

**Arbeit und  
Leben**

BERLIN-  
BRANDENBURG

SERVICE  
STELLE

gegen

Arbeitsausbeutung  
Zwangsarbeit &  
Menschenhandel

# Service Centre against Labour Exploitation, Forced Labour and Human Trafficking

Supporting Migrants' integration into the Labour Market

Eliane Friess

24.02.2026, Berlin

# Service Centre against Forced Labour

Who we are & what we do



- Founded in 2017
- Funded by Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs, operated by Arbeit und Leben Berlin-Brandenburg, located in Berlin, but active nationwide
  - Arbeit und Leben (“Work and Life”) is the joint educational organisation of the German Trade Union Confederation (DGB) and adult education centres.
- **Service Centre supports all relevant actors in a mission to strengthen and expand public sector cooperation structures to address labour exploitation and forced labour**

# Service Centre against Forced Labour

Who we are & what we do



## Focus

- Criminally relevant labour exploitation under German criminal law
- Identified victims are entitled to counselling, safe accommodation, and financial support under German law.

## Sectors Affected

- Construction, hospitality, care, cleaning, logistics, agriculture,

## Vulnerable Groups

- Migrants from EU and third countries
- Structural risks (language barriers, insecure status, dependency)

## Key Challenges

- Victims rarely identified
- Limited access to protection and support
- Large hidden figure: Significant gap between official investigations and actual scale

# Service Centre against Forced Labour

Who we are & what we do



## → Our activities

- Access to information
- Research and documentation
- Training and raising awareness
- Networks and exchange

# Access to information

## → Access to information for labour migrants

Ukrainisch	Russisch	Arabisch	Vietnamesisch	Bulgarisch	Rumänisch	Deutsch	Englisch	<p><b>ARE YOU HAVING PROBLEMS AT WORK?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do you get little or no money for your work? &gt; In Germany, everyone currently gets at least 12 € gross per hour!</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do you have debts with your employer?</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can you move freely? Or do you live with your employer?</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is your work in Germany different from what you were told before?</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are you afraid of your employer? Are you being pressured?</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Do you have no papers and are you being blackmailed?</li><li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Have your passport or other important documents been taken away from you?</li></ul> <p><b>This can be exploitation!</b></p> 	<p><b>YOU HAVE RIGHTS!</b></p> <p>Victims of exploitation and coercion at work have special rights in Germany.</p> <p><b>Housing</b> You have the right to <b>safe housing</b>. There you can rest and be away from your employer. This includes food and access to a doctor.</p> <p><b>Advice</b> You have the right to confidential, free advice in your language. You will learn more about your rights. After that, you can decide what to do next!</p> <p><b>Residence</b> You have the right to stay in Germany for three months. During this time, you get money and food, access to doctors and accommodation. You can recover. Then you can decide if you want to testify at the police or not!</p> 	<p><b>HERE YOU CAN FIND HELP:</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; offer free advice on your rights, regardless of your origin, your residence title and whether you have a work permit!</li><li>&gt; are independent, anonymous and confidential!</li><li>&gt; help you to get accommodation, medical care and benefits for living.</li><li>&gt; support you in your decisions, whether you want to go to the police or not.</li><li>&gt; can support you in returning home.</li><li>&gt; can help you get the money you need to work.</li></ul>
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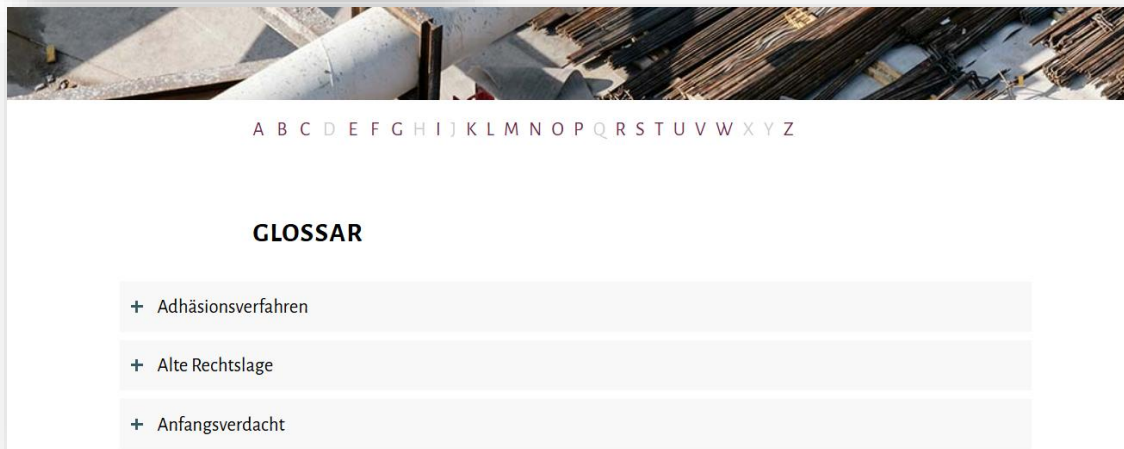
13  
languages

# Access to information



→ **Access to information** for authorities and other stakeholders:

- **Database** on specialized counselling services
- **Overview** of existing structures in federal states
- Glossary of legal terms related to the field of labour exploitation



# Research and documentation

## Sector specific forms of exploitation



*Sector analysis – parcel services and meat processing (2020)*



*Sector analysis – Agricultural seasonal work and domestic care (2022)*



*Sector analysis – Cleaning and road transport (2024)*

# Research and documentation

## Legal reports

### Die Bedenk- und Stabilisierungsfrist für potentielle Opfer von Menschenhandel und Arbeitsausbeutung gem. § 59 Absatz 7 AufenthG

Rechtsgutachten

Autoren: Prof. Dr. Alexander Graser / Dr. Christoph Lindner

*Legal opinion on the reflection and stabilization period (2021)*

Bartsch | Renzikowski | Labarta Greven | Kubicki

### Straffreiheit für Straftaten von Opfern des Menschenhandels?

Zur Umsetzung des Non-Punishment-Prinzips  
in Recht und Praxis

*Legal opinion on the principle of non-punishment (2024)*

# Training and Raising Awareness

- Provision of **(on- and offline) training** on legal frameworks, identification of victims, victims' rights etc. for relevant actors, such as law enforcement agencies, occupational health and safety authorities, state prosecutors, migration authorities, counselling centres etc.

# Training and Raising Awareness

- **Customs Authority („Fiscal Control Illicit Work“, FKS)** responsible for detecting and combating illegal employment, undeclared work, but mandate to investigate labour exploitation since 2019
  - In coordination with General Customs Directorate: Trainings (only) for newly appointed victim protection coordinators until 2023
  - Learning: All customs officers must undergo training, idea for web-based learning tool
  - 2024: **E-Learning-Tool** available for FKS officers, over 3000 officers trained (09/25)

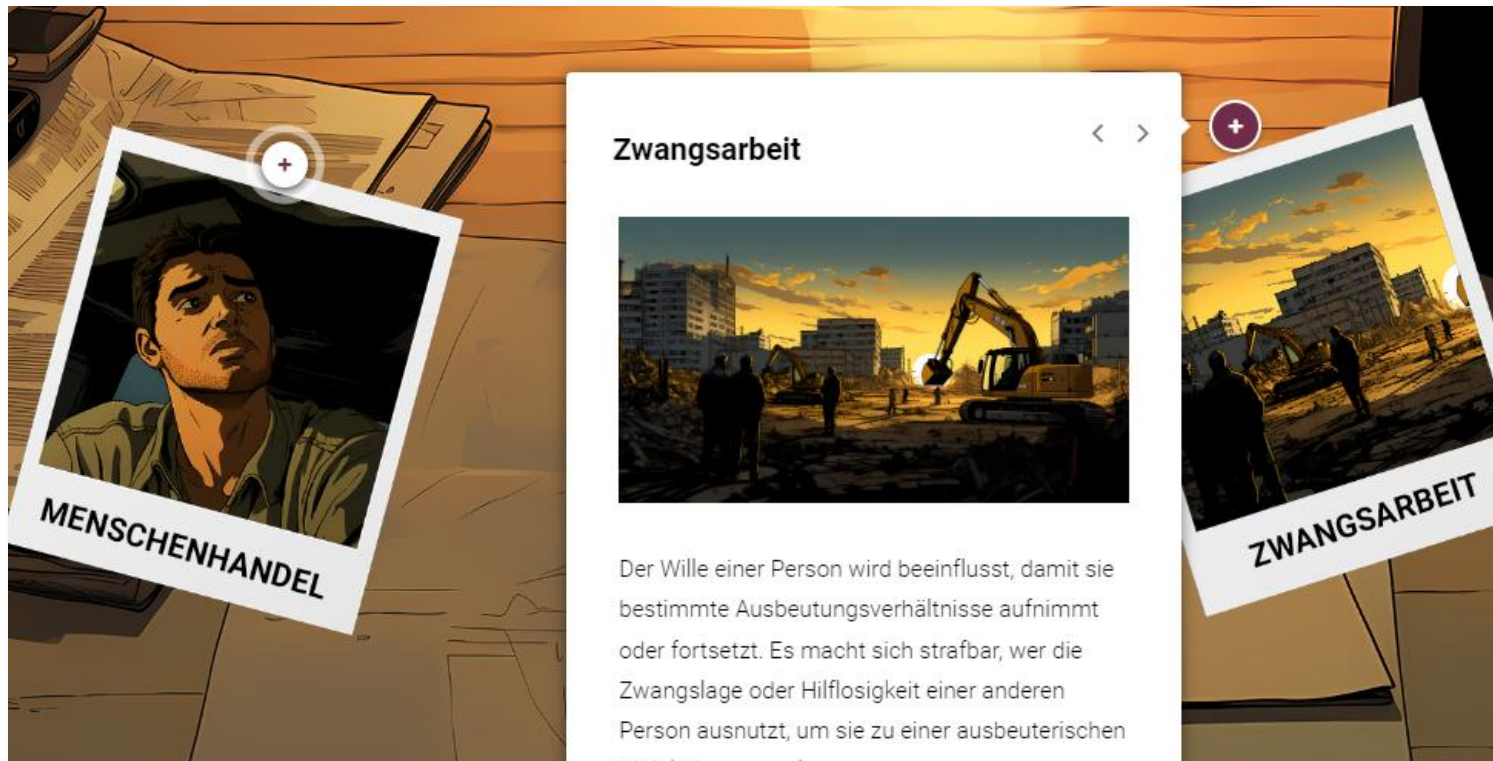
# E-Learning-Tool for the Customs Authority (FKS / Zoll)

- Easily accessible tool for larger target groups
- Flexibility and individual learning pace
- Many options for interactive learning
- Content conveyed through text, videos, images, dialogue, practical exercises



*Welcome to the E-Learning-Tool "Labour exploitation, Forced Labour and Human Trafficking – Identifying and Reacting"*

# E-Learning-Tool for the Customs Authority (FKS / Zoll)

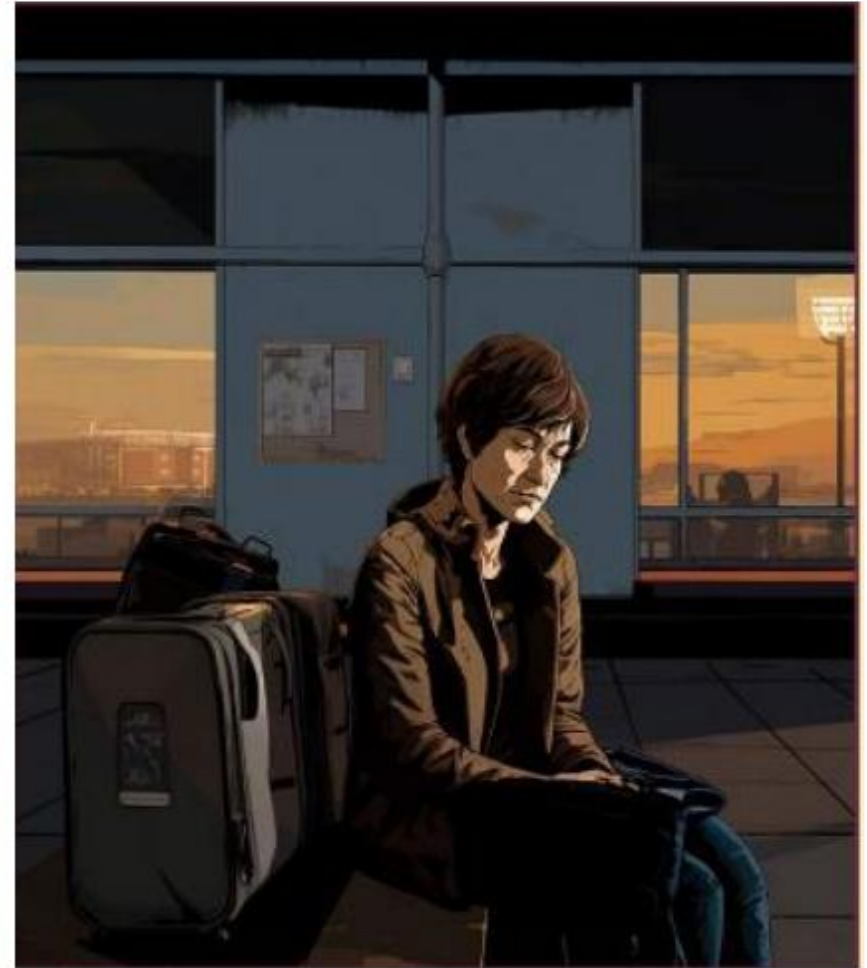


*Click-to-Open: Introductory definitions of Labour Exploitation, Forced Labour and Human Trafficking*



3





# E-Learning-Tool for the Customs Authority (FKS / Zoll)

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Valeria, 24-hour  
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Alessio,  
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gastronomy

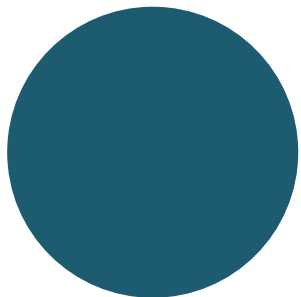


Thuy, nail studio



# Training and Raising Awareness

- **Trainings for companies** (corporate responsibility framework)
  - Pilot training courses for selected sectors (construction sector 2025)
  - Aim: raise awareness and enable foremen/project managers to identify potential victim and initiate first complaint mechanisms for workers
- 2026: (customized) **E-Learning Tool available for federal and state police officers**



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