabilities in both EU and non-EU migrants across multiple employment sectors and inclusion of grey literature. However, the limited timeframe dictated that this review could not be exhaustive. The noted limitations include a limited quality assessment, the inclusion of 5 studies with no stated methodology, 3 of the 18 studies from one special issue of the Journal for Refugee and Immigrant studies and exclusion of sources of literature from books.

Few sources included in the review differentiated vulnerability factors which were specific for different migrant groups. Consequently, this limitation meant it was not possible to specify if vulnerabilities identified were associated with particular groups of migrant workers. This should form a basis for future research and ultimately may aid tailoring of anti-trafficking measures specifically for migrants at greatest risk.

This review advocates that future labour trafficking research should employ the labour approach to human trafficking<sup>69</sup>. The approach acknowledges important push and pull factors for labour migration, those that may manifest in migrant's exposure to exploitative working conditions abroad and is a proponent that anti-trafficking efforts must address the root causes of forced labour and trafficking. The labour approach specifically highlights the myriad of contributing factors which may result in a situation of trafficking and underlines the aim of this review. Furthermore, there is an unmet need to understand the dynamics of international migration as well as trafficking in order to tackle these root causes. Hence, future research should consider and assess structural factors including economic disparities as part of the macro level factors which are integral to trafficking vulnerability<sup>87</sup>.

Within the included review sources, little significance was afforded to male gender as a vulnerability factor and proportionally female based discourse dominated the sources. This is also reflected across trafficking research more broadly<sup>12,88,89</sup>. Several reasons underline the underrepresentation of trafficking in males. Firstly, as was also found to be a reported vulnerability in this research males especially maybe targeted as irregular migrants without recognition of trafficking<sup>88</sup>. Secondly, it is reported that men are less likely to be recognised as being trafficked even where females have been recognised in the same circumstances. This may be an implication of the profiling of trafficked persons as being exclusively females due to the large proportion of females trafficked for sexual exploitation which has

consequently led to the portrayal of a trafficked person as being inherently female<sup>12,88</sup>. Recognising that 70% of migrants arriving in Europe in 2015 were male<sup>90</sup>, this is a factor which should be given increasing priority in future research.

Specific research should attempt to resolve vulnerability factors where consensus was not reached regarding harm inducing or reducing effect. These factors which were identified by this review are; the effect of poverty specifically the role of absolute and relative poverty, the role of social networks, education and gender. It is also important that future research focuses on potential literature gaps identified in this review, specifically vulnerabilities related to mental health status, environmental factors, mothers and pregnant women, males and political instability and conflict.

## Conclusion

Human trafficking is inextricably related to globalisation, with the emergence of labour trafficking of migrants in Europe a clear manifestation of the dark side of this phenomenon. This literature review identified 46 separate vulnerabilities which effect risk to labour trafficking of migrants in the European Region. Four broad themes encompass these vulnerabilities which are individual level factors, workplace and employment related factors, legal and institutional factors at the national and regional level and macro level factors. The most commonly identified vulnerabilities were socio-legal status, social isolation, demand, global mobility and economic disparities, strict immigration laws, absence of trade union membership, poverty and financial difficulty, fear of deportation, communication and language difficulties and temporary and being a posted or seasonal worker. Employment sectors which were most commonly noted as harbouring an elevated risk of labour trafficking were domestic work, agriculture, construction, cleaning, hospitality and catering.

Literature supported that findings are largely generalisable across the European region. However, the findings of this review should not be used to portray migrants as inherently vulnerable and vulnerabilities highlighted in this report do not universally apply to all migrants in Europe.

Future labour trafficking research should employ the labour approach to human trafficking, which is a proponent that anti-trafficking efforts must address the root causes of forced labour. This must include the assessment of structural factors as part of the macro level which are found here to be integral to the understanding of trafficking vulnerability.

Future research should set out to resolve vulnerability factors where consensus was not reached regarding directional and exact effects. These factors are; the effect of poverty specifically the role of absolute and relative poverty, the role of social networks, education and gender. Recommendations for future research also include the need for focus on potential literature gaps identified in this review, specifically vulnerabilities related to mental health status, mothers and pregnant women, the need for more research in males, political instability and conflict and climate induced environmental factors. Factors which have been inadequately explored and predicted to have considerable effects on migration in coming years.

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