



Immigrant
Council of
Ireland

ASSISTING TRAFFICKED WOMEN

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Asylum, Migration and
Integration Fund*



FRAMEWORK

Peer-to-Peer Mentoring

provided by survivors of human trafficking

The ASSIST project is committed to supporting the integration of third country national female victims of trafficking. The project focuses on developing best practice approaches to gender-specific services provision that is geared towards the integration of trafficked women recovering from sexual exploitation and abuses. For the purposes of achieving maximum effect, the project will explore the involvement of survivors in the delivery of integration supports to trafficked women.

This document outlines some theoretical justification and practical guidance developed by the Immigrant Copuncil of Ireland and endorsed by the project partners that covers the following areas: theoretical justification, selection, recruitment, mentoring approach, sample contracts and training materials. It is intended as a Framework on Peer-to-peer mentoring assisting organisations in the participating EU Member States.

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1.Theoretical justification of Peer-to-Peer mentoring.

The theoretical base for this pilot project is developed on the basis of the studies and progress reports produced/guided by the European Commission and in particular the “Study on the Gender dimension of trafficking in Humna beings” (Walby, S. et al, 2016), the “Study on comprehensive policy review of antitrafficking projects funded by the European Commission”, the report “Gender-specific measures in anti-trafficking actions” (EIGE, 2018) alongside its evidencing study “Protecting victims: an anlysis of the anti-trafficking directive from the perspective of a victim of gender-based violence” (Yonkova, N. et al., 2017).

According to Walby et al. (2016), involving survivors in the delivery of services to trafficked women provides positive role models and helps victims of trafficking resist stigmatisation. Very importantly it support changes in the perception of the victims of themselves and how they believe they are seen by others. At the same time, supports delivered directly by survivors can strengthen the resistance of victims (Bjerkan and Dyrliid 2006) and prevent re-trafficking or the return to prostitution. Furthermore, some experts recommend the establishments of organisations. So for example, Wilson et al. 2015 maintains that such supports can effectively facilitate interventions which are timely and non-judgemental, and promote trust-building with victims. O’Brien et al. (2013) also propose that involvement of survivors themselves in services will be beneficial.

Kelly and Dubois (2008) consider that specific services for trafficked women are necessary in addition to the conventional and more established women’s support services after sexual violence, due to the fact that they more often than not involve survivors, among other advantages. Walby et al. (2016) presents an example with the Diogel project in Wales, which delivers for trafficked women person-centred information, befriending, peer support, recreation, practical assistance including finance, action planning, education and training.

Services mirroring the coercive and exploitative tactics of crminals, in highly gendered crimes, are deemed to fail affected women. Caneppele and Mancuso (2013) refer the term ‘rescuing industry’ to Immigrant Council of Ireland **AMIF-2017-AG-INTE-821581**

particularly describe religious-based support services, favouring victims who are passive and adhere to the ethos of the service provider. This type of patriarchal rescuing disempowers trafficked women, in terms of access to rights and successful integration:

[W]ithout the inclusion of peer support by survivors themselves in services, there are barriers to human rights and justice in policy as well as successful reintegration in practice. (Walby et al., 2016)

Many authors discuss the invaluable expertise that can be acquired only through experience, and respectively the silencing of essential voices by not utilising the unique expertise survivors have. In cases of young victims of trafficking recovering from sexual exploitation, the peer-to-peer support and the positive role model involvement is of central importance. Hickie and Roe-Sepowitz (2014) attribute the essential involvement of survivors in these cases to the need to remove barriers to safe decision making and attachment. The authors recommend this peer-based intervention as suitable for young people recovering from other types of sexual abuse. In analysis the importance of the PoppY project in the UK, Walby et al. (2016) flags the role of peer support to the planning of future lives of trafficked women:

[I]t crucially provides role models, non-judgemental understanding and first language support for women by women who have experienced similar barriers in exiting trafficking and prostitution and in gaining access to justice.

Cultural mediation provided by the involvement of survivors could be used as a means of securing the informed consent to any necessary treatments. For example, Yonkova et al. (2016) maintain that involvement of survivors strengthens the basis and validity of obtaining informed consent from trafficked women, to services and other interventions:

The provision for informed and consent-based assistance aids the recovery process of victims of gender based violence, whose ability to choose has been severely undermined as part of their victimisation. This right is important and could be more efficiently implemented by the involvement of survivors.

Due to the existing high level of mistrust amongst victims of trafficking, the involvement of victim survivors in the provision of services represents a favoured element of delivering gender-specific services to trafficking victims.

In conclusion, the involvement of survivors has been mooted as a means of enhancing the effectiveness of integration services and as such it is of central importance to the current project.

2. Selecting mentors

The partners agreed on the following selection criteria for the potential mentors/survivors involved in the pilots:

1. To be a woman
2. Former victim of trafficking involving sexual exploitation
3. Third Country National (TCN)

- a. Alternatively and only as an exception, the tutor could be an EU female victim of trafficking for sexual exploitation
4. To no longer be involved in procedures for identification
5. To no longer be actively involved in any investigation linked to trafficking
6. To no longer feel exposed to any risks, linked to the trafficking crime or otherwise
7. To have a secure immigration status for herself and for any dependent family members
8. To be integrated into the host society in the respective EU Member State
 - a. Can be in receipt of state assistance or can be living independently, without State support.
 - b. To include women working or studying/training and/or parenting minor children
9. To be emotionally and psychologically well
10. To be willing and available to offer tutoring to victims of trafficking
11. To be empathetic
12. To be a good communicator and to have the ability to listen
13. Preferably, former service user of the partner organisation will be approached
14. Preferably, the potential tutor would no longer be actively dependent on services from the partner organisation, with a view to ensuring unquestionable commitment

3. Recruiting mentors

The following position was agreed by the Assist partners with respect to the recruitment procedure for mentors survivors:

1. Potential suitable mentors will be approached through network service providers and the role of the mentor will be on an agreed document between mentor and the partner organisations
2. The Protocol needs to outline a clear framework including:
 - a. informed consent (including consent form)
 - b. training scope and duration (specifying time commitment)
 - c. delivery of supervised sessions (no of sessions, time commitment)

- d. communication rules between the tutor and the survivor
 - e. privacy and confidentiality
3. If child care is needed for the period of training and subsequent tutoring sessions, it will be covered.

1. Mentoring approach

The Assist partners adopted the following approach to involving survivors /mentors in the delivery of peer-to-peer support to trafficked women assisted through the project.

1. The structure of the peer- to-peer support training programme will be based on training materials developed by the Assist project partners within the respective national context of the EU Member State .
2. Training materials' suggested scope:
 - a. An overview of human trafficking as a crime and as a form of violence against women,
 - b. trafficked victims' rights, focusing on trafficked women's special rights
 - c. Medium/long term issues arising for trafficked women post identification avenues for integration for victims of trafficking in human beings.
 - d. cultural awareness
3. Training to be delivered to mentors by the partner organisation
4. Consent forms for victims agreeing to the peer-to peer sessions
5. The mentoring sessions to be held on face-to-face basis
6. Mentors have to participate in two mentoring sessions with a victim at the minimum (recommended work with at least two victims)
7. Following the mentorship programme an evaluation to be made by both mentor and survivor.

4. Contracting Mentors – sample materials

4.1. Sample introductory letter and contract

Dear [insert name of proposed Peer-support provider],

Thank you for considering getting involved in this project to provide peer support to trafficked migrant women. You will be one of two peer supporters engaged to provide peer support sessions. Your experience and expertise is important to us. We hope that with your help we will be able to improve assistance to migrant women who are trafficked for sexual exploitation. We believe you will be able to detect needs and issues for these women in addition to what we have identified during meetings with our clients.

There are three stages to this project: training, peer support meetings and developing information materials. There is also an option to undertake public speaking training.

The first stage of the project is training. You would be asked to commit to 2 training sessions. This is aimed to provide you with a formal knowledge on human trafficking and assistance to victims that could be relevant to women trafficked for sexual exploitation. We are aware that you already have knowledge based on your own experience and this will be very useful. The training will focus on how best to treat victims of trafficking with dignity and respect as this is a vital part of the project,

The second stage of the project is peer to peer support meeting. This will involve at least two (and maximum four) one-hour sessions with you and women victims of trafficking. The support meetings will focus on their experience of accessing services, what they believe they need be a free conversation in which you will answer any questions they may have to which you know the answer and any useful information you consider relevant. We will appreciate your views on how best to organise and structure the conversations during these meetings. Afterwards, we will seek your feedback from these meetings so that we are aware of the issues and concerns raised by women who are currently accessing supports for victims of trafficking.

Your third stage of the project will be to meet with us and review an information booklet for trafficked women that is prepared and designed to be accessible and useful to women victims of trafficking.

If you need child care, in order to participate, you can let us know and we will try to organise assistance in this regard.

TIME OF ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PROJECT

Approximately 8 working days in the period March to December 2020.

WHAT DOES THE WORK INVOLVE

The work comprises 4 stages and the final fourth stage is optional. These are as follow:

Stage 1 (March-April 2020, 1 day in total)

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- Read and sign the informed consent document below this information leaflet.
- Attend 2 training sessions in order to act as a Peer-supporter. In the time and date of these sessions will be agreed with regard to your availability. These sessions will involve the trainer, you and the other peer supporter. The recommended duration of the session is 3.5 hours. Your involvement in the training will guide how the peer support meetings will be conducted.

Stage 2 (May-June 2020, 4-6 days in total)

- Meet at least twice (maximum four times) with two women victims of trafficking who are currently accessing support services. These meetings will allow you exchange your experience of integration in Ireland in a supported manner. You will encourage and answer any questions the women may have in relation to their own integration efforts and possible assistance for this in Ireland, as best as you can. We hope you will be able to support women victims of trafficking in their integration efforts. The recommended duration of the meeting with women is 1 to maximum 1.5 hours. These meetings will be conducted at the ICI office and there will be a member of the ICI team available if required both during and after the meetings to discuss any concerns that you have. If you need any support arising from the meetings this will be facilitated.
- Upon completion, you will share your opinion of the usefulness of these meetings with project staff, during a specially organised interview.

Stage 3 (July-August 2020, 1 day in total)

- Meet with the coordinator of this project to review and share your opinion in designing the content and shaping an information booklet that is intended specifically for women third country nationals trafficked for sexual exploitation and that will provide information on specialised services and other useful information, in language that is accessible and friendly.

Stage 4 Optional training (September-December 2020, 2 days in total)

- You will have the option of participating in public speaking training. If you agree and feel safe and happy to do so you can also be involved in a national or transnational dissemination event for this project. Participating in this part of the project is completely optional.

CONDITION FOR PARTICIPATION

You commit to work 8 days with us and sign a consent form. A stipend of €1,500 is payable to you for your participation in this project.

Additional travel expenses will be covered.

4.2. Sample consent form

CONSENT FORM

Statement

I have read and understood the Information Leaflet explaining peer-to-peer support and the purpose of my involvement in this project. I am aware that my involvement in this project is entirely voluntary.

I am happy to commit to the three stages of the *Immigrant Council of Ireland*, peer support project as outlined in the above information leaflet and to consider the fourth stage. I am aware this will involve attending training and leading peer support meetings with women victims of trafficking currently receiving assistance in the State. This project will also involve reviewing and commenting on draft information leaflets for trafficked women. I am also happy to consider participating in public speaking training with the additional option of contributing to a policy lobbying and/or public dissemination event, as long as this is happening on my terms and I feel comfortable and safe. I am available and happy to dedicate 8 working days to the project in the period March to December 2020. I have indicated dates below when I am not available.*

Steps of informed consent

Please indicate your answer by circling 'yes' or 'no':

I have read the information material (or have it read to me) _____ Yes/No

I understand the information provided _____ Yes/No

I have had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this project _____ Yes/No

I have received satisfactory answer to all my questions _____ Yes/No

I am available for this work in the period March to December 2020 _____ Yes/No

Non-disclosure

I commit to not disclose or share any personal information of any other person that becomes known to me during the course of this project. I understand the seriousness of this commitment and harm and risk that could be inflicted by not preserving the privacy of other people participating in this project.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Name of peer-supporter: _____

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/please use block letters/

Please indicate any dates that you are not available between March and December 2020 (planned vacations, exam times or any other dates that you know not to be suitable).

Month	Days when I am not available
March	
April	
May	
June	
July	
August	
September	
October	
November	
December	

5. Sample training materials for mentors

TRAINING SCHEDULE for peer-support providers

Information about the ASSIST project

In the focus of this project are women who are from outside the European Union and have been trafficked for sexual exploitation). This project is about the development of best practice in gender-specific service provision to such migrant women with the aim of promoting their (re)integration in society. Through the involvement of survivors as peer-supporters and as positive role models, we hope that victims of trafficking are able to better resist stigmatisation. Their perception of how they see themselves and how they believe others sees them is shaped in a positive way. Support delivered directly by survivors can strengthen the resistance of victims and prevent re-trafficking and re-victimisation.

The Anti-trafficking Directive of the European Union (Directive 2011/36/EU) requires **gender-specific assistance** in relevant cases, such as women recovering from trafficking involving Immigrant Council of Ireland **AMIF-2017-AG-INTE-821581**

sexual exploitation. This project seeks to define this gender-specific assistance that helps the integration of trafficked migrant women.

The European Union obliges all Member States to establish assistance to victims of trafficking. This include basic rights, such as the one to be identified and protected during a recovery and reflection period, to be assisted during and after a criminal investigation and court proceedings, to be accommodated in a safe and secure place, to have access to medical and psychological assistance and the right to access training and work.

How could these standard elements of assistance better correspond to the gender-specific needs of women? This project is trying to find the answers. It is funded by the European Union Asylum, Integration and Migration Fund and it takes place in Ireland, Germany, Scotland/UK, Italy and Spain.

Interacting with vulnerable women

The main objective of the peer-support included in this project is to improve the gender-specific assistance to trafficked migrant women. It is of utmost importance to avoid any further harm to victims of trafficking at all cost. Therefore, the program aims to ensure that women are not re-traumatised through their participation in the peer-to-peer support training programme. For this purpose, the peer-supporters are encouraged to follow some basic principles:

1. Special information sheet and consent form is given to the women before participating.
2. Women are reminded that they are allowed to stop the meeting at any time if they feel they are unable to continue with the peer-to-peer support training.
3. Women will be advised of the risk of becoming upset as a result of participation in this programme in which case, counselling will be made available to them.
4. The peer-to-peer meeting will be in a conversation style format, to facilitate the women to lead their training and to introduce topics and conversation relevant to them.
5. Women are advised against revealing private and confidential information about themselves.

Theoretical knowledge on trafficking and the gender dimension of trafficking

What is human trafficking?



Human trafficking is a serious crime which violates women's and girls' human rights.

Human rights are rights natural to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. These include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more.

Human trafficking is a form of **gender-based violence** and violence against women¹.

Human Trafficking has many forms: forced labour and exploitation at work, sexual exploitation (incl. commercial sexual exploitation and pornography), other exploitation of the sexual and reproductive function of women, domestic servitude, forced begging and others.

Sexual exploitation is an act or acts committed through non-consensual abuse or exploitation of another person's sexuality for the purpose of sexual gratification, financial gain, personal benefits or advantage, or any other non-legitimate purpose. Sexual exploitation is the most widely spread form of trafficking and mostly affects women and girls, even though men could be also exploited.

Signs of Sexual Exploitation:

- Be forced, intimidated or coerced into providing sexual services
- Be moved between brothels, sometimes from city to city
- Sleeping on work premises
- Have money for their services provided collected by another person
- Display substance misuse
- Display a limited amount of clothing, of which a large proportion is sexual
- Be unable to travel freely e.g pick up and dropped off at work location by another person
- Be subject to abduction, assault or rape
- Withholding the documents eg passport/security cards
- Working to pay off a debt or loan, often the victim is paid very little or nothing at all for their services because of deductions
- Threat to reveal to authorities an irregular immigration status
- Poor or non-existent health and safety standards
- Excessive work hours
- Threat or actual physical harm
- Imposed place of accommodations and deductions made on it
- Others... the list is endless

¹ Directive 2012/29/EU, known as the Victims Rights Directive
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Three Main Elements of Human Trafficking

Act: These are the series of actions involved in the movement of a person and include recruitment, transportation, transferring, harbouring and receiving of persons.

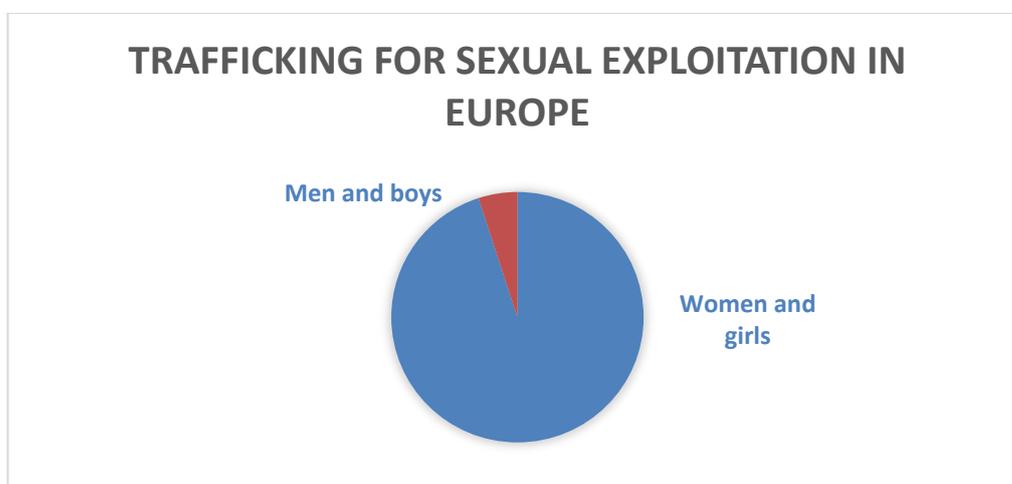
Means: These are the methods used to gain the consent/ force the trafficked person to move including the threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, deception, fraud, abuse of power or the abuse of a position of vulnerability.

Purpose: All of the above has to be done for the purposes of exploitation. The intention to exploit is also a crime.

TRAFFICKING IS A GENDERED CRIME

Trafficking is a gendered crime because it disproportionately affects women and girls and because of the specific form of harm they suffer based on their sexual and reproductive characteristics.

Trafficking affects mostly women. Statistics on trafficking in human beings shows that women/girls made up 95% of victims of sexual exploitation and 68% of victims of other forms of trafficking, making trafficking in human beings a gendered crime (Eurostat 2015).



It is important to note that a **combination of exploitations** could be suffered by a person. A woman trafficked for sexual exploitation may become victim of forced labour or forced into criminal activities and vice versa. People are often re-trafficked from situations of extreme vulnerability.

Gender is all the things a person does to show himself to the society as a man or a woman.

Gendered crime means that it affects one gender disproportionately. Human trafficking for sexual exploitation affects mostly women and for this reason it is a gendered crime. It is similar to domestic violence because it affects women more than men.

How does trafficking affect women? (Specific Harms)

Trafficking affects women through various harms that include physical, psychological consequences and trauma of sexual violence.

Some of the **specific harms from trafficking in women** include: post-traumatic stress disorders, depression, memory loss, anxiety, shame, fear, guilt, frequent viral illness, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), pelvis infections, vaginal infections, back aches, sleeplessness, headaches, stomach aches, eating disorder, exhaustion and other forms of mental trauma.

The most common forms of exploitation of women are:

- Sex trafficking
- Domestic servitude
- Exploitative/Forced/Sham marriages
- Sale of babies
- Sale of eggs
- Forced/ exploitative surrogacy
- Other exploitation of the reproductive and sexual function of women

TRAFFICKING IS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Gender-based violence is violence that is directed at an individual based on his or her biological sex or gender identity. This includes physical, sexual, verbal, emotional and psychological abuse, threats, coercion, and economic or educational deprivation, whether occurring in public or private.

Forms of gender-based violence: Trafficking, rape, attempted rape, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, forced/early marriage, domestic violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other forms of sexual and reproductive exploitation.

Why is trafficking a form of gender-based violence

Trafficking in human being is a form of gender-based violence as it often affects women and children, who are more vulnerable. It also involves forms of exploitations that disproportionately impact on women, such as sexual exploitation, commercial sexual exploitation (e.g. prostitution), forced begging, petty crime, domestic servitude, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. Over 90% of registered victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in the EU are women and girls.

Unlike other forms of exploitation such as labour trafficking and forced criminality, which are based on exploitation of the labour of women and men, trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation has **sexual and intimate violence against women and girls at its core**, and therefore represents gender-based violence.

Some forms of gender-based violence affect primarily and often exclusively migrant women. Trafficking belongs to these migrant women specific forms of gender-based violence, together with commercial sexual exploitation/prostitution, female genital mutilation, forced marriages, breast ironing, honour based violence, dowry debt and others.

GENDER-SPECIFIC NEEDS



The crime of trafficking generates **gender-specific needs** among its victims, who are mostly women. Because the crime is gendered and the exploitation is directed at women because they have characteristics of women, the harm that is caused is also specific to women. This is harm that is specifically based on the sexual and intimate abuse and exploitation of women.

The Anti-trafficking Directive of the European Union (Directive 2011/36/EU) requires **gender-specific assistance** in relevant cases. In order to understand and provide gender-specific assistance to women recovering from sex trafficking, it is important to know how the standard elements of assistance must correspond to the gender-specific needs of women.

(THE FOLLOWING SECTION REQUIRES A DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSISTANCE IN EACH PARTNER COUNTRY)

(EXAMPLE - IRELAND)

Assistance Victims of Trafficking in Ireland



The law in Ireland say that a woman who has been trafficked has the right to accommodation, material assistance, free legal advice, medical care and counselling, advice on personal safety and interpretation services where necessary. Such women have also the right to legal advice, free information services, free interpretation services, and residence status.

Rights to legal assistance - Legal status in Ireland generally means:
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- To be identified as a victim of trafficking
- To receive a recovery and reflection period
- To relax and consider their personal situation
- To receive temporary residence permit, which may be renewed
- To receive support to return home.



Gender-specific legal assistance to migrant women: There is a difference between the legal needs of trafficked women and the State resources provided. The Legal Aid Board provides legal advice, which involves provision of legal quality information. This is often not enough for traumatised women who have escaped from sexual exploitation. Their huge recovery needs prevent them to seek their rights solely on the basis

of the legal information given to them. Women trafficked for sexual exploitation would be best assisted through a gender-specific full legal representation at the earliest possible instance. Legal representation, means that a solicitor (lawyer) acts on your behalf and makes representations on your behalf. The Immigrant Council of Ireland and some other independent solicitors provide such full legal representation on matters of importance to women. Trafficked women face many problems arising from their situation. These can include a delay in their formal identification as victims of crime obtaining legal residence permission, access to identity documents, access to social welfare and child benefit, separation from their children, pressure to participate in criminal investigations and identity parades and a range of other complications. The solicitor can help the trafficked woman understand better her legal rights and entitlements and work out a strategy to access those rights. The legal advice to vulnerable women and children is best provided by a female solicitor with experience in working with victims of sexual violence. It has been demonstrated that early legal intervention better supports the gender specific needs of women as it facilitates disclosure of important information as well as allows for the development of a relationship of trust between the lawyer and their client so the client will speak out about their needs.



Rights to accommodation and material support: It means a safe place to stay, financial support and personal safety. Women have the right to:

- Live in a direct provision accommodation centre during the reflection period or when claiming asylum
 - Receive assistance in finding accommodation after the reflection period, provided they have not made an application for international protection.
- Report any fears and receive advice on personal safety (Please do not suffer silently!)
 - Report your fears to your caseworker, the detective in charge of your case or management in your accommodation centre



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Gender-specific accommodation and material support: Trafficked women are accommodated in direct provision centres for asylum seekers, and they can only leave this type of homes when they are formally (in writing) identified as suspected victims of trafficking. This is often not safe for them, as these centres are mixed gender, share rooms, lack privacy and the personnel are not trained and often do not understand how to respond to victims of gender-based violence. There are organisations, such as Ruhama and Sexual Violence Centre Cork, who would be able to help in securing temporary private accommodation, which will be safer and more suitable for the re-integration of trafficked women. Some women's shelters could also offer accommodation to trafficked women on exceptional basis, but they are generally not funded to do this. It is important that trafficked women are properly identified, formally and in writing, as victims of crime, so that they could be entitled to access safe private housing. In Ireland, an application for international protection may prevent the moving on to individual accommodation and single room, therefore a consultation with a solicitor could be helpful.

Right to Health



- Free access to medical services including doctor/GP services and sexual health services etc.
- Maternity care for trafficked women who are mothers or pregnant
- Referral to general counselling services
- Individual care plan prepared by the HSE Anti-trafficking Unit



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Gender-specific health assistance: Trafficked women experience serious health needs, which must be attended to. These can be physical and psychological health issues. The HSE Anti-trafficking Unit prepares individual care plan for victims of trafficking who have become known to the police (An Garda Síochána). This plan gives women referrals to State provided health care. All victims who report to the police are also given a medical card, which is important benefit for them as it allows them to have a GP and to get all types of treatment available to general public. In Ireland, there are counselling centres that specialise in working with women recovering from sexual violence. For example Dublin Rape Crisis Centre offers psychological services to victims of sexual violence, which could be very suitable to trafficked women recovering from sexual exploitation. The Immigrant Council of Ireland could facilitate a referral to such assistance.

Right to Education, Training and Work



Victims of trafficking are:

- Entitled to part-time education courses, that are run through the Back to Education Initiative
- Attend English language classes, which are run by the Vocational Education Committee
- Entitled to access to training and employment programmes, in cases where they do not apply for international protection
- Entitled to access employment when they have been granted the appropriate permission to do so.



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Gender-specific assistance to access education, training and work:

Trafficked women often have limited education, even though different situations differ. In some cases they have not worked in any specific profession prior to being exploited in commercial sexual exploitation. Therefore, a big part of the recovery process for them would be acquiring, refreshing and enhancing education and developing professional skills in areas that interest them. In Ireland, trafficked women who apply for international protection are not allowed to study or work, therefore a consultation with a solicitor would be important to fully understand the implication of various decisions made by women. There are organisations that specialise in provision of services to vulnerable women, such as Ruhama and Sexual Violence Centre Cork. They would be able to help you select and get involved in appropriate classes and employment programmes. Educational access for migrant women is also conditional and needs expert guidance in relation to enrolment and fees. The Immigrant Council of Ireland would be able to assist you or refer you to organisation that could help you commence your education.

Rights of trafficked women to participate in the community



- Right to vote in local elections
- Right to membership of a party
- Right to apply for citizenship



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Gender-specific empowerment to participate in the community:

Trafficked women must be facilitated to recover and (re)gain their interest to become part of the community. The assistance has to convince them that the State and people are siding with them, against their traffickers and exploiters. Victims of trafficking are important members of our society as they have first-hand information on how to dismantle trafficking and criminal rings. They are

also examples of resilience and strength and they can teach us (all service providers) how best to assist other trafficked women. Leadership and empowering programmes for migrant women would be suitable for trafficked women who have recovered from their ordeal and would like to take their rightful place in the society. In some cases, such women could become inspirational leaders. Organisations, such as Immigrant Council of Ireland and Akidwa provide such courses dedicated to migrant women.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Who can Provide Assistance to Trafficked Women?

Organisations that provide gender-specific assistance to trafficked women:

- **Immigrant Council of Ireland:** this is the organisation that leads this project. The organisation has two female solicitors, who could provide consultation and legal representation to trafficked women. The Immigrant Council specialises in providing legal support to trafficked migrant women. You can directly contact the coordinator of this project or the solicitors.
- **Ruhama:** this is an organisation that provides practical help and educational classes to women recovering from trafficking and prostitution. They work only with women. You can easily access their service or you can be referred by the Immigrant Council of Ireland.
- **Sexual Violence Centre Cork:** this is an organisation in the city of Cork, in the South of Ireland. They specialise in working with women recovering from sexual abuse and exploitation and they specifically support trafficked migrant women. You can easily access their service or you can be referred by the Immigrant Council of Ireland.
- **Dublin Rape Crisis Centre:** this is an organisation that support people recovering from sexual violence and rape. They have female counsellors who provide psychological support to women. The Immigrant Council of Ireland could refer you to this service.
- **Akidwa:** this is migrant women network organisation supporting women activists in their community. They have leadership programmes and work on community engagement. The Immigrant Council of Ireland could introduce you to them.

General assistance to victims of trafficking

- **HSE Women Health and Anti-Trafficking Services:** this is a state agency in the area of health care. They provide individual care planning to all victims of trafficking in Ireland. In order to avail of their assistance, you need to be referred by An Garda Síochána (the Irish police force).
- **Legal Aid Board:** this is a State service that provides legal advice to victims of trafficking. You have to be referred by An Garda Síochána in order to meet a solicitor for such legal information. This service offers a full legal representation to people who seek asylum in Ireland and for this one does not need to be referred by the police but needs to register as an asylum seeker with the International Protection Office.

- **An Garda Siochana:** this is the Irish police force. They are tasked with identifying victims of trafficking and referring them for support. They also investigate the crime of human trafficking and provide personal protection to victims.
- **Doras Luimni:** this is a migrant organisation in the city of Limerick to the West of Ireland. They specialise in supporting victims of trafficking. The Immigrant Council of Ireland could refer to them.
- **Nasc,** the Irish Immigration Support Centre: this is a migrant organisation in the city of Cork to the South of Ireland. They specialise in supporting asylum seekers. The Immigrant Council of Ireland could refer to them.

Organisations that assist with work/training and education includes:

(Please note that the Immigrant Council of Ireland could assist you in contacting any of these below. All you need to do is contact the coordinator of the project)

- **Business in the Community:** BITC's EPIC programme provides training and support to immigrants to find employment and/or training. Dublin region
- **FIT- Fast Track to I:** Provides training in computer and technical skills for jobs in IT. Nationwide
- **Education and Training Board (ETBs):** Provides training in computer and technical skills for jobs in IT. Nationwide
- **Local Employment Services (LESs):** Provides support to find employment. Nationwide
- **Intreo – Department of Social Protection:** Provides social welfare payments and support to find employment. Nationwide •
- **Citizens Information Centres (CICs):** Provides information on local and national services, including on your local services to help find employment and training. Nationwide
- **Volunteer Ireland:** The National Volunteer Development Agency and a support body.

ASSIST: Gender Specific Legal Assistance and Integration Support for Third Country National Female Victims of Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation (EC AMIF: 821581)

The ASSIST project is an initiative of the Immigrant Council of Ireland



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