

Trafficking in human beings: European report highlights the specific needs of beneficiaries of international protection

On the occasion of the European Day against Trafficking in Human Beings (October 18), Forum Réfugiés-Cosi and its European partners Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME, Belgium), Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI, Ireland), Italian Council for Refugees (CIR, Italy), Organization for Aid to Refugees (OPU, Czech Republic) publish part of the results of the TRIPS project on the identification of the specific needs of beneficiaries of international protection victims of trafficking in human beings in terms of integration. Three deliverables are now published by the project partners: a European comparative report including key recommendations for improving public policies and practices across the European Union, accompanied by a summary, and a European toolbox for professionals.

IDENTIFICATION OF TRAFFICKED
INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION BENEFICIARIES'
SPECIAL NEEDS



Following the EU-funded TRACKS project carried out between 2016 and 2018, which focused on identifying the specific needs of victims of human trafficking in the asylum application, the TRIPS project has been implemented and coordinated by Forum refugees-Cosi since January 2020. It analyses the integration conditions and the risk of being (re)exposed to human trafficking for beneficiaries of international protection (subsidiary protection or refugee status) in the light of the European legal framework. Indeed, after obtaining their international protection status, whether or not on the grounds of a trafficking situation, the European Qualification Directive of December 13, 2011, and which entered into force on December 22, 2013, frames the rights granted to beneficiaries of international protection. In particular, it provides that Member States must take into account the situation of vulnerable people in the integration process, specifically including victims of trafficking, after an individual assessment of their situations.

In order to study the effective implementation of this provision, the project partners carried out research in France, Ireland, Italy, and the Czech Republic and addressed the plurality of integration issues - access to social rights, housing, health, training and employment. Thanks to interviews with institutions, civil society organizations and the victims themselves, the partners were able to identify good practices and gaps in the policies and mechanisms in place, and to better understand the specific needs in this area.

None of these four member states guarantees a comprehensive and tailored assessment of the special needs of victims of human trafficking after being granted international protection status. In addition, all EU Member States covered by the study report significant challenges related to the sharing of information regarding the specific needs of victims, including between asylum and integration authorities. In order to ensure a continuum of care for beneficiaries of international protection who are victims of human trafficking, the role of NGOs and social workers appears to be crucial in alerting the authorities to the needs of victims or in directing cases towards the appropriate services and support. Despite the provisions of the revised Qualification Directive on access to social rights and housing, significant obstacles and challenges are reported in all four Member States, exposing trafficked international protection beneficiaries to the risk of re-exploitation. Difficulties linked to cumbersome administrative procedures, delays, inconsistent decisions by the authorities and lack of training on human trafficking have been identified and may put victims at risk of trafficking.

In addition to the challenges faced by all vulnerable people in the EU in accessing adequate and affordable housing, trafficked international protection beneficiaries face additional obstacles in accessing sustainable and secure housing due to the lack of places, long deadlines, security, financial capacity and language barriers. However, promising mechanisms and good practices have been identified to ensure better access to sustainable and safe housing for victims benefiting from protection. Critical in the support of victims of trafficking and beneficiaries of international protection, access to health care and in particular mental health must be improved. Common challenges, linked to administrative procedures, language barriers, the lack of specialized professionals and services adapted to victims of human trafficking are deployed in the four EU Member States. Finally, if various national mechanisms aiming to support beneficiaries of international protection to access employment and education are implemented in the four EU Member States, no specific provision is foreseen for trafficked

ones. The study underlines the importance of access to sustainable and paid employment to ensure basic needs and avoid re-exploitation. On the other hand, trafficked IPBs may need time to recover before engaging in professional integration, but they are pressured to accept any job in order to cover the costs associated with their process and integration procedures. Finally, parenting issues have a significant impact on access to education and employment opportunities, especially for women. Support and assistance to facilitate access to childcare services are rarely provided. The report also underlines the impact of the pandemic crisis on the integration pathways of victims of trafficking who are beneficiaries of protection, and highlights the needs of victims identified during interviews conducted by associations.

Thanks to this research and analysis work, the project partners have developed a European toolbox for practitioners. It revolves around three parts focused on key knowledge on trafficking in human beings and the links with international protection and integration issues, on the identification of the specific integration needs of victims of trafficking benefiting from protection, and guidance on referrals and access to appropriate services. This new toolkit aims to provide guidelines and inspire the development of national toolkits that will include national perspectives and field practices. It thus offers the opportunity to national institutions and organizations from different Member States to develop their own national toolbox to strengthen their capacities in terms of identifying and responding to these specific needs by adapting it to their context and their need.

The development of these European reports and tools benefited from the contribution and expertise of associated European experts: the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA), the French Office for Immigration and integration (OFII), the Secretariat of the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) and Amicale du Nid.

On November 8, the national partners of the TRIPS project will present their national synthesis reports which will present the results of their research carried out at the national level as well as key recommendations, as well as their national toolkits. National conferences will then be organized in France, Ireland, Italy and the Czech Republic. Finally, the partners of the TRIPS project will present all the results of the project at a final European conference which will take place on 8 December in Brussels.

[TRIPS EUROPEAN REPORT](#)

[TRIPS SUMMARY EUROPEAN REPORT](#)

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