



**UNLOCKING THE DOOR TO JUSTICE:  
DOMESTIC WORKERS IN DIPLOMAT'S HOUSEHOLDS**

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2012/2013



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*To Stefan.*





## **Acknowledgement**

I'm thanking my Supervisor, Göran Melander, for his thoughts and guidance throughout this thesis writing. Our meetings have always been inspiring to me.

Special thanks to my interview partners Wolfgang Spadinger and Erik Karlsson for sharing their knowledge and time.

To Soroptimist International Österreichische Union for the generous scholarship and supporting my dreams.

I want to thank Jon for proof reading my thesis. All remaining errors are mine.

I'm thanking Stefan, for putting things in perspective, for encouraging me, and for paying the big telephone bill.

And finally but immensely my parents, Mary and Johny. For your love and support.

Thank you!

## **Abstract**

Domestic workers who are employed in diplomats' households face a huge challenge when their rights are violated. Due to the immunity of their employers, domestic workers have limited access to courts. This research study addresses the gap of legal protection of domestic workers employed by diplomats in European countries and examines the role of receiving States in their capacity of hosting foreign diplomats. The study is based on a broad literature review and is complemented by two expert interviews with representatives of Ministries of Foreign Affairs in Austria and Sweden. Furthermore, a legal analysis of jurisprudence of national courts as well as the European Court of Human Rights is conducted. The findings reveal that receiving States have a positive obligation under international human rights law to offer effective protection to domestic workers employed by diplomats. The interviews in Austria and Sweden have shown an increasing awareness for the situation of domestic workers and political will to prevent rights violations. The study contributes with its collection of primary data on the procedural framework of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Austria and Sweden. It shall serve as a guideline for discussions and future research studies but also give practical recommendations to Protocol Departments.

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