

# **NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

## **Summary Report**



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## 1. Introduction and Methodology

Trafficking in human beings constitutes a, usually, transnational serious crime and a blatant violation of fundamental human rights. It is a modern form of slavery, affecting all genders and ages and it may take the form of sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude and related practices, the removal of vital organs and the recruitment in criminal acts. Victims may suffer multiple forms of exploitation (Europol, N.D).<sup>1</sup>

The project 'HEAL - Enhancing Recovery and Integration through networking, Employment Training and Psychological Support for Women Victims of Trafficking' aims at facilitating the integration of third country national (TCN) women victims of trafficking (VoT) for sexual exploitation in Italy, Greece, Spain and Romania through a healing process comprising a psychological recovery and employment-related skills acquisition. More specifically, the project aims at:

- shared and improved understanding of the identified needs of TCN women VoT and improved cooperation amongst them, service providers and employers;
- designing a Recovery and Integration Programme, fostering the socio-economic integration of TCN women VoT through their enhanced psychosocial wellbeing and employment-related skills;
- the development of a database addressing to trained service providers;
- enhanced awareness amongst TCN women VoT, service providers, employers and the general public of the rights and services available for the support of victims of trafficking, as well as the methodologies and tools promoted in the context of the project.

The HEAL partnership conducted qualitative and quantitative research in order to obtain an insight of the profiles and perceived needs of TCN women VoT, support service providers and employers, as well as the rights, available services women can benefit from and employability services. The research also aimed at mapping existing best practices and main challenges in the work of service providers. Further, the current local market demands were identified as well as the, necessary skills and needs of TCN women VoT for successful integration in the labour market. The partners looked also at the current situation in each partner country in terms of vacancies and important sectors of the national economy.

The desk research involved a mapping exercise, in order to explore existing literature and official reports, in terms of the general characteristics of women VoT in each country,

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<sup>1</sup> Europol (N.D). Trafficking in Human Beings. Retrieved from: <https://www.europol.europa.eu/crime-areas-and-trends/crime-areas/trafficking-in-human-beings>.

organisations working with the aforementioned population, the current needs of the national labour markets and possible contacts from the business sector. All relevant information has been integrated in the national reports.

Qualitative and quantitative research with TCN women VoT, support service providers and employers has been conducted. More specifically, partners have implemented focus groups with women, workshops with professionals and interviews with employers. However, due to the difficulty in approaching women VoT during the current health crisis in relation to Covid-19, Romania and Greece also involved representatives of TCN women VoT in the research, in order to gather insights into the viewpoints of women VoT.

The tools used to conduct the research were developed by KMOP with the contribution of all partners at the beginning of Work Package 2; they can be found in the Annex. Consent forms were signed by all participants before proceeding with the implementation of the research, in order to ensure their anonymity and data protection and to obtain their consent for the processing of data for the purposes of the research. In cases of TCN women VoT and their representatives, additional measures were taken, in order to avoid their identification; consent forms only included their initials. In the case of Greece, in cases participants were reluctant for the discussion to be recorded, notes were taken by the researcher.

The present report, developed in the context of Work Package 2 (WP2) - Promoting common understanding of needs and networking among key actors, aims to summarise and present the results of all four countries in terms of the national situations of the aforementioned topics.

## 2. Key findings from all National Reports

All four countries appear to lack gathered official information regarding the phenomenon in one source, while some participants could not provide a clear idea of the phenomenon and its aspects. Furthermore, data on several aspects of the phenomenon do not exist in existing literature/reports. More trainings and informational provision on the characteristics of trafficking and the needs of the victims were proposed by participants from Romania and Greece.

Participants from Greece, Spain and Romania found that one of the greatest difficulties TCN women VoT have to face is language. Women sometimes find it hard to communicate with others, as they do not speak the national language, making their integration into society and labour market difficult. Women from Greece also face difficulties in socialising, while the general state of insecurity in Romania, due to women's legal status and their desire to reach other EU member states were reported as other barriers of the population. Women from Spain also mentioned the lack of familiarity with available services that could support them in finding a job as another difficulty. Unemployment and access to public and healthcare services seems to be a common barrier for women in Greece. Furthermore, women from Spain highlighted that even when they have a job, the precarious environment perpetuates their dependence on social services and several forms of support.

According to the TCN women VoT that participated in the Needs Assessment in the four countries, they need financial and material support and well-paid jobs, in order to be independent and autonomous and raise their children. Trainings and employment support were found important in Greece and Italy. Women need to be provided opportunities to enter the labour market, as well as assistance and guidance, in terms of where to look for jobs and which services to address. Women residing in Greece would also need support to learn the national language and guidance in many aspects of their everyday life, such as the issue of necessary documents. Women from Spain added that they need to receive support in finding accommodation and home management. Support in childcare was also mentioned in Spain and Greece. Service providers from Spain and Italy underlined the importance of understanding women's background and mentality and to respect their decisions on the timing of their processes and their needs/demands; economic empowerment was also highlighted. Long-term support and effective protection of women VoT was suggested by support service providers from Spain and Italy. Italian professionals also mentioned the provision of legal support. A more holistic/comprehensive approach was suggested by professionals from Greece and Spain, whilst the later proposed the formation of a multi-disciplinary team of professionals specialising in trauma and trafficking to handle such cases.

In terms of women's needs in order to smoothly integrate into the labour market, trainings, guidance, support and acquisition of skills were mentioned. Participants from Spain reported that the specific needs of TCN women VoT could be related to their personal, socio-economic

and cultural differences or to the general need of the development of specific competences for relevant sectors. Employers from Italy agreed that job-related skills relevant to the most important economic sectors are vital and added that specific trainings should also entail the bridging of cultural differences. Lessons on the national language were mentioned as very important. Participants from Italy, Romania and Greece also found that a mentor, as well as psychological support before entering the labour market and during their work would be beneficial, while employers from Spain specifically mentioned that the establishment of a mentoring programme for newly employed women is needed. Women from Italy pointed out that the establishment of useful relevant contacts would also assist them in finding a job. The acquisition of relevant degrees and certificates is really important in Greece, whilst in both Romania and Greece, it was mentioned that the recognition of previously acquired certificates remains of vital importance, as women need documents proving their knowledge and skills to integrate into the labour market. A good CV, practical information, assistance and training to present themselves and their skills were also found important in Greece. Italian and Greek participants emphasised that women need to receive support on their preparation for job interviews. One representative from Greece mentioned that the women they supported have expressed that they would find an online platform with job postings and applications, available in languages they speak such as English, French and Russian, very useful.

One of the employers from Greece highlighted that employers would need support as well, in terms of approaching and supporting women. Support service providers from Romania confirmed that the information and training provision to the potential work environment regarding the sensibilities of traumatised people would be beneficial for their integration.

Participants from Spain, Greece and Italy mentioned that women should integrate in the labour market in steps. The industries of hospitality and manufacturing were identified as potential sectors women where could be employed in Romania. Participants from Greece added tourism, sales, baby-sitting, nursing of elder people, agriculture/cultivation, local stores, food services, administrative and independent professions as potential work opportunities for TCN women VoT. Participants from Romania suggested that self-employment would be ideal for TCN women VoT. Local sectors were also identified in Italy, such as restaurants, hotels and personal care; employers suggested that women are firstly employed in more 'protected' positions, such as in the kitchen of a restaurant and not immediately as waitresses. Employers from Spain confirmed that women should be firstly employed in back office positions and slowly move to positions with more direct involvement with clients, in order to enhance their self-esteem and confidence, but emphasised that local market demands are often related to low-skilled occupations, such as cleaning, maintenance, administration, clerical work, customer service and waitressing. Similarly, participants from Romania confirmed that available jobs are low-skilled and low-paid; they highlighted that this can lead to financial issues and disappointment, especially when a family is supported by a sole income.

In terms of skills that needed to be acquired by women, participants from Greece referred to communication, social, digital/technological, managerial and administrative skills; while

language skills are of vital importance, in order for women to communicate with clients and colleague. Job-related skills were mentioned in Greece. Participants from Romania highlighted characteristics, such as long-term commitment, willingness to learn and stress management. Employers from Spain recommended that women should acquire job-related skills and transversal competences, such as emotion management, resilience, adaptability and communication skills.

One of the good practices mentioned in Spain was the establishment of networks amongst services and cooperation. Support service providers from Spain supported that a good practice would be to learn about the cultural backgrounds of the women and involve them in decision making on the recovery programmes and support provision, even in budgeting details, as a way to empower them. Participants from Italy found that support groups/communities are considered a good practice, while one support service provider from Greece suggested that projects like HEAL constitute European good practices that are integrated in the national context.

As depicted in the results of each partner country presented in the following chapters, many commonalities and differences on the general and employment needs of TCN women VoT were identified. The same applies to the current local market demands, vacancies and employment opportunities. The collected data present several important aspects that will be useful for the development of the Recovery and Integration Programme that is to be compiled in future steps of the project, aiming to support and equip women in order to smoothly integrate in the labour market.



## **3. Results from Italy**

### **3.1 Introduction and methodology**

The aim of the need assessment process was to identify the needs of Third Country National Women Victims of Trafficking (TCN women VoT), support service providers and employers, as well as best practices and the main challenges faced by support service providers and local labour market.

This research consisted in a mapping exercise (desk research) and field needs assessment (interviews and focus groups), in order to obtain a better knowledge of specific needs and improve cooperation between TCN women VoT, service providers and employers.

The desk research looked into general information available on TCN women VoT in Italy, such as most common types of trafficking, overall number, countries of origin, age and educational level as well as main cities of residence. Further, a desk research on service providers was undertaken and Italian job market needs as well as local businesses were identified.

For the field research two workshops with social services providers were conducted, two focus groups with women victims of trafficking and six interviews with employers in Palermo.

The workshops with service providers involved eight experts in the field of trafficking: two Administrative Officers from the Territorial Commission of the Ministry of the Interior; two psychologists working with unaccompanied minors and women VoT in Palermo; a lawyer from the Legal Clinic of Human Rights; two Police Investigators from the Palermo Police Headquarter, one social worker employed by the Municipality of Palermo. They were involved in a debate led by CESIE on the topics of the project: the rights of women victims of trafficking, the protection system provided by law, cultural elements present in the trafficking phenomenon.

Six interviews were conducted with employers in Palermo from the restaurant and hotel sector, from the social sector and one with an organization working on jobs orientation and placement. Some of these employers have been chosen as they already have experience with hiring migrants, including women VoT, others have been chosen as they had no previous experience with hiring migrant women, in order to obtain the perception from different points of view.

The two focus groups with 10 women victims of trafficking coming from Nigeria were held in Palermo in February 2020. The participating women have a mean age of 28 years and half of them have completed secondary school education, half of them have not completed secondary school. During the focus group discussion, the women have been engaged in a confrontation about the obstacles faced in everyday life and their needs for a socio-economic integration in the local society.

## 3.2 Results of the mapping exercise

The desk research has shown that most common types of trafficking crimes in Italy are trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced labour.

In Italy there is still an absence of data on presumed and identified victims of trafficking. The Italian Department of Equal Opportunities (DEO) collects data on the number of assisted victims of trafficking in human being (THB): 1095 in the first semester 2019 and 1373 in 2018.<sup>2</sup>

Regarding the age of TCN women VoT for sexual exploitation purposes, of the trafficking victims assisted, 3.1% in the first semester 2019 and 8.4% in 2018 were minors. According to Save the Children and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the increase in the number of underage VoT is alarming. Most victims of trafficking are women between the age of 13 and 24.<sup>3</sup>

The Countries of origin of TCN women VoT for sexual exploitation in Italy are (numbers are from 2018): Nigeria (660); Romania (23); Albania (18); Bulgaria (15).

Low level of education is quite common among VoT, especially for those from Nigeria.<sup>4</sup>

The main cities of residence of women victims of trafficking in Italy are: Turin, Novara, Alessandria, Verona, Milan, Padua, Bologna, Rome, Naples and Palermo.

There are many organizations working with women victims of violence and trafficking. Among these in the city of Palermo there are:

- PENC: etno-psychiatric service
- Housing Sociale Centro Diaconale “La Noce”: shelter/support service
- Life and Life Onlu: drop-in service
- Associazione “Le Donne di Benin City”: drop-in service, working exclusively with VoT
- Associazione “Il Pellegrino della Terra”: drop-in service
- Centro Agape – Caritas Diocesana Palermo: drop-in service
- Casa Dei Giovani – Progetto “Maddalena”: shelter/Drop in service, working exclusively with VoT

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<sup>2</sup> DEO, Computerised system for the collection of information on trafficking in human beings (database SIRIT) 2018, available at: <http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Servizio-Informatizzato-per-la-Raccolta-di-Informationi-sulla-Tratta-Dati-2018.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> IOM, Human Trafficking through the Central Mediterranean Route: Data, Stories and Information collected by International Organization for Migration, p. 12, available at: [https://italy.iom.int/sites/default/files/news-documents/IOMReport\\_Trafficking.pdf](https://italy.iom.int/sites/default/files/news-documents/IOMReport_Trafficking.pdf); Save the Children, One in four victims of trafficking and exploitation in Europe are children, 25 July 2019, available at: <https://www.savethechildren.net/news/one-four-victims-trafficking-and-exploitation-europe-are-children>.

<sup>4</sup> IOM, Human Trafficking through the Central Mediterranean Route: Data, Stories and Information collected by International Organization for Migration, p. 13, available at: [https://italy.iom.int/sites/default/files/news-documents/IOMReport\\_Trafficking.pdf](https://italy.iom.int/sites/default/files/news-documents/IOMReport_Trafficking.pdf).

- Parrocchia di Sant'Antonio: drop-in service
- Le Onde Onlus: Anti-violence center, not exclusively focused on women VoT
- ARCI Porco Rosso: Drop-in service and Legal support
- Outpatient clinic – ex AIUTO MATERNO: Health services for foreigners
- Gruppo Abele: Drop-in service/Support service/Health service/ Antiviolence center
- CESTRIM Onlus: Support and Health Servicee
- Apeiron Onlus: Drop-in service
- Be Free Cooperativa Sociale: Support Service
- Rete DAFNE Onlus: Drop-in service/Support service/ Health service/Anti-violence center
- Casa Internazionale delle donne: Legal support, not focused exclusively on working with VoT
- Nere e non solo! Onlus: Legal support

In 2019 the unemployment rate in Italy was 9.5%.<sup>5</sup> Based on the number of the employed population the most important economic sectors in Italy are<sup>6</sup>:

- 1) Industrial sector/Manufacturing industry
- 2) Agriculture and fisheries
- 3) Hospitality and Tourism (especially in Sicily)

The most important skills employees should have are: 1) persistence and determination; 2) ability to identify problems; 3) Teamwork; 4) Decision making and problem solving; 5) Ability to communicate clearly and be innovative.<sup>7</sup>

With the desk research CESIE collected a list of 32 potential contacts from the local business sector, among which NGOs, restaurants, jobs agencies, trade unions, pubs, hotels, social cooperative, consortium of research and creation of innovative enterprises.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.istat.it/it/archivio/233707>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.istat.it/it/files/2019/02/Mercato-del-lavoro-2018.pdf>;

<https://www.bancaditalia.it/pubblicazioni/economie-regionali/2019/2019-0019/1919-sicilia.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.ipsoa.it/-/media/Quotidiano/2019/06/03/consulenti-del-lavoro-le-soft-skill-piu-richieste-dalle-aziende/Soft\\_skill%20pdf.pdf](http://www.ipsoa.it/-/media/Quotidiano/2019/06/03/consulenti-del-lavoro-le-soft-skill-piu-richieste-dalle-aziende/Soft_skill%20pdf.pdf); <https://excelsior.unioncamere.net/documenti/bollettinimensili/doc.php?id=3150>

### **3.3 Results of the focus groups with TCN women VoT**

#### *Difficulties faced by TCN women VoT*

The main difficulty faced by women victims of trafficking living in Italy is finding a job that allows them to take care of family and children. Some of the women are working as carer for elderly persons and explained that the long working hours during day and night create difficulties, as this way they can not be present at home to care for their children. Further, this job is poorly paid and hardly makes enough money to survive.

Other women reported to have a job in other sectors, such as laundry or cleaning, where their work is not regularly paid, however. The absence of a regular contract and the economic uncertainty is a major obstacle for renting a flat, looking after family and children, getting access to the health system, buying necessary medicines etc.

All in all, women VoT face a lot of economic difficulties in everyday life and can not rely on support by state authorities or other services. They do not have access to the Italian “citizenship income” (basic income, in Italian “reddito di cittadinanza”) and food distributed for free by the catholic charity organisation Caritas is often not enough to cover the needs of a family for a month. Further, some participants stated that employers often have prejudices against Nigerian nationals and reserve job vacancies to Italians (such as cleaning services at hospitals and schools) – which is why it is difficult for them to find better paid, stable jobs.

#### *Needs of third country national women victims of trafficking and resources they would need to improve their condition*

The discussion during the focus group highlighted that women VoT need clear orientation and indication about their stay in Italy, about services provided and the rights they may enjoy. Often information is fragmented and only held and conveyed by local organizations with which women VoT might enter in contact with; but not all women actually do so.

#### *Women’s knowledge of what rights and services they can benefit from*

Participating women seemed not to be sure about their rights in Italy. When asked about their rights, some mentioned generic fundamental rights such as “freedom of movement”, “respect of the law”; others did not know what to answer at all. Usually, women get the information on their rights from the organizations they are in contact with or from other women already living in Italy who have had similar experience. There are no established paths towards their autonomy and independence. Thus, it may happen that women remain dependent from the association/organization that takes care of them. They need orientation in the job market and help to understand their potential.

#### *Needs of TCN women VoT to enter the labour market*

Many of the participating women do not have clear ideas about their future employment and declared to be ready to do “whatever job”; others were more focussed on specific jobs in the

cleaning sector or as carers of elderly and babysitters. Some of them stated to have work experience and some had already participated at training courses.

In order to enter the labour market, they would need support to draft a well structured CV, thus to make it more attractive for the employer, as well as specific training courses to obtain specific skills, for example in cooking, tailoring, hairdressing and doing care work.

One participant explained that one of the main difficulties of the Nigerian community is a cultural attitude that Nigerians bring with them from their home country, where laws are not enforced and institutions are unstable, and which leads them to be inactive and unmotivated to search for better opportunities or undertake training courses, or participate in other useful events and activities. Therefore, one important thing to do is to work on increasing women's motivation, so that they become more self-responsible and proactive in searching information and work/training opportunities.

Some of the women underlined the importance of personal contacts in the local labour market, as very often it is necessary to be introduced by a friend to the employer in order to be considered for a job.

## 3.4 Results of the workshops with service providers

### *Rights of women VoT in local and EU level*

First of all, women have the right for a period of reflection: the request for international protection is suspended until the woman does not speak of trafficking and has not decided which path she wants to take. Then, women have the right to be inserted in a protection programme if immediate danger is determined and other conditions are fulfilled. In practice, being included in a protection programme is conditioned by a criminal complaint (although it is not obligatory to file a complaint, in fact very often women are constrained to do so); the law foresees two possibilities: with a criminal complaint and without criminal complaint, which is followed by a social integration process. The women VoT can obtain a residence permit for social reasons, which is the most important instrument (ex-Art. 18 – 18 months duration, extendable several times), or an international protection residence permit (recognition of refugee status, in case they face a danger in their home country when they are repatriated). The first thing to do is providing protection to the women, which also means very often searching reception centers in other parts of Sicily for a major security. Generally, the protection programmes foresee also a socio-economic integration, but interlocutors were not sure how far it is done, and how well it is working for the women. E.g., if women VoT obtain an international protection residence permit, they can access the programme called “SIPROIMI”<sup>8</sup>, which was created for all refugees with international protection permit and unaccompanied minors. It foresees employment integration, but also this system does not always work well according to participating service providers.

Differences at international level: in terms of international protection, although at European level the legislative frame is the same, there are some differences, e.g. not all states differentiate the particular cases of victims of trafficking; not in all European states victims of trafficking have the right to obtain a residence permit (but stakeholders were not sure about the information).

### *Ways cultural elements affect human trafficking*

Obviously, there are cultural elements that influence human trafficking according to participating service providers; among others, one participant said that some states have almost like a “standard for trafficking”, with always the same elements, “almost like an industrial production”. It has become a way to go abroad, and there are also religious elements (Voodoo rites); cultural elements can condition the women for pronouncing herself or not in front of authorities about the trafficking. One has to consider also that a Muslim woman might have more difficulties in talking about what has happened to her, even more so speaking about sexual exploitation. Culture can influence also the final phase, i.e. to file a criminal complaint, as

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<sup>8</sup> SIPROIMI stands for “Sistema di Protezione per titolari di protezione internazionale e per i minori stranieri non accompagnati”, i.e. Protection System for holders of international protections and for unaccompanied *minors*.

women might feel being persecuted as a consequence of a Voodoo rite. Cultural elements can have strong manifestations and can go so far that women present psychiatric problems after filing a criminal complaint, as they are convinced to be under influence of Voodoo. Another important cultural element is the fact that women are forced to pay back their debts and are threatened by trafficking organisations, including also their family that is still in their home country. That's why paying back and working (earning money) is fundamental for the women. According to the service providers interviewed, the family of origin of women VoT often has a key role in recruitment, conscious or not of the consequences. These women often have a low level of education and come from countries where women's status is poor. Furthermore, looking at the history of colonialization in Africa (and other parts of the world), with the years of domination and exploitation by Europeans, one can understand the root causes of trafficking: on the one hand, the vulnerability of women (due to their poverty, poor education) can be explained in this context; on the other hand, on the side of the traffickers, trafficking has been able to develop as the most profitable business in the world against this background. It is important not to lose sight of the goal of earning money in the explanation of the phenomenon.

### *Difficulties of service providers reaching women VoT*

One current issue is that almost all reception centers were closed recently; there is a difficulty thus to place the women after they have been identified. Some participants only see the final phase of the women who have decided to file a criminal complaint; in any case it is very difficult to convince women to file a complaint, participants have even seen various cases where women disappeared from reception structures. The most problematic phase is the initial one, and participants said that very few women go to social institutions on their own initiative (maybe 1%). It has become more difficult to reach out recently: it used to be easier to reach out to women VoT at the time of the arrival of boats, when the IOM, for example, had specialists to identify women VoT at their arrival at the Sicilian coasts. Nowadays, boats do not arrive to the Sicilian coasts anymore. It is a lot more difficult to reach out to women who have been staying on the territory for a longer time; in that case, almost only controls of the police reveal cases of trafficking. In the identification phase, sometimes women declare to have been trafficked, but more often they remain silent. The Territorial Commission (organ of the Ministry of the Interior) follows specific indicators for their identification, however, women's consent to be identified as victims of trafficking is a precondition for the recognition of international protection.

### *Identified risks when delivering support services*

Convincing women in the initial phase is very difficult according to interlocutors. The municipality informs the local Public Health Authority for psychological support, and this works very well. A main difficulty for support service providers is creating a relation built on trust, one needs a lot of sensitivity, not to be intrusive with women, respecting instead the time they might need to open up and talk.

Letting them speak out, listening to them – this is difficult in Italian according to participants, even if they speak Italian, but as well in their language, because women VoT feel ashamed

speaking in front of a person from their same country/their same culture. In the case of Nigerian women, they speak perfectly English, but often prefer speaking Pidgin. Ideally, there would be a complete stranger (not from same community/culture) to function as interpreter/mediator. With men women VoT do not speak at all; if all, there needs to be a woman.

Women VoT live in a condition of great vulnerability, where they need to reach economic independence. Training courses are important, but not very useful for women, if they are not followed up with concrete employment offers providing the opportunity to earn money.

### *Existing gaps in the legislation affecting the quality of their work*

Before, it was possible to grant “humanitarian protection” for clearly vulnerable persons (in case of women reluctant to speak about trafficking), but this has been abolished. The recent legislative changes in Italy have been devastating (not only for women VoT). It means for the work of service providers that there is a lot more pressure for those in charge of identifying indicators for human trafficking: as there is not the way out with the humanitarian protection, in case the woman does not want to speak, they need to talk several times with possible VoT, in order to let emerge elements which can be the basis for a protection permit. It means there is more stress both for professionals and for victims – they do not have time and need to speak as soon as possible about their experience of trafficking. Some service providers highlight gaps in the implementation phase and the necessity of a better coordination between various institutions and persons involved.

### *Success stories and good practices*

Participants are not sure how to define “success” in the case of women VoT. However, a success is for one of the participants when they succeed in discovering the persons and organization behind the trafficking.

One of the participants tells a story of two girls, 15 and 17 years old, who thanks to the collaboration with the IOM filed a criminal complaint and who were brought to another part of the country. Initially, the social workers did not receive any news from the women, but one day the girls searched for their numbers to thank them, and they met in another Sicilian city. The girls were also able to pay back their debts thanks to the collection of money by associations. For another participant, who only sees the initial phase, a success is when the woman starts talking about trafficking.

The IOM has always done a very good work with VoT according to participants – they started identifying them at the arrivals of boats. Social services and Public Health Authority also started cooperating with them, their psychologists knew better how to speak to the women, as they had a very good knowledge of their culture, for example.

There are stories of women who have been trafficked and then founded or became part of an association to support other women. Also some public health institutions have created well functioning services to help women VoT.



## **3.5 Results of the interviews with employers**

### *Local market demands*

Labour market has different needs according to interviewed employers. It is divided into two fundamental parts: sectors which require a high level of specialization and sectors which do not require specialization.

In the local market, the service sector and restaurant businesses in particular always require different figures: mainly chefs with experience, but also waitresses speaking at least two languages. This sector is characterized by a significant turnover and requires also great flexibility in working hours. Other local labour sectors which often have job offers are cleaning services, pubs, loading and unloading of goods and sales assistants, mainly in business activities run by foreign citizens (i.e., Chinese local shops).

Some interviewees highlighted instability as main characteristic of the local labour market, and the need of laws that make it easier for an entrepreneur to hire workers with regular contracts, the necessity of a Public Administration faster in granting permits and licences, more controls to assure legality.

### *Potential employment opportunities of TCN women VoT*

Women victims of trafficking, having faced a recovery path, can be employed in every sector. At the beginning of their work experience, employers' suggestion is to employ them in kitchen, i.e. in a more protected environment, and to reserve the front office, for example, in a second moment.

Training is fundamental, first of all because it is necessary to overcome a "cultural gap" with respect of the knowledge and experience of the place where women VoT (but also migrants in general) live and work. Often there is a lack of knowledge of the services provided by the Municipality and of the existing opportunities.

Apart from the cultural aspect, there are specific competences required by the labour market that can be acquired by training: a course aimed to obtain a food safety certificate (HACCP - Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points), a course to train chefs which teaches to prepare soup, cream, bread and pasta, a course to become hairdressers. Information on rights and legal procedures is also important, also in order to raise women's sense of responsibility towards their family and children, which may encourage them to leave illegality and look for regular and legal jobs.

Teaching languages is also important: women VoT often do not speak Italian and in some cases neither English. Usually, they are not able to read and write. Teaching sessions, more than on grammar, should be focused on conversation.

In proposing training, women's aspirations, their dreams but also potentialities should be taken into consideration, giving importance to their past and making them aware of the existing

opportunities. The training should not be out of range for them, in consideration of their level of education, language skills etc. It must be organized step by step and the place chosen should meet their needs, in order to overcome mistrust.

Before organizing training events with women VoT, it could be useful to have a preliminary session before the group session, in order to understand if they want to stay and work all together.

In order to improve women VoT possibilities to be employed, the presence of a good mentoring is always essential, beyond the trainer who deals more with work experience. A good mentor, in fact, is able to address women's needs and the level of psychological troubles, and can thus suggest the most appropriate work place. The most successful training experiences are those where there is a good collaboration between the mentor, the person trained and the trainer.

## 3.6 Factual aspects

Many of the social service providers participating in the two focus groups (social workers, police officials, administrative officers, lawyers, psychologists) work directly with women VoT, and some also with unaccompanied minors for their custody and adoption. They offer different kinds of support to them: psychological support, opportunity to obtain international protection, legal assistance, social protection. They seem not to have clear information about the number of victims of trafficking in Italy. The only answer provided states “thousands”, without an exact number. About the age of the women VoT, 90% of them believe that women VoT are around 17/18 years old, while only 1% answers that there are also women who are only 13 years old. Regarding the level of education all service providers agree on the fact that women VoT are attending or have not completed secondary school, or have only completed primary school. They do not provide answers regarding the number of children women VoT have, and on the number of women having a job; however, some of them mention sectors where women VoT could work: agriculture, care work/domestic work, tailoring, as hairdresser. According to services providers the main cities of residence of women VoT are Palermo, Torino, Verona, Castelvoturno, Naples, Bari. 90% of them believe that women VoT come from Nigeria, while 10% from Liberia and Ivory Coast. They are all aware of the fact that the reason behind trafficking are sexual exploitation and labour exploitation. About the average number of victims of trafficking, the perception varies between 15 to 150 per year. They have knowledge of the services offered in the region (mentioning protection/legal assistance, psychological support, health assistance, employment integration). 80% of them feel only in part trained to support victims of trafficking; only some have already participated at training courses offered, for example by UNHCR and IOM or the third sector; one participant states to have worked as trainer for specific trainer courses.

90% of the employers interviewed has a University Degree, 10% has a High School Diploma. The perception of the unemployment rate in Italy varies: 50% answered more than 37% or simply “high”, 40% believes it is around 9–15%, 10% does not know or does not answer. Women’s unemployment rate is perceived as high: those who quantified it estimated 15% or 30%. All the employers believe that the highest unemployment rate is to be found in the South of Italy: Sicily, Calabria, Campania. The most important sector according to them is HORECA (hotels, restaurants and cafès), but also the automotive industry, showbusiness and agriculture. The sectors with more opportunities for employment are: hotels, restaurants, personal care, transport. The employers interviewed consider that the most important skills employees should have are: flexibility, patience, ability to enter in relation with people, language and digital skills as well as specific skills, those important for each sector.

The participating women VoT in the focus groups are of different ages (between 20 and 47 years, with an average of 28 years old), all of them coming from Nigeria and living in Palermo or San Giuseppe Jato. 50% of them is attending secondary school and 50% graduated from secondary education. 50% of them are married; 10% not married but live with a partner; 10% are

single; 10% not married and have never lived with a partner; 10% have a partner but live separated; 10% is divorced. Their legal status varies, while some of them did not indicate their status, others stated to have a permit for assistance to minors, to be recognized as asylum seeker, to have a permit for family reunification reason or to have a subsidiary protection permit. All of them have work experience in different fields, such as cleaning, care work, laundry, restaurants, hairdressing. Only half of them declared being employed, but all of them would like to be employed and mention the fields of cleaning and laundry, service in bars/restaurants, child care and care for the elderly.

## 3.7 Conclusions

This desk and field research has collected facts on TCN women VoT in Italy and has taken into account different views: the women themselves, service providers and employers.

The field research has revealed the most important needs of TCN women VoT in Italy. According to the women themselves, the most pressing need is economical: they need economic support and regular, well-enough paid jobs allowing them to spend time with their children; further, they need better orientation on existing services, on (employment/training) opportunities and on planning their job future, as well as assistance in developing their motivation and self-responsibility. Last, but not least, women mentioned the need to create useful contacts in order to get a job. Service providers mentioned the need of legal support and effective protection for the women VoT, along to sensitive psychological support and socio-economic assistance, which so far is not working very well in Italy. Employers believe that women VoT have specific training needs, ranging from bridging cultural differences to the provision of specific competences needed for specific sectors as well as language training.

From the risks in the delivery of service described by service providers the following recommendations can be derived: it is important to understand the cultural background women come from, to have psychological knowledge and respect each woman's time; economic independence is very important for the women, and so training courses need to be accompanied by concrete support for finding a decent work. Empowerment, as seen in the example of the local association founded by women VoT themselves, can be seen as a good practice. Further, the cooperation with well trained professionals, such as those from the IOM, was mentioned as a good practice example.

Employers have emphasized the need of training in their interviews (see above), and see employment opportunities in various local sectors, such as in hotels, restaurants, personal care. They would recommend employing women at the beginning in more protected areas, e.g. in the kitchen and not immediately as a waitress. A recommendation from employers is also to set up a mentoring programme for women: alongside the trainer, a mentor should take care of the women's psychological difficulties.

The desk research found a lack of precise data on victims of trafficking, but an information on assisted victims of trafficking found more than 1000 assisted victims of trafficking in 2018 and 2019 in Italy. Social service providers did not provide concrete numbers, having apparently no clear idea about quantitative terms of the phenomenon. The majority of service providers has experience with women VoT aged between 17 and 18 years old, but, as emerged from the desk research, trafficking affects also underage girls, and there has been an increase of underage VoT recently, some of them being only 13 years old. While social services providers have experience mainly with women coming from Nigeria, trafficking in Italy involves also women from Romania, Albania and Bulgaria (although, numbers for these nationalities are much

lower). Both desk and field research showed that women VoT have a low level of education, and that women live in various cities across the country.

## **4. Results from Greece**

### **4.1 Introduction and Methodology**

The project 'HEAL - Enhancing Recovery and Integration through networking, Employment Training and Psychological Support for Women Victims of Trafficking' 2019–2021 aims at facilitating the integration of third country national (TCN) women victims of trafficking (VoT) for sexual exploitation in Italy, Greece, Spain and Romania through a healing process comprising of psychological recovery and employment-related skills acquisition. More specifically, the project aims at shared and improved understanding of the identified needs of TCN women VoT and improved cooperation amongst them, service providers and employers; designing a Recovery and Integration Programme, fostering the socio-economic integration of TCN women VoT through their enhanced psychosocial wellbeing and employment-related skills; the development of a database addressing to trained service providers; and enhanced awareness amongst TCN women VoT, service providers, employers and the general public of the rights and services available for the support of victims of trafficking, as well as the methodologies and tools promoted in context of the project.

The present report, developed in context of Work Package 2 (WP2) - Promoting common understanding of needs and networking among key actors, aims to obtain an insight of the profile and perceived needs of TCN women VoT, support service providers and employers, available services, rights of TCN women VoT, existing best practices and main challenges in the work of service providers. Furthermore, it aims to map the current local market demands, necessary skills and needs of TCN women VoT to integrate in the labour market, as well as the current national situation in terms of vacancies and important sectors of the national economy.

In context of the needs assessment, qualitative and quantitative research was conducted. To elaborate, in context of the desk research, former research and official reports were used to explore the characteristics of TCN women VoT, available services providing support to victims of trafficking in human beings, unemployment rates and the current market demands. Additionally, field research with TCN women VoT and their representatives, support service providers and employers was conducted. Even though it was foreseen that focus groups with TCN women VoT would be conducted, individual interviews with TCN women VoT or their representatives were held, due to the vulnerability and special characteristics of the population. Furthermore, one workshop and one additional interview with support service providers were held, as well as individual interviews with employers. Before conducting the qualitative research, participants filled in quantitative questionnaires, in order to gather basic relevant information on the aforementioned topics.

The tools used to conduct the research were developed by KMOP with the contribution of all partners in the beginning of the work package. Consent forms were signed by all participants,

before proceeding with the implementation of the research, in order to ensure their anonymity. In cases of TCN women VoT and their representatives, additional measures were taken, in order to avoid their identification; consent forms only included their initials. In cases participants were reluctant for the discussion to be recorded, notes were taken by the researcher.



## 4.2 Results of the mapping exercise

### *TCN women and victims of trafficking*

According to the report of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM)<sup>9</sup> for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking for January–June 2019, the most common forms of trafficking in Greece are sexual trafficking, beggary and forced labour. In particular, 52 cases of trafficking for sexual exploitation, 28 cases of beggary and 12 cases of forced labour have been recorded and presented in the report. In addition, there were three cases of forced marriage, one case of recruitment in armed conflict and one of exploitation to criminal activities.

The NRM has recorded 82 victims during the aforementioned period, some of which have suffered multiple forms of exploitation. Out of the total number of victims, 58 (72.5%) were women and girls; more specifically, 39 (47.56%) were women and 19 (23.17%) were girls. Forty-three people (52.43%) were from countries outside the EU; however, no segregation of gender/sex and country has been made in the report. Most victims (23 – 28.04%) were 26–35 years old and 0–12 years old (22 – 26.82%); there were also 17 (20.73%) minors aging from 13–17 years, 13 (15.85%) young adults aged 18–25, five (6%) adults aged 36–45 and two people aging 45–55 and 56–65 years old.

No segregation between gender/sex, form of trafficking and country of origin has been presented in the report. Out of the total 82 victims of trafficking, 43 (52.43%) were third country nationals. More specifically, 12 were from Cameroun, seven were from Albania, five were from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and five were from Ghana. Four people were from Nigeria and the same number of people were from Pakistan. Respectively, two people were from Guinea, two were from Iraq and two from Bangladesh. Usually, the educational level of victims of trafficking is basic, as only some have completed secondary education<sup>10</sup>, whilst there are no data on their main cities of residence.

### *Service providers*

The National Referral Mechanism for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking (NRM) in Greece, coordinated by the Office of the National Rapporteur on Human Trafficking and managed by the Social Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA), gathers all data of cases of human trafficking, in cooperation with national bodies, NGOs and relevant organisations.

The Office of the National Rapporteur on Human Trafficking<sup>11</sup>, a public body, is in close cooperation with international and national organisations, as well as with relevant Ministries

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<sup>9</sup> National Referral Mechanism for the Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking (2019). Έκθεση του Εθνικού Μηχανισμού Αναφοράς για την Προστασία θυμάτων Εμπορίας Ανθρώπων (Ιανουάριος–Ιούνιος 2019). Retrieved from: [https://sway.office.com/xpLNDJmZlUnQ8lqa?fbclid=IwARlFgxin3a8m9jtSb0vroSda9eb7Q0\\_jylMmVXf\\_44zvFVX6V09-AdJ-5lc](https://sway.office.com/xpLNDJmZlUnQ8lqa?fbclid=IwARlFgxin3a8m9jtSb0vroSda9eb7Q0_jylMmVXf_44zvFVX6V09-AdJ-5lc)

<sup>10</sup> Micha, E. (N.D.). Practical Legal Guide for handling human trafficking. Project STOP Trafficking.

<sup>11</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2017). Office of the National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings (NRO). Retrieved from <https://www.mfa.gr/en/foreign-policy/global-issues/human-trafficking.html>

for the prevention and protection of victims of human trafficking. The Office also implements trainings and issues guidelines addressing to first-line professionals on the identification of victims and organises awareness raising campaigns, such as the ‘Break the Chain’ campaign, aiming to sensitise the public and businesses and engage key stakeholders for the promotion and establishment of ‘slave free’ supply chains (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017).

The National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA), another public body which does not exclusively work with victims of trafficking, is responsible for the management of the NRM and is also in charge of the coordination of CSOs, organises awareness raising campaigns, cooperates with the police and has shelters and the helpline 197.

The Anti-trafficking services of the Hellenic Police<sup>12</sup> are responsible for reporting cases of trafficking and protecting witnesses who have reported relevant cases. The main offices are located in Attica and Thessaloniki and there are 12 ‘anti-trafficking teams’, supporting all regions. Professionals working in the aforementioned units receive constant training in Greece and abroad.<sup>13</sup>

A21<sup>14</sup> is an NGO with 17 offices in 12 countries, working exclusively to combat trafficking in human beings. They work for the identification and rehabilitation of VoTs, they provide trainings to professionals and organise awareness raising campaigns for the sensitisation of the public. Furthermore, they have shelter homes for the accommodation of victims and they hold a call centre (tel. 1109)<sup>15</sup> for the provision of information in 186 languages, using tele-interpretation services. Within the aforementioned helpline, services of information provision, referrals, reporting and training assistance are provided.

The Centre for Research on Women’s Issues (CRWI) “Diotima”<sup>16</sup> provides legal and psychological support to women and children victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), as well as assistance and support to refugee victims to access services. The organisation also organises trainings of professionals in handling cases of SGBV.

Generation 2.0<sup>17</sup> is an NGO promoting human rights, equality and diversity and contributes to the tackling of racism, xenophobia and discrimination. Within the framework of the organisation, an initiative for the monitoring of a well-known case of labour trafficking in

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<sup>12</sup> Hellenic Police (N.D.). Anti-trafficking services. Retrieved from [http://ypes-dt.gr/index.php?option=ozo\\_content&perform=view&id=226&Itemid=226&lang=EN](http://ypes-dt.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&perform=view&id=226&Itemid=226&lang=EN)

<sup>13</sup> Hellenic Police (N.D.). Trafficking in Human Beings. Retrieved from [http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo\\_content&perform=view&id=3809&Itemid=656&lang=](http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&perform=view&id=3809&Itemid=656&lang=)

<sup>14</sup> A21 (N.D.). Information. Retrieved from <https://www.a21.org/content/greece/gnqxx4?permcode=gnqxx4&site=true>

<sup>15</sup> A21 (N.D.). National Human Trafficking Resource Line - 1109. Retrieved from <https://1109.gr/content/greece-english/gjgcc0>

<sup>16</sup> Centre for Research on Women’s Issues (CRWI) “Diotima” (N.D.). Information. Retrieved from: <https://diotima.org.gr/en/>

<sup>17</sup> Generation 2.0 (N.D.). Information. Retrieved from <https://g2red.org/>

Greece was established. Manolada Watch<sup>18</sup> aims to monitor the work and living conditions of the workers of Manolada (Ilia) and raise awareness regarding the matter.

The General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality<sup>19</sup> is a national body, which holds 27 counselling centres for women victims of violence, providing psychosocial & legal support in several regions of Greece. The organisation also has 18 shelters and a Phone Line (tel. 15900), in context of which experts provide immediate assistance and support to urgent cases of violence.

The Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) provides different forms of support to victims of trafficking and aims to ensure that people in need of international protection receive the protection foreseen by the existing legal framework.<sup>20</sup> Médecins Sans Frontières Greece<sup>21</sup> provide medical and mental health care, operate hospitals and implement surgical programmes.

The NGO Smile of the Child has, amongst others, 10 homes for children victims of violence, including human trafficking, the Day Centre «The House of the Child», health services for therapeutic treatment and psychosocial rehabilitation and three helplines; the National Helpline for Children SOS 1056, which receives and forwards complaints to relevant authorities and conducts on-site interventions in cases of children at risk, the European Hotline for Missing Children 116000, which also supports children who are victims or potential victims of trafficking and the European Helpline for Children and Adolescents 116111, which provides counselling services. The organisation focuses on education and awareness raising, as well as psychological, medical and material support.<sup>22</sup>

Amongst others, PRAKSIS<sup>23</sup> provides healthcare, psychosocial material support, legal counselling and accommodation to victims of trafficking, as well as services of interpretation and cultural mediation.

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<sup>18</sup> Generation 2.0 (2019). Manolada Watch-Information. Retrieved from <https://g2red.org/el/manolada-watch/>

<sup>19</sup> General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality (N.D). Services -Information. Retrieved from <http://www.isotita.gr/emfyli-via/>

<sup>20</sup> Greek Council for Refugees - GCR (GCR). Victims of Violence (Torture, Sexual and Gender Based Violence, Trafficking, etc.). Retrieved from <https://www.gcr.gr/en/our-programs/itemlist/category/60-thymata-vias-vasanismoy-seksoualikis-vias-me-vasi-to-fylo-emporias-k-a>

<sup>21</sup> Médecins Sans Frontières (N.D). Information. Retrieved from: <https://msf.gr/en>

<sup>22</sup> Smile of the Child (N.D). Services for Trafficking-Smuggling. Retrieved from <https://www.hamogelo.gr/gr/en/paidia-thimata-vias:trafficking%20-%20smuggling/>

<sup>23</sup> PRAKSIS (N.D). Information on services provided. Retrieved from <https://praksis.gr/about/>

### Data on employability

According to the Hellenic Statistical Authority<sup>24</sup>, the unemployment rate in Greece, as of February 2020, is 16.1%. The economic sectors with the highest rate of employers in Greece, as of 2019, are wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, transportation and storage, accommodation and food service activities; public administration and defence, compulsory social security, education, human health and social work activities; and agriculture, forestry and fishing.<sup>25</sup>

Some of the skills required to enter the labour market are job-related skills, as well as flexibility and adaptability, the ability to learn new things, communication skills and teamwork.<sup>26</sup>

In terms of possible contacts from the business sector, a list is presented in the table below:

Name	Type of organization	Contact Info	Website
Chamber of Commerce & Industry	Chamber	<a href="mailto:info@acci.gr">info@acci.gr</a>	<a href="https://www.acci.gr/acci/s_hared/index.jsp?context=101">https://www.acci.gr/acci/s_hared/index.jsp?context=101</a>
Chamber of Tradesmen	Chamber	<a href="mailto:eea@eea.gr">eea@eea.gr</a>	<a href="https://www.eea.gr/about-us/">https://www.eea.gr/about-us/</a>
Hellenic Association of Professional Congress Organizers	Association	<a href="mailto:hapco@hapco.gr">hapco@hapco.gr</a>	<a href="http://www.hapco.gr">www.hapco.gr</a>
Chamber of Hotels	Chamber	<a href="mailto:grhotels@otenet.gr">grhotels@otenet.gr</a>	<a href="http://www.grhotels.gr">www.grhotels.gr</a>
General Pan-Hellenic Federation of Tourism Enterprises	Association	<a href="mailto:info@poet.gr">info@poet.gr</a>	<a href="http://www.poet.gr">www.poet.gr</a>
Hellenic Hoteliers Federation	Association	<a href="mailto:info@hhf.gr">info@hhf.gr</a>	<a href="http://www.hhf.gr">www.hhf.gr</a>

<sup>24</sup> Hellenic Statistical Authority (2020). Labour force (Monthly data) / February 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.statistics.gr/en/statistics/-/publication/SJO02/->

<sup>25</sup> Hellenic Statistical Authority (2019). Employment/2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.statistics.gr/el/statistics/-/publication/SEL21/->

<sup>26</sup> National Institute of Labour and Human Resources (2016). Σύστημα Διάγνωσης Αναγκών Αγοράς Εργασίας [System for the Diagnosis of the Needs of the Labour Market] - Επιτελική Σύνοψη Παραδοτέων Β' Φάσης (Ιούλιος-Δεκέμβριος 2015). Retrieved from:

[http://www.eiead.gr/publications/docs/%CE%95%CF%80%CE%B9%CF%84%CE%B5%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE\\_%CF%83%CF%8D%CE%BD%CE%BF%CF%88%CE%B7\\_%CE%B4%CE%B9%CE%AC%CE%B3%CE%BD%CF%89%CF%83%CE%B7%CF%82\\_%CE%B1%CE%BD%CE%B1%CE%B3%CE%BA%CF%8E%CE%BD\\_11-2-16.pdf](http://www.eiead.gr/publications/docs/%CE%95%CF%80%CE%B9%CF%84%CE%B5%CE%BB%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE_%CF%83%CF%8D%CE%BD%CE%BF%CF%88%CE%B7_%CE%B4%CE%B9%CE%AC%CE%B3%CE%BD%CF%89%CF%83%CE%B7%CF%82_%CE%B1%CE%BD%CE%B1%CE%B3%CE%BA%CF%8E%CE%BD_11-2-16.pdf)

Greek Tourism Confederation	Association	<a href="mailto:info@sete.gr">info@sete.gr</a>	<a href="http://www.sete.gr">www.sete.gr</a>
Hellenic Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen & Merchants	Association	<a href="mailto:info@gsevee.gr">info@gsevee.gr</a>	<a href="https://www.gsevee.gr/epikoinwnia">https://www.gsevee.gr/epikoinwnia</a>
Hellenic Association of Young Entrepreneurs	Association	<a href="mailto:info@oesyne.gr">info@oesyne.gr</a>	<a href="http://oesyne.gr/">http://oesyne.gr/</a>
Hellenic Confederation of Commerce and Entrepreneurship	Association	<a href="mailto:info@esee.gr">info@esee.gr</a>	<a href="https://esee.gr/epikinonia-esee/">https://esee.gr/epikinonia-esee/</a>
Research Institute of Hellenic Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen & Merchants	Association	<a href="mailto:info@imegsevee.gr">info@imegsevee.gr</a>	<a href="https://imegsevee.gr/">https://imegsevee.gr/</a>
Hellenic Federation of Entreprises	Association	<a href="mailto:info@sev.org.gr">info@sev.org.gr</a>	<a href="https://en.sev.org.gr/">https://en.sev.org.gr/</a>
Career Office of University of Piraeus	University	<a href="mailto:gdiasyn@unipi.gr">gdiasyn@unipi.gr</a>	<a href="https://career.unipi.gr/">https://career.unipi.gr/</a>
Career Office of University of Peloponnese	University	<a href="mailto:rectorate@uop.gr">rectorate@uop.gr</a>	<a href="https://www.uop.gr/en/contact-us">https://www.uop.gr/en/contact-us</a>

### 4.3 Results of the focus groups with TCN women VoT

Four TCN women VoT were interviewed to investigate their needs. Three of the women have been in Greece for three years, whilst the other one has been in the country for 17 years.

Due to the difficulty in approaching victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation themselves during the contact restrictions in place for the Covid-19 crisis, interviews with representatives of TCN women VoT were also conducted, in order to gather more information. A list of the participants and the women they represented can be found in the following table.

<i>Professional</i>	<i>2 women – have been in the country for 16 and 2.5 years respectively</i>
<i>Professional</i>	<i>2 women – have been in Greece for approximately 2 years</i>
<i>Professional</i>	<i>1 woman – have been in Greece for approximately 10 years</i>
<i>Professional</i>	<i>20 women – have been in Greece for approximately 10 years</i>
<i>Professional</i>	<i>7 women – came from Africa after 2017</i>
<i>Professional</i>	<i>10 women – have been in the county for 6 months – 2 years</i>
<i>Professional</i>	<i>1 woman – has been in Greece for approximately one year</i>
<i>Professional</i>	<i>3 women – have been in Greece for 1-3 years</i>

#### *Difficulties faced by TCN women VoT*

Many of the TCN women VoT and the ones that were represented have reported that one of their major difficulties they face is the language. More specifically, one of the women reported to not be familiar with reading and writing, ‘but’, as she described, ‘I somewhat speak English and now that my husband is in jail, I find it hard to communicate with people in Greece’. Another woman agreed; ‘I try to speak English, but not everyone speaks English’. Some of the representatives added that the language barriers also lead to other difficulties, such as finding a job, accessing services, socialising and difficulties in their everyday life. The representative of the 20 women clarified that they are reluctant to address services, because of their lack of fluency, as they are afraid that they will not be able to communicate their needs.

Unemployment was another common difficulty women face. The woman that has been in Greece for 17 years supported that even though she integrated in the labour market shortly upon her arrival, in the industry of agriculture, she is currently unemployed and struggling to find a job, although she understands and speaks Greek. Representatives confirmed that getting a job remains a barrier for the women they represented, especially for those who do not speak Greek.

The representative of two women supported that one of them has found socialisation easier, as she is living with her husband, but has faced difficulties in finding a job, even though she was employed at first. The other woman VoT has faced several difficulties in terms of language and socialisation, while she also has trouble finding a job, since she has never worked before and she does not know where to look. The representative clarified that the woman needs constant support in many aspects of everyday life.

One of the women that has been in Greece for approximately three years focused on the difficulties she faces in raising her two kids. One of the representatives also reported that the woman they represented struggles in raising her children, due to lack of employment and income. They added that she finds it difficult to combine work and raise her children.

Access to public and healthcare services and cover of basic needs was another identified difficulty. The professional that represented three women highlighted that their accommodation status remains unsure and unstable. The representative of the 10 women reported that they do not have access to basic healthcare, as well as social services. Another representative highlighted the difficulty of the woman they represented in accessing services and obtaining the necessary documents, as she does not know the language. Furthermore, one woman mentioned that public services, such as hospitals and schools do not have interpreters, making the communication harder. One representative further clarified that 'they might need to book an appointment with a doctor and face delays'. The representative of the seven women reported that they face difficulties in relation to accommodation and living conditions, as well as legal documents; they also have medical problems.

One of the women that were interviewed reported that even though life in Greece is quite good in comparison to the life in her country of origin, she has faced obstacles in terms of the language, access to healthcare, while she has faced difficulties during her stay in hospitality centres. One participant reported to have forcedly come to Greece, accompanying her husband, while another one had to leave her husband due to abusive behaviour.

TCN women VoT also need material and financial support, especially since they might be unemployed for specific periods of time and need to cover their needs.

### *Needs of TCN women VoT and resources they would need to improve their condition*

In terms of support and resources they need to improve their condition, most TCN women VoT and representatives mentioned assistance in learning the national language and information on where and how to look for jobs. The woman that has been in Greece longer reported that she only needs support to find a job. One professional reported that the women they represented has expressed that they would need their previously acquired degrees to be recognised.

In addition, women also need psychological and medical support, training structures, occupational guidance and training programmes, so that they can have an official document that could assist them in getting a job. They also need to be monitored and evaluated by

experts throughout the process of the integration; peer support groups would also be beneficial, in order to avoid their re-victimisation. The representative of the 20 women highlighted that they also need psychological support in order to smoothly integrate into society. Better accommodation and employment are also crucial.

Many women and representatives also underlined the need of material and financial support, for them and their children, until they are independent. One elaborated that such support is needed in order to 'shop for her children'. One representative provided the example of asylum seekers, who receive their ruling and are no longer eligible for financial support, while existing bonuses were reported to be inadequate. Many representatives suggested that holistic service provision is needed and not partial by several organisations.

Women with children indicated that they need support in child care, meaning a place where children can stay while they are at work or attend Greek lessons. The representative of the seven women underlined that they need support in childcare, in order for them to work.

### *Women's knowledge of what rights and services they can benefit from*

In general, women seemed to have basic knowledge on their rights, as they have received information by organisations, the police and the Asylum Office. To elaborate, one of the women victims reported to have learnt her rights in terms of health and employment through organisations that provided her support upon her arrival. One participant highlighted that her rights include her 'children going to school', free medical care and employment. She reported to have learnt the aforementioned rights by the organisation that provides her with accommodation and other refugees she communicates with. One of the represented women was reported to have learnt about her rights by the police, which is usually their first contact and, thus, informs them about their rights; information regarding their rights are also provided by the National Referral Mechanism, in the consent forms provided to victims of trafficking, which include information on the phenomenon and victims' rights. There are also available online platforms, such as the one of the Greek Council of Refugees (GCR) that provide relevant information. The representative of the seven women also confirmed that the women they represented learnt about their rights by NGOs, while they are aware of organisations that provide support to matters of their everyday life.

On the other hand, another TCN women VoT has shown to have limited knowledge of her rights, as she has learnt about them in practice. She has learnt that she can file for a divorce, as well as that she can work, but did not mention where she got the information. The representative of the 10 women have partial information of their rights, obtained by NGOs.

Women also seemed to be somewhat familiar with organisations they can benefit from. One woman mentioned ARSIS, UNCHR and 'the Medicines'; they provide her with food and clothes. She reported to have visited SolidarityNow, ARSIS and Medicines of the World, while she would like to visit UNCHR, but is not familiar with the address. Another woman suggested that she would like to visit UNCHR, 'but everyone says that this is not possible'. One of the women has



visited some organisations for medical reasons and reported to have been treated adequately; she referred to NGOs such as ARSIS and Medicines Without Borders. The Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) was another organisation that another woman has addressed to, for matters related to asylum. Women have reported to their representatives that they would like the procedures not to be that long, as sometimes bureaucracy can be a major difficulty.

In terms of public organisations/entities, one woman suggested that she has received health and employment services by public organisations, but was not aware of organisations, as she used to live in a small city. Nonetheless, she has approached an organisation that supports her to integrate in the labour market. One of the women that were represented has also addressed to OAED to receive support in finding a job, the national body that is in charge, amongst others, of assisting in finding a job, labour market policies, employment counselling services, vocational training and employment programmes; however, her request was not met, as she did not receive any call back. Another participant has addressed to the asylum and tax office to get her papers ready. One woman was reported to have visited asylum services, as well as hospitals and other basic services. A professional that represented two women described that one of them has addressed public authorities by herself and was satisfied by the services, whilst the other one needs support to address such services, but remained satisfied with the provided services.

One of the women that has been in Greece for three years seemed to be really satisfied with the organisations she has visited and the services she was provided. She elaborated that they have supported her with accommodation and medical care. She also reported that one of the organisations 'enrolled three of my children in school. They said it was mandatory and if they did not attend, I would have problems with the police'. Some of the organisations she mentioned were Medicines of the World and UNCHR that has provided her with accommodation. She has visited organisations for material support (clothes and food), along with other people living in her neighbourhood.

#### *Needs of TCN women VoT to enter the labour market*

In terms of TCN women VoT smoother integration in the labour market, they elaborated that they need guidance on where to look for jobs and information on documents they need to gather. They would also need support with the language, as they do not understand what papers are necessary. One of them characteristically stated 'I went to open a bank account by myself and they were asking me to sign papers without explaining me what they were. I am afraid because I don't know what is written on them'. Mentors are also important, because women might feel vulnerable and alone, as they are living in a different country, under different circumstances; psychologists and social workers would be ideal to provide such guidance.

It was commonly agreed that in order to enter the labour market, women need to attend Greek lessons, in order to improve their communication, as they have reported that it seems to be hard for employers to trust them if they do not speak Greek and can cause problems to the collaboration with colleagues. One representative specified that Greek lessons could be taught

through experiential training. One representative underlined that women should gradually integrate in the labour market, through complete programmes.

They added that they would need employers' understanding and support because of the several barriers they have to face. One of the women also mentioned the forms of discrimination and fear expressed by employers and other people as another difficulty they have to overcome. A representative of two women suggested that 'we need to find more employers that would hire migrants and refugees'.

They do not feel that their knowledge is adequate to integrate in the labour market. One of them supported that a degree would be useful, along with communication skills; one provided the example that when she arrived 'men used to give me their hand to greet me – this does not happen in my country. I don't know these things and I don't want to look weird'. The woman that has been in Greece longer added that she speaks four languages and would be 'nice to work somewhere that these languages are needed'. One of the participants that felt that her knowledge is inadequate supported that she would like to find a job that degrees are not considered a prerequisite. Some felt that their competences are limited, as they 'only know how to cook and sew'. Half agreed that a relevant degree, providing their knowledge and competences is needed. One of them added that technological skills are also crucial.

Women did not refer to specific skills they need to acquire, other than language lessons, as every skill would be beneficial to them. One of the women has expressed that she is confident she has adequate previously acquired skills to enter the labour market. Women have expressed that they would like more opportunities for employability to be available and to acquire communication skills.

Further education and training programmes would contribute to women feeling they have adequate knowledge. Nonetheless, women would need financial support to attend such trainings. In terms of skills that would contribute to their smoother integration in the labour market, one of the representatives reported that women have not expressed specific skills; however, language skills are needed. Women would be interested in attending relevant seminars. One representative suggested that the woman they represented needs to attend lessons of Greek and English, but to also be provided a certificate proving their newly acquired knowledge. Training on special skills is needed and work as interns for their smoother integration in the labour market. Conflict management was another skill that was considered beneficial.

One representative clarified that the trainings should focus on skills related to existing vacancies in the labour market. A representative suggested that an online platform in different languages, like English, Greek, French and Russian, where women could look for open vacancies would be useful, so that they be more independent. More trainings should also be available, in order to gain expertise.

In terms of the working conditions, women seemed not to have many expectations. One participant highlighted that she would need a job that would permit her to stay home in case her children are sick. Another participant added that flexible working hours are needed in case you have children. Women also 'need to be respected, in terms of working hours, employers' behaviour and ways of working'.

However, one woman who has been in Greece for 16 years, has attended training and obtained a barista degree and will soon receive a degree in tourism business, with the support of an organisation, so it would be ideal for her to work in one of the two aforementioned sectors.

Three of the women declared that they were not interested in participating in further stages of the project, while one stated she was unsure. One of the representatives suggested that the two women they represented would be interested in participating in further stages of the project, anticipating to find a job. Another representative of two women indicated that they would be eager to participate in the upcoming stages of the project.

## **4.4 Results from the workshop with service providers**

One workshop with five service providers (psychologist, sociologist, three social workers) and one additional interview was conducted; all were women. One was working in an NGO specialising in intervention programmes addressing adult victims of trafficking, which also holds a helpline for information provision and reporting, as well as services of accommodation, psychological and legal support, and legal representation. One was occupied in a national body providing shelter to abused women, which is also a part of a network that holds shelters in all regions of the country. Another participant works in a Community Centre of a Municipality, which is in charge of financial assistance, and has former experience working with vulnerable groups, through her work with other organisations and the police. Similarly, one of the five professionals works in a shelter for minors who are victims of violence and also has former experience in context of her work in a national body, which provides accommodation. Finally, one of the social workers worked in an NGO providing shelter to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and another participant works in an organisation providing psychological support, accommodation and covers basic needs.

### *Rights of women VoT in local and EU level*

As reported by a professional working in an organisation specialising in trafficking in human beings, in general the Greek legislation liaises with the European provisions, in regards to the protection of victims. More specifically, victims are entitled to receive support by the State or NGOs, in terms of accommodation, psychosocial support, interpretation and legal representation in court, whilst when they have received a residence permit for humanitarian causes or auxiliary protection, with the support of a relevant organisation, they are entitled to work. One of the participants referred to the additional support foreseen by the Istanbul Convention, for people who have been victimised in other countries; nonetheless, the practical implementation of such provisions seems to be difficult. One of the professionals raised the concern of the difficulties to the provision of information to the victims.

It was also mentioned that the rights of victims of trafficking are similar to any other vulnerable groups. However, it was highlighted that, as trafficking is an international crime, the procedures are different and victims should be provided adequate protection in order to report and be identified by the police and the district attorney. Another professional pointed out that some of the victims are not willing to cooperate with the authorities; however, they can also be recognised by the district attorney. However, these victims are recognised and treated as SGBV cases by certain organisations.

### *Ways cultural elements affect human trafficking*

The different language, along with the lack of interpreters in the existent services/organisations, even though victims are entitled to services of interpretation, was considered to be a barrier affecting professionals' work.

Few of the participants confirmed the influence “juju” has, as a practice and cultural element, on the phenomenon of trafficking, especially in Africa, while other practices are common in Arabic countries. Threats that are formed in context of such practices may address women’s families. The psychologist working in an organisation supporting victims of trafficking confirmed that elements of magic and religion are quite common to women coming from Africa. She added that sometimes women might be aware that they come to Greece for prostitution, without identifying themselves as victims of trafficking. Such cultural elements are interconnected with financial elements, i.e. the financial situation of the woman, and her position in the society; in some cases the woman ‘is not recognised/treated as a human’. According to one of the participants, these factors may also have an impact in the under reporting of cases, since women may be discouraged due to the religious aspects of the aforementioned practices. Another professional disagreed, mentioning that women are not discouraged, but they have a different viewpoint and service providers should be careful when addressing these issues.

One of the participants referred to the special characteristics of the Roma community. Characteristically, they underlined that family members may traffic their relatives; for example fathers and uncles might traffic a child and force them to beggary. It is usual for the aforementioned people to come to Greece from Bulgaria. Cases of trafficking of minors can be identified in Eastern Europe, ‘in order for the rest of the family to have an income’. People from Eastern Europe were reported to present lack of trust towards authorities, due to the high levels of corruption in their countries; this usually leads to the avoidance of addressing /reporting to the authorities in Greece. Worth mentioning is also the fact that it seems to be a common practice for victims coming from the abovementioned countries to be ‘seduced’ by partners, friends and acquaintances. Women coming from Middle East present high levels of embarrassment to report their victimisation, in order not for their partner and family to know about the situation.

Their gender, as a cultural element, is also a factor, as women have a vulnerable position which increases their risk of victimisation. It was mentioned that many times women do not identify themselves as victims, as they might believe that they have provided their consent.

### *Difficulties of service providers reaching women VoT*

One of the participants underlined the difficulty for women to trust professionals, ‘as in their eyes we are public officials’. Another participant indicated that there is lack of trust and disbelief towards the authorities and towards service providers themselves, due to their former experiences. However, this changes over time and a relationship of trust is built.

One of the service providers referred to the difficulty in approaching women VoT who are not accommodated in a shelter, while another one added that they face difficulties in identifying TCN women VoT, as many victims are unwilling to approach experts, while experts are not adequately trained. Language barriers constitute another difficulty that was identified, especially in the cases that interpretation services are not provided. Another difficulty of

approaching women VoT was the different cultural background and context they have, that might be hard for professionals to comprehend, especially without training.

One of the participants mentioned the lack of available information and trainings on handling cases of trafficking, especially in other regions outside Athens; they characteristically reported 'I don't know what happens after I make references of (potential) victims to organisations'. They also added 'I don't know if actions of holistic approach are available in Greece'.

### *Identified risks when delivering support services*

Logistic matters, such as funding of available shelters, sometimes consist barriers in delivering adequate support services. For example, the operation of short-term Accommodation Centres depends on the funding received. It was underlined that services should be available in all regions of the country, whilst more holistic approaches are needed. Support service providers have to be very careful when handling cases, in order to avoid secondary victimisation of the women. The recording and follow-up of cases is also another barrier professionals have to deal with. Another participant clarified that the risks when delivering support services to women VoT are the same as to all vulnerable groups.

Information provision and understanding of the situation cannot be covered only by individual counselling. Trainings are of vital importance, but they need to be adjusted in the needs of the women.

Another participant referred to the difficulties faced in order to contribute to the integration of the women. Even though relevant services are provided, women need to integrate in the labour market and be independent. They added that a safety network in their everyday life would be beneficial.

One of the participants working in a specialised organisation mentioned that theoretically the risk of victims to be approached by traffickers and relevant organisations still lurks, but they have not seen it many times. However, the organisation operates with confidentiality and anonymity; only victims know about the location of the organisation's offices and shelters. Precaution measures are taken in cases the victims are about to testify in court, as traffickers are also informed about the dates. Another professional added that in cases the identity and whereabouts of the victim are revealed to the trafficker, professionals are at risk as well.

One participant working in an organisation open to the public, raised the concern on the steps she needs to follow in case a victim visits her organisation, especially in case the victim is accompanied by the trafficker. One professionals expressed that colleagues might fear or be reluctant of handling relevant cases, due to the existing risks and lack of protection for professionals.

Professionals reported that organisations should focus on providing specific/specialised support, in order for it to be adequate. Systematic and holistic support is needed for women's integration and independence. Another professional disagreed, suggesting that each first-line organisation should be able to provide support to these women, as even though trafficking

might be a complex phenomenon, it is not as complex so that organisations are not capable of making a referral to the National Referral Mechanism. She underlined that this is of high importance as victims will not address organisation with this specific request, thus, first line professionals should be able to identify victims and refer cases. She provided the example of organisations and authorities, especially located outside the region of Attica and Thessaloniki, that cannot identify such cases.

### *Existing gaps in legislation affecting the quality of their work*

In terms of existing gaps in legislation, one participant clarified 'even if there are no gaps in legislation, the reality might be different'. For example, cultural mediation, accommodation, material and legal support might be protected by law, but they are not always provided in practice. This was reported to affect the quality of professionals' work, in terms of being unable to refer victims to organisations. One of the participants pointed out that such inefficiencies also cause personal cancellation to the professionals.

The professional working in the organisation specialising in cases of trafficking supported that there are no gaps in the legislation, but they exist in the implementation of the law. They provided the example of the ineffective official identification of victims when the criminal act or the request has taken place in another country. Another participant added that such issues are addressed to the Istanbul Convention, whilst the other professional suggested that even though such matters might be addressed, this does not correspond to the reality. Other professionals provided the example of restrictive orders, that even though are foreseen to protect the victims from the perpetrators, this does not happen in practice.

Other inefficiencies that were reported was the example of the 'possibility for the women victims to testify by distance with a camera, without being in the court room and what we hear from the courts is that they don't have connection to the internet or camera'. Financial compensation is also foreseen by the law, but it is not provided.

### *Success stories and good practices*

One of the participants highlighted that they are forbidden to share success stories. In terms of good practices, they indicated that the workshop they took part in is one of the European good practices that are adapted to the national context.

The professional working in the organisation specialising in trafficking provided examples of women that were safely repatriated, started working and had their own families. She clarified that they connect women that return to their country of origin with organisations located there. Another victim they supported was recently granted a scholarship in a private college and will graduate this summer, while 'she wanted to publicly speak about her experience, which is really brave and rare'. Other women that had relevant experiences are now in a good psychological state and have entered the labour market.

Professionals suggested that organisations should be prepared to handle such cases and have specific expertise, in order to contribute to women's integration, while services should provide long-term support. Support should also be provided even after victims have entered the labour market. The creation of relationships of trust was of high importance, thus, continuous support is needed. One of the professional supported that existing service provision is adequate and what is needed is for the women to have a supportive social environment and supportive peer groups, which could be achieved by providing information and making intervention in same-language/ethnicity groups (communities). One highlighted that this is highly seen in African women, who want to stay with the community.



## **4.5 Results of the interviews with employers**

Six employers have been interviewed in order to map the local market demands and the employment opportunities for TCN women VoT. A female independent professional, a female manager of a luxury tourist company, a female professional working in a private counselling centre, a male director of a company, specialising in the collection, transport and management of waste, one male owner of an accounting office and a female hotel manager participated in the research.

### *Local market demands*

In terms of the current needs of the local market, and more specifically of the local stores, the independent professional suggested that after the national and European crisis of the last decade, they have increased. Local businesses should receive support, especially for those that 'feed' the local economy, whilst entrepreneurs should be encouraged and be given motivation. The manager of the tourist company mentioned that the local market of tourism currently needs tourist guides, who are fluent in a variety of languages, such as Spanish and Korean and with cultural knowledge. The professional working in the private counselling centre suggested that new financial measures/ products and openness are needed for the local market to open up.

According to the independent professional, tourism, agriculture/ cultivation, and independent professions are the sectors with the most vacancies. However, they pointed out that agriculture is usually degraded. They provided examples, such as hotels, food services, administrative positions, such as secretary support. The manager of the tourist company mentioned that their sector constantly has open vacancies, as it is one of the main industries in Greece; however, they pointed out that 'permanence is not one of the industry's characteristics'. The sectors of constructions and sales were reported to have vacancies open. Secretaries and psychosocial support services do not have as many vacancies. The hotel manager suggested that open vacancies are available in tourism.

According to the director of the waste management company, the sectors with most vacancies are those of sales and accounting. They also confirmed that their sector, i.e. recycling and circular economy, have available vacancies, but a relevant scientific degree is a prerequisite. The eminent needs of the labour market is for vacancies to be covered, as presented by the accountant. The accountant suggested that there are vacancies in construction and tourism businesses, while there are available vacancies in their sector.

### *Potential employment opportunities of TCN women VoT*

The independent professional suggested that with the right support and guidance, taking into account previously acquired skills, TCN women VoT can be employed in the aforementioned sectors. The manager of the tourist company added that TCN women VoT could be employed

in this sector, assisting groups, as they just need to speak the language and have communication skills.

Women should attend relevant trainings, developed and implemented by experts who understand their needs and can provide the right training for specific/specialised cases. The independent professional suggested that such trainings should be adjusted in each case, depending on the needs and the characteristics of the women. The manager of the tourist company added that such trainings should also focus on the development of technological and managerial skills, as they could be beneficial. According to the hotel manager, communication skills are of vital importance, while women would need mentoring and support.

The professional working in the private counselling centre suggested that it would be beneficial for TCN women VoT to work in administrative positions, in order to enhance their communication skills and learn to manage relationships. The hotel manager indicated that seasonal job opportunities are optimal for TCN women VoT, as well as tourism, cleaning and home services. According to the accountant, TCN women VoT could be occupied in secretariat positions, depending on their skills, but they would need to acquire digital and communication skills and speak fluent Greek. They should also receive practical information regarding job interviews. Before entering the labour market and during their work, psychological support should be provided.

According to the director of the waste management company, TCN women are usually low educated and would need to attend basic language trainings. Thus, they could be occupied in the sectors of agriculture, production and packaging. They added that since hygiene conditions in their countries are degraded, they should receive a health certificate before entering the labour market. Nonetheless, they highlighted that their company has participated in a project for the employability of former prison inmates and they are open to participate in relevant projects for the integration of vulnerable populations in the labour market.

In terms of skills needed to be acquired by TCN women VoT, two participants indicated that language skills are of great importance. Furthermore, social, communication and technological skills are considered valuable. They highlighted that employers should also contribute to the smoother integration of TCN women VoT in the labour market, as previously acquired skills will come to surface, or relevant competences will be cultivated in the process.

According to the independent professional, a nice CV would enhance the hiring probability of these women. Guidance and support, at least in their first steps is also vital. The appropriate information provision of high quality would also help both employers and TCN women VoT. The manager of the tourist company supported that other than a good CV, guidance and acquaintances are of vital importance.

In terms of training and skills, the professional working in the private counselling centre reported that women should focus on understanding their own skills and learn good ways to present themselves. They should also be supported in compiling a nice CV. Openness and

adaptability were identified as important competence that would help them integrate in the labour market.

## 4.6 Factual Aspects

### *TCN women VoT and Representatives*

Four TCN women VoT filled in the quantitative questionnaires. They were 32, 52, 39 and 38 years old respectively. Two have completed secondary education, while one still attends or has not complete secondary education; one did not answer. One reported to be single, but living together with her partner, whilst two are divorced; one did not answer the relevant question. All four are under humanitarian protection. Their countries of origin are Syria, Georgia, Kuwait and Morocco and are all currently living in Thessaloniki.

In total, 8 representatives of TCN women VoT have completed the quantitative questionnaire. The women they represented were 35, 41, 25, 30, 25, 27, 42, 26 years old; one has not been to school at all and one has completed primary education, six still attend or have not completed secondary education. Three are divorced, one of whom also has a child, two are married but live with their partner, one is widowed and one has gotten out of a forced marriage. One is a recognised refugee, four are asylum seekers and two have received protection for victims of trafficking in human beings; one woman has received protection for 'family reunification'. Their countries of origin are Nigeria (2), Morocco, Cameroun, Afghanistan, Iran, Moldova; five live in Thessaloniki and one live in Athens, whilst one has recently moved from Athens to Switzerland.

One of the women reported to have worked as an interpreter and currently has the same job, while another has worked 'with animals and cooking'. The latter is currently unemployed, but has declared her interest in getting a job. Based on her former experience, she would like to 'work with animals, cooking or nursing elder people'. The older woman mentioned that she has worked all the years she has resided in Greece and before her arrival in the country she has worked in Russia. She has been occupied in agriculture, nursing elder people and cleaning. Even though she is currently unemployed, she expressed her interest in working in a less tiring job, due to medical reasons. One participant has worked in the textile sector and is currently unemployed, but willing to work in the same sector. One representative reported that the woman is a sex worker and would like to work as a cleaning lady.

Two representatives reported that the women they represented have worked as cleaning ladies and one has worked in bars as a minor in their origin country. One lady has worked in companies of food packaging. In Greece, she has worked in a unit producing cosmetics and she currently works occasionally. Her ideal sector would be cosmetics production. One representative reported that the woman would not like to answer questions regarding her employment. Four of the represented women are currently unemployed; three would like to work and one would rather not. One explained that she would like to work in anything that provides her stability, income and morning hours and two would prefer to work in food services. One of the represented women is unemployed but would like to work, in any sector.

### *Support service providers*

In total, six support service providers have filled in the quantitative questionnaires.

They were all women and worked in Caritas Athens, A21, the Shelter for women victims of Violence of the Municipality of Athens and the Counselling Centre for Women Victims of SGBV; one did not answer the relevant question. In terms of their role in their organisation, four were social workers, one was a counsellor of social support and one was a psychologist and coordinator of awareness raising programmes. Most (four) reported that they do not specifically work with TCN women VoT, but with TCN women in general. Two exclusively work with the aforementioned population and one does not work with TCN women VoT at all.

Almost all could not identify the characteristics of TCN women VoT or did not answer the relevant questions. One participant reported that the average number of victims of human trafficking in Greece is at least 3,000, while at least 2,000 are third country nationals and their average age is 23 years old. Another participant suggested that the average number of victims of trafficking in Greece is 15, 30% of whom are TCN women VoT and their average age is 17 years old. Three participants supported that they either attend or have not completed secondary education.

Athens and Thessaloniki are the most common cities of residence of TCN women VoT. One added big cities, while two specifically mentioned Lesvos, Crete and Larissa; one did not answer. Two supported that the most common countries of origin are African countries, while one specifically mentioned Nigeria and another one added Congo and Cameroun. Indonesia and Philippines were added by another professional. Others added countries of Eastern Europe, and one mentioned Moldova; one did not answer. In terms of the most common forms of trafficking they all agreed that is sexual exploitation, followed by labour trafficking and forced beggary.

One of the professionals reported that their organisation provides psychological, social, material and employability support, as well as healthcare and legal representation. The organisations of two other participants provide psychological and social support, as well as protection, and make referrals for accommodation. One supported they provide social support and one did not answer.

Three did not specify the approximate number of victims supported by their organisation. The organisation of one of the participants was reported to provide support to 10 victims of human trafficking and 10 TCN women VoT, while another one stated that they support one to two people and two to four TCN women VoT per year, while their mean age is 25 and 20-30 years old respectively. Another participant reported that their organisation provides support to approximately two victims and TCN women VoT. In terms of the level of education of the TCN women VoT they support, two reported that they have not completed or still attending secondary education, one of whom clarified that 'it is inexistent', one supported that 'it cannot be measured, as they have technical skills outside the educational system' and two did not answer. Finally, one participant reported that they are illiterate.

Four were not aware or did not answer on the number of women supported by their organisation have children or work. According to one of the professionals, approximately five

women they support have children and three of them work, while another one suggested that two have children and none of them works. Regarding the most common sectors they are occupied, professionals indicated food services and cafeterias, hotels, cleaning, baby-sitting and sales; two did not answer.

Two of the service providers expressed that they do not feel adequately trained to handle cases of TCN women VoT, two suggested that they somewhat feel adequately trained and one was confident; one did not answer. Three have not attended relevant trainings, one has attended networking trainings, organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Centre for Social Solidarity and one reported that their organisation is specialised in handling such cases.

Five suggested to be aware of other services providing support to victims of trafficking, such as A21, EKKA, DIOTIMA, SOFFA, the Greek Council for Refugees (GCR) and the General Secretariat for Family Policy and Gender Equality, which provide psychosocial, legal and material support, networking, protection, accommodation and employability. Two supported that the same applies for TCN women VoT, two did not know and one suggested that there are no specialised services.

### *Employers*

In total, six employers filled in the quantitative questionnaire. One was a psychologist working in a private counselling centre and has acquired a bachelor in psychology and a master's degree in special pedagogy. Another one was the director of a waste management company, with a master's degree. One was an owner of an accounting office and has completed higher education. One was a female hotel manager who has attended higher education. One was a manager of a luxury tourist company. And one was the director of an organisation working with third country nationals, that employs the aforementioned population as interpreters and cultural mediators.

According to the psychologist, the unemployment rate in Greece is approximately 16%, whilst the unemployment rate of women is less than that of men. According to the manager of the waste management company the unemployment rate in Greece reaches 19%, whilst the rate of female unemployment reaches 25%. The unemployment rate in Greece is 20%, as reported by the accountant, and female unemployment reaches 23%. The hotel manager indicated that unemployment rate is 17%, the one affecting women is approximately 20%.

According to the psychologist, the regions with the highest rates of unemployment are those of Northern Greece, and specifically the regions of Macedonia and Thrace, as the production activity is non-existent. The director of the waste management company and the hotel manager suggested that the region with the highest rate of unemployment is Epirus. The accountant indicated that Macedonia has the highest levels of unemployment.

In terms of the most important economic sectors in Greece, the psychologist mentioned tourism, agriculture, manufacturing and production activity. The director of the waste

management company suggested that the most important sectors are construction, tourism, shipyard and export. Tourism and agriculture are the most important economic sectors in Greece, according to the accountant. Tourism, agriculture, the public sector and food services are the most important economic sectors, according to the hotel manager.

The psychologist suggested that communication, digital, managerial and time management skills are required for employees in Greece. The director of the waste management company indicated the specialisation in new technologies and technical training. Communication, digital and organisational skills, as well as punctuality are important characteristics employees' should have, according to the accountant. The hotel manager suggested that employees should have a secondary education degree, respect, they should be eager to work, while higher education is optimal.

Agriculture, manual-labour businesses and jobs requiring the knowledge of more than two languages were identified as the ones with the most vacancies by the psychologist, while the director of the waste management company mentioned sales and accounting offices. Construction businesses currently have more vacancies, as reported by the accountant. Tourism and food services currently have vacancies as indicated by the hotel manager.

## 4.7 Conclusions

The data of the field research regarding the characteristics of the women have mainly confirmed former literature. All three target groups confirmed that the most common countries of origin are Nigeria, Morocco, Cameroun and Congo, while most women live in Thessaloniki and Athens, probably to the existent services available in the two big cities. In terms of women's educational level, most appeared to either still attend or to have not completed secondary education. However, some of the women have previously acquired skills, but some do not have a degree proving that, either because they did not obtain it, or because it was not recognised in Greece.

According to the professionals that participated in the research, there are no gaps in the legal framework; nonetheless, not all rights are protected in practice and not all the forms of support foreseen by law are provided. TCN women VoT seem to be familiar with their basic rights, as they are informed by the police, organisations and relevant documents provided by the National Referral Mechanism and the Greek Council for Refugees.

In terms of difficulties faced by professionals, they suggested that they sometimes have difficulty in approaching and identifying TCN women VoT, especially if they are not accommodated. Cultural aspects also affect the phenomenon; magic and religious practices remain evident, especially for women coming from African countries. They do not only constitute a difficulty for professionals, but they also have an impact on victims' self-identification.

On the other hand, the two most highlighted difficulties faced by the women are the language and the unemployment. Some participants also referred to the difficulty in accessing public and healthcare services, socialisation and difficulty in raising their children. In terms of support, they would need assistance in learning Greek, employment, financial and material support, guidance in several aspects of their everyday life, such as the issue of necessary documents and childcare support.

As depicted, tourism, sales, manufacturing, baby-sitting, nursing of elder people, agriculture/cultivating, local stores, food services, administrative and independent professions are some of the sectors with vacancies. In general, all three target groups suggested that TCN women VoT could potentially be employed in the aforementioned sectors.

Guidance and assistance provided by a mentor would be beneficial to their smoother integration in the labour market. Many of the participants indicated that psychological support would also be needed, not only before their integration in the labour market, but also during their work. A good CV, practical information, preparation about job interviews, assistance and training on how to present themselves were also found crucial. One of the employers that participated in the research highlighted that employers would need support as well, in terms of ways to approach and support TCN women VoT. One of the representatives of TCN women VoT described that the women they represented would find an online platform with job



postings and applications useful; they elaborated that the platform should be available on the most common languages they speak, such as English, French and Russian.

According to the participants, communication, social, digital/technological, managerial and administrative skills constitute a prerequisite for TCN women VoT to enter the labour market. In addition, women should acquire language skills and learn Greek and English, in order to be able to communicate with clients and colleagues. A degree proving their previously or newly acquired skills was also considered important. Job-related skills were also mentioned by an employer.

It remains evident that support service providers and employers can contribute to the smoother integration of TCN women VoT in the labour market. Skills, guidance and support are of vital importance of both employers and women. Several sectors were identified, where women can find employment and be independent, contributing to the prevention of their re-victimisation and their integration into society.

## 5. Results from Spain

### 5.1 Introduction and methodology

#### *Needs assessment*

In order to achieve the goals of the HEAL project, the first activity of the project was conducting a qualitative and quantitative field needs assessment (WP2). This needs assessment aimed at gaining insight of the profile and perceived needs of TCN women VoT, support service providers and employers, available services, rights of TCN women VoT, existing best practices and main challenges in the work of service providers in Italy, Greece, Spain and Romania. The results obtained will guide the development of the Recovery and Integration Programme (WP3).

Prior to the fieldwork, a guidelines document for field needs assessment was produced by KMOP (as the leading partner in this WP). This document provided guidance for conducting the fieldwork in all countries.

Another crucial document for the preparation of the needs assessment was the HEAL project Ethics Policy. The objective of this document issued by SURT was to ensure that all activities and outputs of the project:

1. Comply with all ethical requirements entailed when working with women victims/survivors of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, as a vulnerable group;
2. Are compatible with EU data protection legislation;
3. Safeguard child protection, in the cases that minors will be involved in the project activities.

The implementation of the needs assessment followed the standards described in the Ethics Policy.

The present report contains the results of the fieldwork conducted in Spain.

#### *Methodology*

The fieldwork in Spain was conducted between December and March 2020. The selection of the participants was based on convenience sampling, through previous contact with professionals working with TCN women VoT from different service providers.

Before confirming their participation, the potential participants were given detailed information about the project goals, activities and the voluntary nature of their participation (they were free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason). They were assured that the information provided would be kept confidential.

Participants were asked to sign a consent form for participating in the focus groups

During the fieldwork the following methods were used:

## a) Interviews with TCN women VoT

The interview was the technique chosen to collect qualitative data from TCN women VoT. After careful consideration of the situation of the VoT that should participate in the fieldwork and the content of the scripts provided in the guidelines, the interview format was preferred over the focus group because of the personal and sensitive nature of the issues discussed, which required a more intimate atmosphere.

**Aim:** The aim of the interviews with TCN women VoT was to investigate the perceived needs of the respondents in terms of issues they encounter, resources they would need to improve their condition, their understanding of their rights and accessible services.

**Structure:**

The interviews were recorded and then transcribed, which let us later proceed to analysis.

**Sample:** A total of TCN 10 VoT women participated in the 10 interviews.

They were between 25 and 30 years old and they were either asylum seekers or had legal status as victims of trafficking. They were from the following African and South American countries: Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Cameroon and Venezuela.

Nine participants are currently receiving support in the SURT programme and one is a former client.

**Questionnaire:** Before the interview, all participants were asked to fill in a qualitative questionnaire.

## b) Focus groups with professional support services

The focus group was the technique chosen to collect qualitative data from professionals working in support services. Two focus groups were conducted on the 17<sup>th</sup> December and the 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2020.

**Aim:** The aim of the focus groups was to explore service providers' understanding and knowledge of the rights of women VoT, potential cultural elements that affect human trafficking, the difficulties of reaching women VoT, potential risks when delivering services of support, existing gaps in the legislative instruments influencing the quality of their work, as well as success stories and good practices.

**Structure:** the focus group had the form of an informal discussion amongst the participants.

**Sample:** A total of 6 professionals working in specialized support services participated in the focus groups. All participants were women. They were psychologists, social workers, social educators, career counsellors and labour experts in a programme of liaison with employers.

Questionnaire: Before the interview, all participants were asked to fill in a qualitative questionnaire.

## c) Interviews with employers

The interview was the technique used to collect qualitative data from the employers.

Aim: the aim of the interviews was to identify the needs of employers in terms of issues they encounter and their willingness and perceived obstacles to employ women VoT. The current local market demands and potential employment opportunities for TCN women VoT were also investigated.

Sample: A total of 6 employers and HR professionals were interviewed. These employers come from a wide range of organizations and enterprises working in different fields.

Employer 1: Third sector

Employer 2: Grassroots organization

Employer 3: Housing services

Employer 4: Restaurant

Employer 5: Integration enterprise

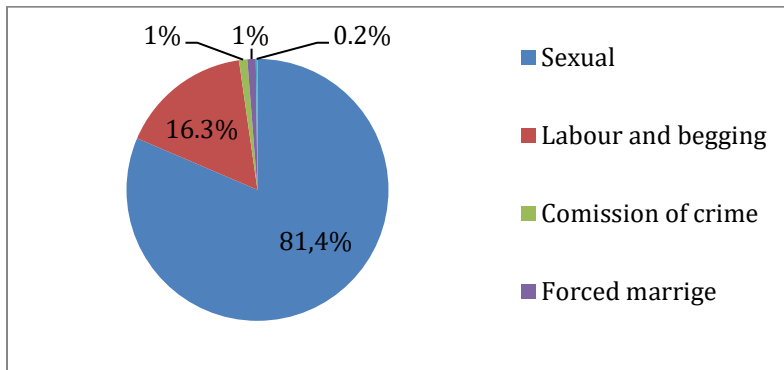
Employer 6: Restaurant

Questionnaire: Before the interview, all participants were asked to fill in a qualitative questionnaire.

## 5.2 Results of the mapping exercise

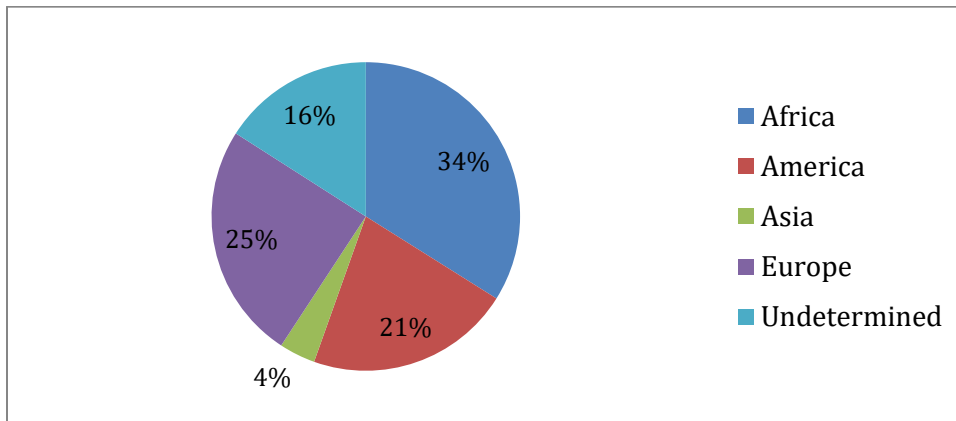
According to the latest data from the Public prosecutor, in 2017 485 victims were identified in Spain, 440 of them women (90.7%). As it is known, due to the nature of the phenomenon of trafficking, the number of identified victims is very low in respect to the estimations of actual prevalence.

In Spain, the most prevalent purpose of exploitation among identified victims, including men and women, is sexual exploitation.



Identified victims of trafficking, according to purpose of exploitation. Source: Public prosecutor report on open investigations, 2017

The majority of victims of sexual exploitation in Spain are women (99%), coming from Africa and (Eastern) Europe.



Origin of victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Source: Public prosecutor report on open investigations, 2017

According to the Public prosecutor report on open investigations, in 2017 the 7.3% of identified victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation were under 18.

There are no data regarding the educational level of identified victims, nor the main cities of residence of women VoT in Spain.

Assistance to survivors of trafficking in Spain is provided by small NGOs specialist in support to VoT, with the funding of the Spanish and regional governments (on a per grant basis). These services usually provide housing, social, legal health and psychological support, as well as support to access training and employment. At local level, these organisations work in multi-agency networks, including other support services open to the whole of the population and specialised services for migrants and women affected by other forms of GBV.

Regarding the labour market in Spain, in 2019 the unemployment rate was 13,8%. The main economic sectors in Spain are services (74% of GDP and industry (23%).

## 5.3 Results of the focus groups with TCN women VoT

### *Difficulties faced by TCN women VoT*

Regardless of their diverse personal traits, and different levels of education and/or work experience, in general, the women who were interviewed for this report recognized the job search as the main difficulty they face towards their independence and self-determination: specifically, six out of ten women mentioned this particular issue. Even when they have a job, the precarious environment in which they live hinders the achievement of the economic stability necessary to start the desired processes of independence and autonomy, without having to depend on social services and other types of assistance.

This situation is described by one of the interviewees, who stated that neither with financial aid nor the salary from her current job provided the necessary income to live independently: “Adding what I earn at work and the help I get from AMIF (Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund) I don’t reach the minimum wage (900€). I pay the rent of my room with my salary and AMIF gives me 230€ that I use for food, other expenses and to send money to my family.” (53\_18).

Two of the barriers that were most mentioned by women and which interfere in their labour integration are the lack of knowledge of the resources or services to support their job search and the existing language barrier, which is worse when it comes to African women who usually cannot speak neither Catalan nor Spanish. For this reason, the accompaniment for job search, job placement, and improvement of employment conditions are the main demands of survivors of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

The house-hunting process is the second challenge most commonly mentioned for survivors, and in particular among those who are already out of residential resources. This is due to the crisis in the price of housing and the social and institutional racism these women have to face every day.

Finally, other difficulties mentioned by women who still live in shelters are the anxiety provoked by the uncertainty of not knowing how long they will be in the shelter and the lack of freedom and autonomy to make independent decisions.

### *Needs of third country national women victims of trafficking and resources they would need to improve their condition*

As previously mentioned, six out of ten women considered that their main need was to find a job. Of these six women, two said that although they were currently working, the salary they earn does not allow them to pay for the rent or bills independently. For this reason, they tried to search for better jobs, but there is a lack of work opportunities on this matter.

Some of the elements that have been identified as effective ways to enhance their chance for employment are the official recognition of diplomas and certificates of education background and the improvement of language skills (both Catalan and Spanish).

Regarding access to housing, seven out of the ten women interviewed said that they needed more support in their house-search, as well as more information and advice on home management (for example types of rent, how to read invoices, request help to cover basic needs, etc.).

Other needs and demands on resources mentioned by some of the interviewees are:

- 1) Support for child care. Some women with children (living in the host country) identify the lack of networks of support as one of the main needs to be addressed because it has negative effects on access to work and conciliation between work and family life. Thus, they believe it is necessary to provide greater support in the identification of resources that support child care.
- 2) Assessment and knowledge of the host country, both in cultural and community environments.
- 3) Support on managing appointments. On many occasions, women deal with a large number of appointments and bureaucratic formalities, and they often find it difficult to remember them. For this reason, they ask for more support for the management of appointments.
- 4) Accompaniment and advice in obtaining certificates of education. Women with higher education, especially, complain about the difficulty to have their previous certificates officially recognised in Spain, as well as to get social recognition of their educational / work background in the country of origin. Regarding women with primary or less than primary education, they find that it is necessary to organize specific courses to improve their employability, as well as to provide long-term support that can increase the identification and improvement of their personal and professional competences.

### *Women's knowledge of what rights and services they can benefit from*

Women's awareness of their rights varied based on several factors, such as their level of education, their contact with legal counselling and their attendance to specific courses.

Out of the ten interviewees, eight reported having basic notions about the right to request asylum as victims of trafficking, as a result of their administrative processes and the support obtained by legal advisors from the service provided by Adoratrius SICAR.cat<sup>27</sup>.

Of these eight survivors, five reported having basic notions of labour rights, after having attended a specific course by a Spanish Trade Union (CCOO). Only one of the survivors claimed

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<sup>27</sup> Adoratrius Sicar.cat is a social-religious organization that offers comprehensive support for the full recovery of victims of trafficking, and cooperates with Surt in a joint programme supporting survivors in their process towards an independent life.



to have no knowledge of her rights, but she said she had a lawyer who was already taking care of her legal issues.

One of the survivors considered having extensive legal knowledge, although it is linked to her previous training and personal interests in the subject (she had a law degree in her country of origin).

The main resources that women have had access to are SICAR.cat and Fundació Surt. Other services that they know of, or have had occasional contact with, are social services, adult schools or training centres, health centres and Caritas (NGO providing social support).

### *Needs of TCN women VoT to enter the labour market*

The needs of survivors of trafficking for sexual exploitation regarding the labour market are diverse and vary according to the case, trajectory, and life experience. However, one of the most mentioned topics during the interviews was their concern towards obtaining degrees or certificates that can facilitate their access to the labour market.

In fact, seven of the interviewed women considered necessary to have some type of degree or training that certified their skills, knowledge, and competences. These certifications can be obtained by them if they enrol in higher cycles of education, start specific courses for employment, or get accreditation of diplomas, among others.

As regards recognition of diplomas, women who started these processes acknowledge that they have to deal with a lot of bureaucratic obstacles and time-lags, which conflict with their most immediate needs for survival and coverage of basic needs.

In this sense, women who at first wanted to pursue longer education (such as nursing, geriatrics or commerce) are lowering their expectations and choosing to take shorter and faster courses to access the labour market. This entails the perpetuation of the so-called feminization of poverty, which is characterized by their access to employment mostly in precarious and highly insecure sectors, such as the care industry, domestic work and other agricultural sector occupations (such as the seasonal fruit harvest).

Apart from obtaining certificates and specific studies and/or training, other tools could enhance their access to better opportunities in the labour market, such as:

- Learning languages: Catalan, Spanish and English.
- Obtaining a driver's license
- Learning IT skills.
- Knowledge of the cultural context, codes of conduct, needs, and demands of the labour market, among others.

## **5.4 Results of the workshops with service providers**

### *Rights of women VoT in local and EU level*

In Catalonia, unlike the Spanish state, trafficking for sexual exploitation is considered a form of gender-based violence. Within this framework, survivors of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation have the right to have access to specific resources and services aimed at survivors of other forms of gender-based violence (such as intimate partner violence), but there are several factors that limit the access to this right.

First, as in national Spanish legislation human trafficking is not seen as a form of gender-based violence, survivors of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation cannot access national government resources nor services for women who have experienced intimate partner violence, the most common example being the lack of access to material and monetarily assistance.

In addition, the poor training of general service staff in the region makes it difficult for women to access existing services. One example of this situation happens in the SOC office (Catalonian Employment Office), where professionals say they have detected numerous situations of violation of women's rights, for instance, the request for confidential documentation to access these services. Additionally, the lack of awareness of the characteristics of survivors and the consequences of these processes (lack of coherence in speech, confusion or contradiction, difficulties to maintain attention, among others) also condition the support received and, consequently, the full guarantee of their rights.

Finally, professionals describe the lack of a comprehensive model of protection and reception that is known and shared by all the professionals who work in the anti-violence circuit, which makes it hard for professionals to guarantee access to women's rights, hindering women's achievement of full citizenship, interfering and limiting the process of accompaniment and recovery that specific services and existing NGOs can offer.

In this sense, and linking to the second block of the interview, elements such as the women's origin or other cultural factors, such as time management or means of communication, were identified as factors that on many occasions condition the relationship between survivors and professionals, thus limiting their identification, investigation and care. Thus, the interviewed professionals recognized that the existing care and support services have not always been designed in ways to incorporate gender, intercultural and intersectional perspectives.

### *Ways cultural elements affect human trafficking*

During fieldwork, it was found that many factors influence the experiences of human trafficking in women, beyond cultural factors, such as time and forms of exploitation, life history, possible previous situations of violence, the migration process, the social network in the country of destination, among others.

However, regarding cultural differences in resilience processes, specifically, the following realities surfaced during fieldwork:

- Regarding African women and, in particular, Nigerian women, it has become evident that their recovery processes are usually influenced by a spiritual base, where bonding with the church often favors community networking. These networks, however, do not always guarantee their security and protection. In addition, the fear of being subjected to spells or other forms of magic (like juju), which can harm their families or themselves, also adversely affect their processes. Finally, the interviewed professionals observed greater resistance on the part of Nigerian women when accessing social services, due to the lack of knowledge of these services and their non-existence in their home countries. In addition, the cultural distance from the resource itself and from the professionals involved influences the quality of the accompaniment they should receive.
- As for the Latin American women, there has been an increase in the number of women from this region, which can be caused by the worsening political and economic situation in countries such as Venezuela and Colombia, for example. Therefore, women initiate migratory processes alone or using the networks of illicit human trafficking, and on multiple occasions end up being sexually exploited.
- Finally, with regard to women of Eastern European countries, such as Romania, there is a decrease in the number of women supported by these services, although this may not necessarily be linked to a decrease in trafficking in the Eastern Europe region. However, it should be mentioned that among the Eastern European women assisted, there is greater resistance to identifying and reporting traffickers, often due to the existence of romantic ties with them (couples, husbands and, sometimes, fathers of children born before or during the trafficking process).

To conclude, the fieldwork showed that the language barriers, as well as the social and institutional racism, are often limiting elements that make it difficult for women to integrate into the host community and to being supported by social services.

### *Difficulties of service providers reaching women VoT and identified risks when delivering support services*

Apart from the general elements and structural inequalities mentioned previously, some of the main risks and challenges pointed out by professionals and which hinder the achievement of the full citizenship of survivors are:

- Lack of long-term resources and services: these would guarantee a comprehensive accompaniment adjusted to the timeline that each woman needs for her recovery. In this

sense, it also includes the need to find more support and safe spaces that can allow women to identify and respond to their different demands (for example housing, training, work, and others).

- The difficulty of working on the trauma and its consequences for women. This is usually compounded by the lack of training in trauma-informed care among professionals, the temporary demands of institutions and the lack of support services and resources.
- Attitudes towards women that are paternalistic, re-victimizing or stigmatizing based on pre-constructed narratives, which can often occur among the various professionals working in the assistance of women in violent situations. The lack of external supervision and understanding of the cases, added to the lack of specific training for this matter, further contributes to this challenge.

Regarding the legal gaps that obstruct the current psychosocial intervention, the following challenges surfaced during the fieldwork:

- The lack of rights that guarantee the protection and recovery of women, an issue that affects the confidentiality of interviews and the construction of safe and trustworthy spaces where psychosocial intervention can be effectively provided.
- The scarcity of economic resources to meet the basic needs of women. This often results in women focusing their lives on covering up basic needs and putting themselves in a survival mode, making it difficult for them to focus on progress in other areas of their lives, such as health, relationships and self-care.
- The limited supply of vocational training and/or the tardy recognition of previous studies, which would facilitate the social and labour insertion of women.
- The difficulty to understand the bureaucratic idiosyncrasies that delay the acquisition of work permits, the provision of protected housing, etc.

### *Success stories and good practices*

During fieldwork, Surt gathered evidence that the experience of art therapy is an example of good practice for survivors of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. This type of therapeutic intervention program aims to respond to the needs of care and recovery of the different blocked emotional spheres that women experience, as a result of the traumatic processes that they underwent during their trafficking paths and which influence their process of social and labour integration supported in the RAI project.<sup>28</sup> This is especially true for women

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<sup>28</sup> In the field of support to victims of trafficking, Surt carries out an ongoing support and empowerment programme for victims of THB for sexual exploitation, in cooperation with the NGO SICAR.cat The programme provides comprehensive assistance (social, psychological, legal and housing) and Surt's role is to provide career counselling to victims, so that they define their professional interests and carry out an action plan for their labour integration.

who do not want / do not feel ready to start a deeper therapeutic process. Therefore, the overarching goal of this project is to reinforce the process of women's personal empowerment, self-esteem, and self-concept through strategic therapeutic accompaniment, to work through the various emotional blockages that may accompany processes of social and labour insertion within the RAI project. At the same time, this accompaniment and support are sustained in the long term, opening up to possible future demands that women may request.

Finally, we should also highlight the networking that has been developed among the different specialized services in the region, which, although they are still scarce, enable multidisciplinary care that improves the psychosocial intervention.

## 5.5 Results of the interviews with employers

### *Local market demands*

According to the professionals interviewed, the job sectors in Catalonia with more vacancies are the secondary sector (industry) and the tertiary sector (services). The most in-demand occupations would be mostly low-skilled jobs: professional carers; cleaning and maintenance occupations; administration and clerical worker; customer service, waiters and waitresses and technology professionals.

There are professional competences that are considered to be more relevant in the current labour market. Professional competences can be classified into three different categories:

- Technical competences are those competences associated with the position or profession, such as customer support, hairdressing techniques or food preparation, etc.
- Basic competences are those necessary ones to realize any profession in the labour market such as reading and writing, computer use or language.
- Transversal competences are needed to function in work situations under different circumstances, for example managing emotions, communication, teamwork, etc.

According to the participants, the most demanded basic competences would be computer skills and language skills, specifically the knowledge of Catalan and Spanish. Regarding transversal competences, participants pointed out teamwork, initiative, responsibility, empathy, ability to resolve conflicts, creativity, communication, leadership and organisational skills. It was not possible to determine the most demanded technical competences as they are subject to the particular position or job.

### *Potential employment opportunities of TCN women VoT*

The majority of the participants claimed that TCN women VoT might be able to access any job sector, as they are a diverse group with a wide range of interests and background. These women should be able to develop their personal and professional competencies and be ensured proper support from the employers.

Nevertheless, given the segregated structure of the labour market, most feminized sectors might be more accessible for these women. In this sense, the occupations mentioned by the participants are the service sector, cleaning and maintenance, restaurants, etc. It should be mentioned that feminized occupations tend to be the most precarious and unstable employment.

The employers interviewed are aware that TCN women VoT have specific needs due to the trafficking experience. They point out that they need specialized psychological treatment and support to gain self-confidence and self-esteem.

In order to facilitate their access to the labour market, it was revealed that these women should be provided with assistance and protection to enable their disclosure and strengthen their capacity to resolve the obstacles encountered at work. A participant proposed that this support could be offered by a mentor. Individual and group coaching sessions were also considered a positive action to enhance the job opportunities of these women, as well as guidance on how to create the Curriculum Vitae and apply for jobs.

Participants also expressed the importance of training and competency building. Apart from job-specific skills, transversal competencies, such as emotion management, resilience, adaptability and communication skills, were much more appreciated.

A participant also pointed out the need to work on the empowerment of these women in order to become aware of their structurally unequal position, identify different types of discrimination and gain confidence to deal with them. Finally, it was also considered important that these women are given information on the available employment and training services and resources in their local context.

## 5.6 Factual Aspects

Many of the social service providers participating in the two focus groups (social workers and psychologists) work directly with women VoT. However, some of them also support women victims of intimate partner violence, migrants and asylum seekers and sex workers. They offer psychological support and social protection to them, within a comprehensive approach that takes into account different spheres of daily life. One of the focus groups also involved the participation of researchers who have extensive experience in gender mainstreaming and the promotion of women's rights.

Participants did not have enough information about the number of victims of trafficking in Spain. Regarding the age of the women VoT, participants agreed that women VoT are usually young women, from 14 years onward.

Regarding the level of education, all service providers agreed on the fact that there is not a standard general pattern, but the range is between no education and secondary level (high school). However, there are also women with high level, university education. The common challenge for all of them is the lack of certification and official recognition of their diplomas.

About the number of children that survivors have, only one participant shared her perception: the rate of victims with children is of 10–15% over the total of clients.

Regarding the number of women who have a job, social services providers mention that, when women arrive at their services, they are out of the formal labour market. However, they often have previous experiences in the following sectors: farming/industry, cleaning, care work/domestic work and customer support.

According to providers (all based in the Barcelona province), the main cities of residence of women VoT are Barcelona, Hospitalet de Llobregat and Santa Coloma, which are some of the largest cities in the area.

90% of them considered that women VoT come from Nigeria, Venezuela and Colombia, while 10% of the participants also add Romania.

They all agreed that the purpose of trafficking of their clients is sexual exploitation. And about the number of victims of trafficking they support, it varies between 8 to 26, per year.

Social service providers stated that they are aware of the services in the region that promote legal assistance, psychological support, health assistance and employment integration to women VoT. Finally, more than 60% of the participants felt they were partly trained to support victims of trafficking, and half of the participants mention they have already participated in specific training courses to attend women victims of trafficking.

Concerning the information gathered from employers, all the participants interviewed had a University Degree and worked as a manager or HR professionals in their companies. According to their perceptions, in Catalonia, the job sectors with more vacancies are the second



(industry) and third (services) sectors, and specifically, the most in-demand occupations are: professional carers; cleaning and maintenance occupations; administration and office worker; waiters and waitresses and technology professionals. The employers interviewed also said that the most important skills employees should have are the following: basic competencies (for example language and technology skills) but also transversal (such as flexibility, empathy, assertiveness, teamwork, etc.) and technical competences, specifics for each job.

Finally, women VoT participating in this research had different ages, between 25 and 36 years; with an average of 29 years of age. The countries of origin were Venezuela (40%), Nigeria (30%), Cameroon (10%), Ivory Coast (10%) and Serbia (10%), and almost 90% of them are living now in Barcelona. The educational level was generally very high: 30% had university degrees (two of them on Law), 20% had finished secondary education and 20% were currently in high school. Their legal status varied: 70% of women were asylum-seekers/refugees and 30% had protection permits as VoT.

Only three of them (30%) had been employed in the formal market, but all of them have experiences working in different fields: care work, restaurants, legal assessment, healthcare, tourism, cleaning and agriculture. Those who were not working mentioned that they would like to find a job and suggested different sectors, according to their previous experiences: cleaning and laundry, administration, legal counselling, health care and agriculture.

## 5.7 Conclusions

This research report gathers information about TCN women VoT in Catalonia, according to the perceptions of the women themselves, service providers and employers.

According to the **women** themselves, the most important need of TCN women VoT is economic inclusion, as a way to achieve independence and autonomy. The two main barriers that interfere in their labour integration are lack of knowledge of the resources or services that could help them to find a job and the several language barriers, especially for those who don't speak Spanish or Catalan.

The second need most commonly mentioned is the need to receive support in house-search and home management. Among women with family responsibilities, there is also a common need to expand their network, in order to to obtain support with the childcare and try to reconcile work and family responsibilities.

Regarding labour integration, women said that even when they have a job, the precarious environment they are in perpetuates their dependence on social services and other types of assistance. For this reason, they consider it necessary to receive better advice and counselling about existing services to search for regular and well-paid jobs, but also about (employment/training) opportunities and planning their career future, as well as assistance in developing their competences and skills. Last but not least, women mentioned the need to receive support about how to obtain recognition of their certificates, especially in those cases with a high educational background.

**Service providers** mentioned the need for long-term support and effective protection for women VoT, through a comprehensive model of attention, which includes a multi-disciplinary team with professionals specialized on trauma, and knowledge about the trafficking phenomenon and their consequences on survivors. This also implies integrating in this comprehensive model the current multi-agency network dealing with cases of intimate partner violence in order to guarantee women's rights and promote their achievement of full citizenship.

The women interviewed, service providers and also employers believed that women VoT have specific training needs, either related to personal, socio-economic and cultural differences or to the development of specific competencies needed for specific sectors, as well as language training.

For that reason, service providers remarked the importance to understand women's background, to have knowledge of psychology and to respect each woman's decisions regarding the timing of their processes, as well as their demands, and to promote the economic empowerment as a way to achieve their independence and autonomy. It was also mentioned that training provision should be complemented with specific counselling and

support to find stable and well-paid jobs. Furthermore, establishing networks with other services was mentioned as a good practice.

**Employers** emphasized the need of victims to be trained and identified employment opportunities in several sectors. However, the demand is often related to low-skilled occupations, such as cleaning and maintenance; administration and clerical work; customer service and waitressing.

Employers recommend promoting training and competency building, both to acquire job-specific skills but also transversal competencies, such as emotion management, resilience, adaptability and communication skills. Another recommendation from employers was to set up a mentoring programme for women who start a new job, in order to strengthen their capacity and surmount the obstacles encountered. There are no data regarding the educational level of identified victims, nor the main cities of residence of women VoT in Spain.

Finally, the main difference amongst the findings of the desk and field research is the gap regarding the awareness of research participants about victimisation data. According to the Public Prosecutor report (2017), 485 victims were identified in Spain in 2017 (90,7 of them women). However, due to the nature of the phenomenon of trafficking, the number of identified victims is very low concerning the estimation of actual prevalence. This could be the reason why social service providers did not provide specific figures and found it difficult to define the phenomenon in quantitative terms.

Concerning the sociodemographic profile of the victims, the official victimisation figures do not exactly match the profile of victims supported by services: the majority of service providers had experience with women VoT aged between 25 and 36 years old, but, as emerged from the desk research, trafficking affects also underage girls (7.3%), which are probably supported by other services which did not participated in the present research.

The information provided by social services providers matches official data in their observation that trafficking in Spain involves mainly women from Africa (34%). However, social service providers describe an increase of women from South America and a decrease of Eastern European women, which do not match official data (according to the last report by the Public Prosecutor, in 2017, the second most common continent of origin in Spain is Europe (25%) followed very closely by America (21%). This difference may be explained due to larger barriers to access services by Eastern European VoT (perhaps also related to a greater resistance by Eastern European to identifying and reporting traffickers, often due to the existence of romantic ties with them - couples, husbands and, sometimes, fathers of children born before or during the trafficking process), as well as an easier access for Spanish-speaking Latin American VoT.

During desk research no consistent data were found about some research items (such as the educational level of identified victims, the main cities of residence of women VoT in Spain or the most necessary competences identified by employers), and therefore they cannot be compared with the perceptions of participants in the workshops and focus groups.

## **6. Results from Romania**

### **6.1 Introduction and Methodology**

The aim of this needs assessment is to identify the characteristics and needs of three target groups, namely third country national victims of trafficking (TCN VoT) for sexual exploitation, service providers and employers; to recognize best practices and main challenges in providing assistance to TCN VoT by support service providers, as well as the needs and expectations of the employers on the local labour market. Additionally, this phase is intended to begin networking and cooperation among these groups in order to find the best solutions for the labour market integration of TCN VoT.

The results in this needs assessment were obtained through a desk research complemented by quantitative and qualitative methods of field research on all three target groups mentioned. During the desk research we have looked into general information available about trafficking in Romania – trends, types of trafficking, methods, victim profiles – as well as completed a mapping exercise to identify the service providers working with victims of trafficking and the employers that would potentially be interested in offering employment to them.

The mapping exercise was followed by a field research implementing quantitative (questionnaire – survey) and qualitative research tools (focus-groups and interviews) to obtain information on all three of our target groups. According to the original plan we set out to organize 2 focus groups with 10 TCN women victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in order to determine their profiles and perceived needs but access to this group has proven to be particularly challenging in Romania. On the one hand, the desk research revealed a lack of information/awareness on the specific intersection of third country nationals and victims of trafficking which was later confirmed by the workshops with service providers. On the other hand, the lockdown imposed by the Romanian government to limit coronavirus infection has made the organization of focus-groups impossible. Instead, we have completed interviews with 6 representatives of TCN victims of trafficking, all first line professionals directly involved in working with (presumed) victims of trafficking whose experience allowed them a clear and detailed view on the needs of TCN victims of trafficking. Four of these professionals are involved in working with migrants and refugees in Romania and two of them have long-term experience with victims of trafficking. As for their professions, we interviewed a social worker, a researcher, an anti-trafficking inspector, two psychologists and the coordinator of a women's shelter, representing organizations like AIDRom, ANITP, LADO, ADPARE and the Babes-Bolyai University. Switching from victims of trafficking to first-line professionals implicitly impacted the methodology as we modified the questions in the interview from second to third person singular/plural as well as the questions in the survey. The modified interview questions are presented in annex I. We asked our interviewees to focus on TCN victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation that they met and to describe their situation/characteristics to the best of their

knowledge. Admittedly, the information obtained in this manner is relatively fragmented or sometimes non-available because our interviewees were relying on the memory of more or less short-term past encounters. In total they were capable of describing the situation of 14 TCN VoT for sexual exploitation in Romania whose details are presented under the heading factual aspects.

The qualitative methodology applied to the other two target groups consisted in 2 workshops for 6 support service providers and interviews with 6 employers. In the workshops with support service providers we had psychotherapists, a social worker, a probation officer, a doctor, representative of a women's rights organization, and a representative of an anti-trafficking organization. The employers we interviewed were representatives of businesses in the field of HORECA – an HR specialist and a sales manager, coaching – a CEO, interior design – a manager and a designer and sales – manager.

It is important to note an important research limitation arising from realities specific for Romania. Since a change in the sources of information and the methodology has been deemed necessary, the resulting information may be somewhat unbalanced and it may disproportionately represent the points of view of support service providers. In order to limit the degree of this asymmetry the interviewees making up the group of representatives of TCN women victims of trafficking were asked to quantify and describe in detail their interactions with the victims to the best of their knowledge. The obtained results reflect the situation of 14 TCN VoT, but, admittedly, some of the factual information may be fragmented or sometimes non-existent. Also, in order to retain relevant information that has been relayed through the interviews with representatives of TCN victims of trafficking two additional paragraphs have been added to the section on support service providers with the most important ideas.

## 6.2 Results of the mapping exercise

According to the most recent annual report on human trafficking compiled by the National Agency against Trafficking in Persons (ANITP), the most common types of trafficking in Romania are sex trafficking (over 80%), forced labour and forced begging (ANITP, 2019, p. 30)<sup>29</sup>.

In 2018, the total number of recorded victims of trafficking in Romania was 497. Out of the total number of trafficking cases, 73% of these were women, and of these women, 67.4% were trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. In 2018, 36.62% of sex trafficking victims were minors, 36.42% were adults, and the remainder was unknown (ANITP, 2019). For TCN women victims of trafficking, very little to no official data is available. For 2018 the category of non-Romanian trafficking victims comprises 1 person from the Republic of Moldova (ANITP, 2019, p.20)<sup>30</sup>. This can have many underlying causes among which the fact that Romania has primarily been a country of origin or transit for victims of trafficking, rather than a country of destination for foreign victims, therefore both the identification processes as well as the support services are working under this paradigm. A later publication, a short overview of human trafficking for 2019, points to a few important changes in this regard, namely that the number of identified victims of trafficking increased by 28.8% from 497 to 698 and mentions as a very important element of novelty the fact that in 2019 there were 12 non-Romanian citizens identified as victims of trafficking in Romania, 10 of whom were minors (ANITP, 2020)<sup>31</sup>. Unfortunately, the author does not go into any details regarding these victims of trafficking hence country of origin (other member states or third countries), gender, education, type of exploitation all remain unknown. The GRETA report on Romania published in 2016 states that in the period between 2011 – 2015 there were 15 foreign nationals identified as trafficking victims in Romania, 7 from the Republic of Moldova, 5 from Bangladesh, 1 from Serbia, 1 from Greece and 1 from Poland. (GRETA, 2016, pg.7)<sup>32</sup>. Meanwhile, Romania as country of origin scored highest in terms of total number of registered victims of trafficking in Europe, 6101, between 2010 and 2012. Of these, 3230 were registered in Romania (EUROSTAT, 2015, p.35)<sup>33</sup>. More recent data places Romania as the first country of origin in the EU, with a total of 1511 registered victims of trafficking

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<sup>29</sup> ANITP (2019) Raport Național privind evoluția traficului de persoane, în anul 2018 Ministerul Afacerilor Interne Agenția Națională împotriva Traficului de Persoane.

<sup>30</sup> ANITP (2019) Raport Național privind evoluția traficului de persoane, în anul 2018 Ministerul Afacerilor Interne Agenția Națională împotriva Traficului de Persoane.

<sup>31</sup> ANITP (2020) Analiză succintă privind victimele privind victimele traficului de persoane în 2019 Ministerul Afacerilor Interne Agenția Națională împotriva Traficului de Persoane

<sup>32</sup> GRETA. Report concerning the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings by Romania. Accessed May 20, 2020. <https://rm.coe.int/16806a99b1>.

<sup>33</sup> EUROSTAT (2015) Trafficking in Human Beings. Luxembourg. Accessed May 20, 2020 [https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/eurostat\\_report\\_on\\_trafficking\\_in\\_human\\_beings\\_-\\_2015\\_edition.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/eurostat_report_on_trafficking_in_human_beings_-_2015_edition.pdf)

in the EU with Romanian citizenship between 2015 and 2016. This amounts to 20% of the EU-victims accounted for during this period (EC Migration and Home Affairs, 2018, p.81)<sup>34</sup>.

In a study of the situation of women victims of sex trafficking in Romania conducted in 2016, the lowest level of education among the interviewees was graduation from middle school (8 grades), while several of them went to high school or were, at the time of the interview, enrolled in a university. (GIRL, 2016, pg. 15)<sup>35</sup> The same study also showed that there appears to be a decline in the number of victims being recruited. This trend is allegedly caused by the increase of informational and preventive materials and actions throughout the country. Meanwhile, the age of the sexual exploitation victims is going down, especially in internal domestic trafficking. This means that a lot of the women victims of trafficking in Romania are underage.

As of 2018, the main cities/counties of residence for Romanian women victims of trafficking in Romania are Bacău, Dolj, Galați, Călărași, Vrancea, Prahova, Constanța, Sibiu, Bihor and Bucharest, in that order, containing 3.6% to 6.4% of the total number of victims registered in Romania. Among the ten first counties of origin, all except Sibiu also ranked first of counties where victims were recruited (3.8% to 7.7%), and trafficked internally (ANITP, 2019, pg. 28). These numbers indicate that there is a geographical concentration of the criminal activity as well as vulnerability of victims in those regions.

#### *Service Providers in Romania*

**ANITP (National Agency against Trafficking in Persons)** works within the Ministry of Internal Affairs as a multidisciplinary team consisting of police officers, social workers, psychologists and sociologists. ANITP is a governmental entity tasked with ensuring coordination, among anti-trafficking actors, state and non-governmental, and developing policies and prevention activities. The Agency has national coverage through its 15 regional centers set up to mirror the Central Unit, at a smaller scale. One of the outcomes of Agency involvement was a consistent improvement of the anti-trafficking response, guided by the principle of a victim centered approach. The main support service that it offers to the victims of trafficking is legal counselling and direct assistance in the judicial process.

**IGI (General Inspectorate for Immigration)** is a specialized structure of the central public administration and is coordinated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. It is the institution responsible for all six Regional Centers for Procedures and Accommodation of Asylum Seekers, the accommodation centers for foreigners under public custody and county departments. For migrants and asylum-seekers, after the border police, IGI staff is the first real encounter with Romanian authorities that have the opportunity to identify victims of trafficking.

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<sup>34</sup> European Commission – Migration and Home Affairs (2018) Data Collection on Trafficking in Human Beings in the EU. Final Report. Lancaster University, European Union, doi:10.2837/193237

<sup>35</sup> GIRL – Gender Interventions for the Rights and Liberties of Women and Girls Victims of Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation – 2016 Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation for Romanian Women. A Qualitative Research in Romania, Italy and Spain. Project Report

**DGASPC (General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection)** has the role of ensuring, at county level, the implementation of policies and strategies of social assistance in the field of child protection, family, single persons, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, as well as any other persons in difficulty.

**AIDRom (Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania)** is an NGO active in the field of migration. It runs campaigns to inform about and prevent human trafficking. It has national coverage concentrated specifically around the Regional Centers for Procedures and Accommodation for Asylum Seekers run by IGI and in Timișoara they run a center for vulnerable categories of asylum-seekers. They also provide direct assistance through counselling and support groups for vulnerable or already trafficked persons. An important part of what they do is to assist groups of migrants unto preventing their involvement with trafficking.

**ADPARE (The Association for Developing Alternative Practices for Reintegration and Education)** is an independent NGO in Bucharest and is largely regarded by professionals to be one of the best support service providers in the field of assistance for victims of trafficking. They offer safe housing, psychological, social and legal counselling, material support and labour market integration programs. ADPARE caters both to Romanian and foreign victims of trafficking.

**JRS Romania (Jesuit Refugee Service – Romanian branch)** is an international Catholic organization which offers services in the field of human rights protection for migrants and refugees. It has national coverage, but concentrates its services in locations where migrant populations are relatively high (Bucharest, IGI run accommodation centres). It offers a large variety of services from housing to psycho-social counselling, material support, community building, legal counselling and assistance, etc.

#### *Local Support Service Providers – Cluj county*

**DGASPC (General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection – Cluj county branch)** is the state institution responsible for the single safe house in the county for victims of trafficking. It is located in the town of Câmpia Turzii, it houses female victims up to 26 years of age and it has a capacity of 10 places complemented by 12 places dedicated to female victims and children of domestic violence. Its funding comes from county level state administration and caters for beneficiaries that reside in Cluj county.

**DASM (Directorate for Social and Medical Assistance)** is the public institution which is part of the public administration structure of the city of Cluj. Although it does not specifically offer services to victims of trafficking it provides psycho-social counselling, legal counselling, material support and medical services to victims of gender-based violence, among others.


**Artemis (The Women’s Association against Violence)** is a local NGO with a long-term involvement in providing support services for victims of trafficking. It used to run a safe-house, a service that is no longer available. At the moment it offers psycho-social and legal counselling, as well as labour market integration programs for victims of domestic violence.




**Asociația Lumea ca Lumea Cluj** – a local NGO that caters to victims of domestic violence with comparatively similar services as the Artemis Association.

**LADO – The League for Defense of Human Rights Cluj branch** is an established Regional Integration Center implementing the state funded programs of integration for resettled refugees in Transylvania directly referred by IGI. It offers a whole range of services related to the integration of migrants and refugees from language courses, to cultural orientation, legal counselling and assistance in job search for third country nationals both refugees but also workers, students and family members. LADO does not have a specific focus on victims of trafficking.



 - IGI Regional Centres for Procedures and Accommodation for Asylum Seekers.

 - Regional Integration Centres established under AMIF-funded projects and run by NGOs. Projects on integration are divided in 5 regions, as shown on the map.

The map shows the number of IGI run Regional Centers as well as the area of responsibility for each Regional Integration Center. LADO is involved in the integration activities of the refugees and migrants in the dark green area.<sup>36</sup>

In the last 3 years the labour market in Romania has been structured as follows. At the end of March 2020, the level of unemployment was 2.95% (ANOFM, 2020)<sup>37</sup>. According to the labour force register, in 2017, the employed population was 8,317,600, of whom 5,223,800 were salaried employees. The most important sectors by labor force participation were the services sector with 3,241,700 employees, while 1,857,700 people were working in industry and the construction sector. A significant number of people (124,400) were employed in agriculture, forestry and fisheries (WhomeN, 2018, pg. 46)<sup>38</sup>. These sectors are following a downward trend, however. In terms of future job prospects, it is anticipated that there will be significant labour shortages in the healthcare sector (due to emigration), as well as in manufacturing, construction and hospitality (Skills Panorama Romania)<sup>39</sup>. For networking purposes, we have reached out to different organizations among which the Cluj Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Association of Business Women (AFA) Cluj and 6 businesses that can be potential employers for TCN VoT from the HORECA sector, the creative industries, coaching, and beauty products distribution. The most important skills employees should have are as follows: willingness to learn, long-term commitment, foreign language skills, digital skills and resilience in stressful situations.

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<sup>36</sup> Voicu, B., Deliu, A., Tomescu, C., & Neagu, A. (2018). An assessment of pathways to integration. Executive Summary <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/refugees-in-romania-2018-an-assessment-of-pathways-to-integration-executive-summary>

<sup>37</sup> ANOFM statistics [https://www.anofm.ro/upload/12520/BI\\_MARTIE\\_2020.pdf](https://www.anofm.ro/upload/12520/BI_MARTIE_2020.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> WhomeN (2018) Qualitative Study on Training Needs of Women at Risk of Social Exclusion. Project publication

<sup>39</sup> <https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/countries/romania>

## **6.3 Results of the interviews with representatives of TCN women VoT**

The difficulties faced by third country national women victims of trafficking (TCN VoT) in Romania are primarily determined by their personal backgrounds as well as the category to which they belong related to their legal status. In Romania people originating from outside the European Union are legally classified into two main categories:

Third country nationals (*resortisanți ai țărilor terțe* or RTT) comprised of people who stay in Romania with work visas, student visas or are family members of Romanian citizens. The people in this category make up the majority of foreigners from outside the European Union. Recently, work visas have been handed out in growing numbers due to the activity of different international recruiting agencies and internal workforce shortages. Both for students and workers residence permits are valid for the duration of their declared activity, i.e. work (in case they become unemployed there is a window of 90 days to find new employment or lose their right to stay in Romania) or study (the residence permit covers the length of their study contract with the university). Persons in this category have certain limitations regarding their participation in the labour market, for instance students are only allowed to work part time, while any employer is required by law to go through a relatively costly and cumbersome process of obtaining a work permit in order to hire a third country national.

Persons under international protection (*beneficiar de protecție internațională – BPI*) are individuals who have completed the asylum-seeking process and have been offered refugee status. Once they have obtained this legal status they are referred to the 11 Regional Integration Centers established under AMIF funded projects and run by NGOs where they are offered the opportunity to participate in the integration program as well as other types of social assistance. The refugee status grants almost identical rights as those of the Romanian citizens with a few exceptions (e.g. the right to vote) and, by law, resettled refugees can access healthcare, social services, the labour market etc. similarly to Romanian citizens. Therefore, the difficulties in this case arise rather from the practicalities of access and lack of preparedness/resources on the implementation level than anything else.

Before one can talk about the difficulties of TCN victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation there is another aspect that needs to be clarified, namely the fact that the realities of the TCN victims of trafficking rarely fit neatly into theoretical categories, but, in the experience of our interviewees, there is a partial overlap between them. For instance trafficking of human beings for exploitation through work sometimes gains such poignant aspects of sexual abuse that the boundary between exploitation through work or sex becomes blurred. Similarly, especially in the cases of arranged marriages or marriages of convenience the phenomenon bleeds into domestic violence and it becomes particularly difficult to disentangle. Admittedly, the situation is due in part to the overall invisibility of the phenomenon, the relatively small numbers of identified victims (the National Agency Against Human Trafficking registered 1 non-citizen

victim of trafficking in 2018, and 12 in the year 2019) and the overall working paradigm of Romania as a country of origin or transit for victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

The country of origin greatly impacts the difficulties and needs of victims of trafficking and there is a general agreement among professionals that migrants/victims from Moldova (a neighbouring country with a high number of Romanian speakers) should be a separate category in the field of migration in Romania as Moldovans speak a dialect of Romanian and have historical and cultural ties to the country.

After establishing these points of reference it is possible to structure the difficulties faced by TCN women victims of trafficking and to better assess the implications for the design of a more effective recovery and integration program.

The representatives of victims of trafficking, i.e. first-line professionals who work with TCN victims of trafficking, that were interviewed for this phase of the project agreed that the difficulties faced by TCN women VoT arise from the intersection of being both a traumatized individual as well as a newly arrived foreigner in the country. On the one hand the severity and complexity of their trauma determines their attitudes towards enacting change in their lives and asking for/accepting help. Many victims often suffer from different levels of anxiety and panic attacks, some have symptoms of PTSD and, in the professionals' view, the most difficult cases exhibit forms of Stockholm syndrome where they are not aware that they are/were in an abusive situation and are emotionally dependent on their traffickers. The latter category in particular requires long term psychological counselling before they can be ready to integrate into the labour market. In many cases victims of trafficking are also addicted to drugs and can suffer from illnesses, thus first interventions need to stabilize the client by providing not only physical security and psychological counselling, but also medical services and an adequate plan for the treatment of substance abuse, as well as legal assistance. On the other hand, the biggest obstacle that TCN victims of trafficking face in their everyday lives is the language barrier (except for Moldovan women). Third country nationals on student visas are offered a year of intensive Romanian language courses at local schools and universities, but those in the other categories have more limited access to similar classes. The motivation to learn Romanian is also influenced by the person's desire for long-term residence in Romania and quite often people registered as asylum-seekers, especially in transit areas, leave the country illegally for other, more Western member states. Resettled refugees, people that plan on working in Romania for a longer duration as well as the family members of Romanian citizens are best situated in terms of motivation to learn the local language. Access to language courses may be restricted by their timing e.g. evening courses are inexistent, or by the lack of childcare facilities, therefore women who work regular office hours or have small children find it hard to participate. The situation is made worse by the fact that state and local authorities publish very little information in English resulting in an incapacity to follow mundane administrative procedures like purchasing a monthly travel pass, accessing healthcare or finding information related to taxes. Another major difficulty in TCN women VoT is the lack of a social/support network. Professionals agree that places with a more diverse community of

migrants are better suited to integrate new arrivals which in Romania is limited to Bucharest and a couple of larger cities. This is especially important in the case of TCN women that are either unemployed homemakers or employed in so-called 'feminized' activities as domestic or care work because it only worsens their isolation. Some TCN victims of trafficking are very young and have low levels of education, but other categories, like the Filipina wives or some refugee women with different degrees face the particularly cumbersome challenges of navigating the legal recognition of their degrees or the recognition of their skills and competences as professions may have a significantly different regime compared to that in their countries of origin. Statistically speaking migration usually involves lower level employment that the migrants' qualifications would allow.

The needs of TCN women victims of trafficking naturally follow from the difficulties described above. First, for a minimum of 6 months they need to have access to professional and adequate social services in order to stabilize them emotionally and to assist them in processing trauma and regaining confidence. Second, language skills training that takes into consideration their availability and responsibilities is required as soon as possible, ideally by combining language courses with vocational training programs. Cultural orientation is just as important, implemented both through formal courses but also by real-life informal encounters between TCN and Romanian citizens. According to our interviewees, asylum-seekers are informed of their rights during the procedure but in practice TCN need more hands-on instruction and direct assistance in navigating the Romanian institutional structure. For integration in the host society, state and local institutions of healthcare, insurance, employment, education, administration, etc. as well as actors from the private sector (employers) need to be more informed and knowledgeable about the difficulties and needs of migrants/refugees and the connected legal framework.

Overall TCN women victims of trafficking do not know their rights and the services they can access. Asylum-seekers and refugees usually turn to the organizations that implement the integration program, which have a relatively limited capacity, while other categories of TCN, despite a certain level of mistrust, are compelled to turn to their embassies for consular assistance. For migrants from certain countries like the Philippines this is a particularly strenuous attempt as the closest embassy is in Budapest, Hungary, but because Romania is not part of the Schengen countries, in practice, they cannot access emergency assistance if they need it. Victims of trafficking usually know that if they want to escape their current situation they need to go to the police, they may even know the emergency number – 112 – but a variety of factors play into their inability to reach out, like emotional barriers, language barriers, mistrust of the police, or the fact that prostitution is an administrative offence in Romania and so on. Most of our interviewees admitted that the preliminary counselling of presumed victims of trafficking very rarely results in an official complaint against the trafficker. If the victims of trafficking get registered, they can be offered residence during the legal procedures and by law they will have the right to the same services as any other Romanian citizen. However, they have no knowledge of local service providers that can assist in the

different aspects of their recovery, partly because services for gender-based violence are scarce and underfunded in Romania (e.g. at present in Cluj county there is one women's shelter available with 12 spots for women victims of violence), but also because there is a lack of awareness about TCN victims of trafficking as well as a lack of sustained coordination of social services between organizations active in the field of migration and those in the field of gender based violence. There are some notable exceptions in the form of a few NGOs like ADPARE, the ICAR Foundation, Generație Tânără or People to People Foundation, but their impact is limited to their geographical area.

In the matter of integrating TCN women victims of trafficking into the labour market of the host society, their needs are just as complex and varied as is their background. The following are the most common needs in this regard mentioned by the representatives of TCN women victims of trafficking. **General and domain specific language training** was the most cited obstacle in entering the Romanian labour market. Since employers are required by law to instruct their employees regardless of their position in the company (on issues related to on-site safety, fire safety, etc.) for which they have to sign a document in Romanian, some of them resist hiring TCNs, even if there is a workforce shortage like in the urban areas where most migrants and refugees are settled. Additionally, for TCN persons that are not refugees there is the additional paperwork to be filed with the state to obtain the work permit which implies both additional resources and knowledge of the regulations regarding this category of employees. Therefore raising awareness with employers about the hiring procedure of TCN would be beneficial for both parties. **Direct assistance in finding and keeping a job** is essential, from **emotional support** to avoid secondary traumatization, **understanding the Romanian system of professions and qualifications, navigating job search**, including the writing of a **CV** and **letter of intention, preparing for the interview** offline and online, **understanding of organizational culture** and the requirements of the job to **managing possible work conflicts**. Third country nationals need to be informed about **Romanian labour laws, employee rights, taxes**, rights related to **maternity leave** and **unemployment benefits, lay-off procedures** etc. in order to be able to defend themselves against unfair labour practices. Some of these responsibilities could be taken up by the employers as they also need to be informed about the specificities of the employees' cultural background and experience in order to create a more accommodating working environment. **Managing the expectations** of the migrants and refugees regarding employment is also very important. If they come from cultures where one income families are the norm, they may find it difficult to realize that it is financially untenable to support a family in an urban area on a single income from a chef's salary for instance. Discrimination around housing can have aggravating implications in this regard. Similarly, as long as their **competences and qualifications** aren't officially recognized TCN only have access to low level jobs mostly in manufacture, the HORECA sector and domestic employment which translates into small wages that often prove unstable and insufficient to cover for day-to-day expenses, let alone for making economies or sending money to dependent family members in their country of origin. The risk of disappointment is quite high and both refugees

and migrants can end up feeling trapped in an undesirable situation with no way out. In the professionals' experience, **self-employment** could avoid some of the pitfalls of being an employee, but it is important to take into consideration that entrepreneurship requires a higher level of resilience, a more intensive instruction period related to regulations around starting a business and procedures, but most importantly, an initial financial investment which is considerably higher than in the case of employees even if one only accounts for fees and taxes. For this reason, a few professionals recommended **financial assistance** at the beginning. Job-specific skills are a great necessity in like manner. **On-site training** offered by the employer is the preferred option, because it is more practical and specific, while the vocational trainings offered by the State Employment Agency are exclusively in Romanian and eligibility is conditioned by a certain educational level, usually 8 grades. **General digital skills** like using a computer or smart phone were mentioned along with learning how to use specific software required by employers.

Given that TCN women victims of trafficking in Romania present such a variety in terms of country of origin, cultural background, legal status, levels of trauma and experience of gender based violence it is suggested that it would be best both to include their opinions as well as to uphold the principle of a certain level of flexibility throughout the design and implementation phase of the Recovery and Integration Program addressed to them.

## **6.4 Results of the workshops with service providers**

Concerning the rights of women VoT at local and EU level workshop participants stated that “programs are available in Romania through the whole country, supported by Law 678”. Law 678, adopted by the Romanian parliament in 2001, provides the regulations related to the prevention and combatting of trafficking in human beings, as well as the protection and assistance of victims of trafficking. According to this law, human trafficking “constitutes a violation of human rights and an offence to the dignity and integration of the person” (Law 678/2001/1). According to Article 6(1) of this law, the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity shall, both at central and territorial levels, develop and enforce special measures for integration into the labour market for particularly vulnerable and high-risk groups, in particular women from poor communities and marginalized areas. Furthermore, the law stipulates that the National Agency for Employment is responsible for developing “information programs concerning the labour market and employees’ rights, vocational and professional skills training programs for particularly vulnerable victims of trafficking, as well as information program for employers in order for the latter to grant such persons priority for job placement” (Law 678, Article 6(2)). Finally, the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity, together with the Ministry of Public Finances, is charged with considering possibly developing initiatives that stimulate companies that hire at-risk individuals and victims of trafficking who have attended vocational training courses (Law 678, Art 6(3)).

According to the service providers, victims of human trafficking have the right to stay in a shelter for six months after they have been registered. These shelters (5 in 2018) are set up across the whole country. While staying in the shelter, their identities are protected, and they are offered basic services, like medical assistance, psychological and legal counselling, material and financial support. Another service that is available is a free phone number, which is open every day from 8am to 4pm. The phone number can be used to (anonymously) report cases of work exploitation, sex trafficking, organ trafficking, etc. The service providers are not aware of any disparity between local and EU-level rights and services for women victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Service providers pointed to the lack of sexual and emotional education as key contributing factors to the high level of human trafficking victims from Romania. Many children do not know how to identify their emotions, or use the appropriate tools to address them. Furthermore, family violence and addiction enhance the vulnerability of the children. Another cultural element that was brought up was common stereotypes, such as “it’s the oldest job in the world”. Furthermore, stereotypical expectations related to the traditional family, and particularly the role of women in the family, exacerbates the vulnerability of high-risk groups and victims of trafficking. These cultural elements significantly affect women victims of trafficking in several ways, among which women who are victims of sex trafficking do not recognize themselves as such. This is because women, who find themselves in a situation where they are being



trafficked, will often blame themselves for the situation they are in. Furthermore, the mechanisms of recruitment often give a false sense of autonomy.

Regarding the difficulties of service providers in reaching women VoT support service providers pointed out that family plays a key role. It's important to understand where the victims are coming from, their background, and how they ended up in this situation. This can affect certain aspects of providing support to the victims, which in every case needs to be based on an individual recovery plan. Friends and family might prevent them from coming forward and seeking help, due to social stigma and resulting social pressure. People around them may blame them for the situation they are in – they are not seen as victims, but as offenders.

The (Romanian) system is not fit to support the victims, and there are many unaddressed needs. Service providers report that there are not just difficulties, but even impossibilities in reaching the victims. One service provider commented that the people who reach out to them for support are either (1) already over the situation, and have a developed support system; or (2) were victims of domestic violence, whose friends pressured them into getting therapy, but who did not follow up with the treatment. Many women from toxic environments come to therapy for a short time, 1-2 hours a week, but then they go back to their toxic environment. This causes them to lose hope, no matter how much progress they make in therapy. There is a need for sustained engagement over longer periods of time, in a safe space, and with assurances that the victims will not go back to the same toxic environment. One core challenge is that many victims do not identify as such. One example was given of a case with a male trafficker and a woman (18) being trafficked for sexual exploitation. In this case, the trafficker was both using her services himself, and looking for more clients for her. In these types of situation, usually the trafficker sees the woman as a product, and has a market- and business-oriented perspective on the situation. The justification is usually economic, and it involves a lot of emotional control (not necessarily or only physical). If emotional control is the primary or only form of coercion, it is more difficult for the women victims of trafficking to understand that they are, in fact, victims of trafficking. This gets even more complicated as they develop close relationships with their trafficker.

In order to address these complex situations and the challenges that come with them, there is a need for an integrated approach when working with women VoT. As one of the participants pointed out, "there is no point in going to psychotherapy, if they don't have a wider support system". Furthermore, victims of abuse often have a tendency to be dependent on their abusers. If they are not provided with a good viable alternative, there is a high likelihood that they will turn back to them. One service provider reported that they had difficulties providing services, in terms of sex education, prevention, and even distribution of hygienic products, to women in certain minority groups. It is largely assumed that the barriers faced by the service providers in this regard are caused by religious convictions of the women themselves. Sexual education is generally lacking in Romania, for the same reason.

Another challenge that was pointed out through the discussion is that women VoT often refuse to attend trainings or therapy, and, unless it is money, they will not be receptive to the services provided. There is a certain belief in Romania, which says, “if I give you something, you owe me”, and vice versa, which might be part of the reason why victims of trafficking in Romania are less inclined to accept the support offered them. Abuse victims generally exhibit an attitude of helplessness in which it is inconceivable to them that they can influence their situation, therefore reaching out for help is considered to be futile.

A great risk related to delivering support services to victims of trafficking is that, unless one can sufficiently protect the victims and ensure that they are properly separated from their trafficking environment, they could be at greater risk of retribution and/or re-trafficking, than they were before they received support. Another identified risk is the inherent mentalities and perspectives of women’s objectification that are ingrained in Romanian culture, such as “women are seen as accessories” and other types of labelling, which could be very triggering and end up re-victimizing the women VoT.

One support service provider shared a story from when she was searching for a job in the Child Protection Services. At that time, she discovered that over 60 percent of parents do not know basic legislation regarding the right of their children. This is a telling example of how unaware most people are about basic rights and legal principles. It could therefore be argued that one gap in the legislative system affecting the quality of the work of service providers, is the lack of awareness amongst the general public, about their own rights and liberties. Another challenge that was mentioned is the lack of integrative approaches in the way the legal system functions. There is a need to break down silos and work between sectors – law, psychology, social services, etc. – to solve the challenges related to supporting victims of human trafficking. There are certain legal instruments in Romania, which make it more difficult for sex workers to leave the sex work industry. While many countries, such as Norway and Sweden, penalize the buyer, but not the seller, Romania still punishes the act of selling sex, but not the buying. Because selling sex is a legal offense in Romania, women victims of sex trafficking could potentially face legal charges against them, and they might have to pay a fine. This in itself places a lot of restrictions on the victims’ willingness to report to the authorities, or seek help in other places. To add to these legal barriers, women victims of sex trafficking often face discrimination by the police and other authorities. One service provider pointed out that there is a need for education programs, such as sensitivity trainings, to be put in place for the police who handle these types of situations on a regular basis.

The service providers attending the workshops could not come up with any success stories from their own experiences from working with victims of human trafficking in Romania. One service provider mentioned that, in Iceland, there is an organization, which supports and handles cases of victims of abuse. What is special about this organization is that it was founded and is run by survivors of abuse. The organization provides support groups, therapy, legal counselling and a helpline, and provides a good example of good practice in this field – showing the road from victim to survivor.

In addition to the data gathered through the workshops with support service providers there were a few relevant pieces of information related to assisting victims of trafficking that came through the interviews with the representatives of TCN VoT. The city of Cluj-Napoca is situated in the center of Transylvania, about 200 kms away from the nearest border crossing, hence it doesn't register significant numbers of asylum-seekers and refugees. As presented in the mapping exercise, in Cluj there is a Regional Integration Center which works with resettled refugees referred directly by the General Inspectorate for Immigrations mostly from the Șomcuta Mare Regional Center for Procedures and Accommodation of Asylum-seekers. Also, the city is the second greatest university hub in Romania with a famous Medical School that has been hosting a relatively large number of foreign students – some from inside the EU like Germany, France, Sweden, or Greece; and some from Arab and African countries. IT is one of the core economic sectors in town which, due to their foreign business contacts contributed to the cosmopolitan diversity of its profile and to raising the cost of living well above Romanian average. Consequently, in Cluj-Napoca, the third country national population be it refugees or people on student and work visas are mostly long-term residents of the town and are less affected by the instability of their situation as others in places closer to the border. Another specificity is the large TCN student population and the growing numbers of seasonal workers. In the experience of local professionals, the most desperate situations are encountered when people's work or student visas expire and they are looking to find legal ways to extend their stay. Usually at this point they apply for asylum which is rarely granted. Having a relatively large population of TCN who are not refugees and are subject to limitations of access to the Romanian labour market has important implications for their integration program.

Our interviewees described another systemic problem related to the difficulties of offering support services for TCN women VoT, namely that there is a multitude of structures and provisions regulating the services for victims of trafficking resulting in a lack of coordination and the institutions themselves being unaware of their anti-trafficking role in this regard. A case in point is the situation of the women's shelters at county levels. Being financed by the state administration at county level they restrict access to clients who have ID cards issued in the county. There have been moments when a TCN woman refugee was turned away as her ID card didn't establish her permanent address in the county. In the case of TCN with other types of legal status this becomes an insurmountable obstacle, which only an NGO with a more flexible policy can address.

## 6.5 Results of the interviews with employers

The employers we interviewed all agreed that at present there is a great generalized demand for workforce. They mentioned vacancies in their sectors, i.e. hospitality, beauty industry, creative industries and coaching and they complained of not being able to find enough 'good' employees. Although it wasn't clearly articulated, their interpretation of the good worker would be one with long-term commitment and loyalty as well as a generalized openness to learn. Our interviewees pointed out that the biggest demand for personnel is in the entry-level jobs, often for unqualified workers. There is a huge labour force demand in manufacture for e.g. in different factories or in furniture making, but also in companies that employ manual workers like mechanics, plumbers, electricians, construction workers, citing fellow employers that are willing to employ unqualified people and train them on site because they've lost hope of finding experienced professionals. They are looking for people with "two hands and two feet" as one employer put it. In the hospitality industry there is a need for wait staff, concierges, chefs, chef helpers etc. They admitted to a general problem of retention, i.e. high fluctuation in the labour force which in their opinion is partly due to emigration, with lots of young people looking for employment abroad. In our interviewees' experience there was also a need for more qualified workforce, for e.g. to cover the personnel shortages in the healthcare sector, the creative industries (interior design) or site managers with some technical construction related knowledge. One of the participants active in the beauty industry recounted that hair dressers, cosmeticians, nail technicians but also sales agents/sales representatives are permanently wanted, but cited a lack of professionalism of the interested parties.

The employers we interviewed were all open to the idea of hiring victims of trafficking in principle. They saw the best opportunities for them to work in entry-level jobs and slowly work their way up the career ladder. Some of them mentioned the hospitality sector – starting in a back office gradually moving to front office – the social services, working with animals, becoming a beautician, starting as an unqualified worker in a factory or in sales. Another offered to assist them in their job search through her contacts. It seems that for the participating employers it was much more important and they put more emphasis on the experience of being a trafficking victim, than on that of being from another country/culture. Thus, they were keen to point out some compulsory soft skills which are crucial to holding a job, rather than ones connected to being a foreigner. Most of them mentioned self-confidence and self-esteem, but also loyalty and being psychologically suited to handle stressful situations. For these reasons one of them suggested they should start in entry-level jobs at different corporations because these companies have more resources for training and support, could even offer a mentor in a fellow co-worker and are more open-minded as well as their work environment is more diverse in terms of ethnicity.

## 6.5 Factual Aspects

All of the 6 employers interviewed for this needs assessment have graduated institutions of higher education. The great majority of them 66.67% couldn't answer the questions related to the levels of unemployment at national level or for women. The two people answering were at opposite extremes with 1% and 30% respectively. None of them had any knowledge of women's unemployment levels (national statistics on unemployment are not broken down according to gender). They all placed the highest levels of unemployment in other regions, either the South (2) Moldova (2) or the city of Hunedoara. Regarding the most important economic sectors of the country most of them, 66.67% agreed that the IT and the manufacturing sector were one of them, with two respondents listing HORECA and creative industries. One mention went to healthcare, pharmacies, agriculture and the service sector each. When it came to the skills that are most needed in an employee, our interviewees focused on the importance of soft skills half of them expressing in different words the idea of commitment, but team-player is also present (2), as well as being solution oriented (4), while flexibility, management skills, foreign language each get one mention. The participants have a very diverse view on the vacancies in the job market. What gets cited the most (4) is work in manufacturing, followed by IT (3), HORECA (2) beauty industry (2), complemented by one mention of the public sector, security, sales and teaching.

Since information about the personal backgrounds and work experience of TCN VoT was gathered from secondary sources, it is somewhat anecdotal and fragmentary, but still very relevant. The 6 first line professionals that we interviewed recounted interactions with 14 TCN victims of trafficking, all but one of them (13) being women, 1 transsexual. As far as their age is concerned the women were rather young, 4 of them 20-23 years old, one 28 years old, 3 between their early 20s and 30s, and we don't have age related information about the rest (5), all we know is that they were young adults and one of them was underage. African countries are overwhelmingly represented in the category of country of origin: with 2 victims from Nigeria, 1 from Zambia and 4 from Eritrea, while for 2 of them the interviewees could only recall North Africa. 4 of the victims of trafficking were originally from the Asian countries, 3 from the Philippines and 1 from Thailand. They are all married to Romanian citizens and have been the longest (1 to 3 years in the country). 1 of the victims was from Brazil. The interactions with the victims from Africa are much shorter (a few weeks to a few months) as most of them are asylum seekers (4) who don't want to remain in Romania. One notable exception is an older African woman who applied for asylum after her student visa has expired. Their education level varies from low level education for about half of them (8) to bachelor's degrees (5) while we don't have available data for the rest. Most of the trafficking victims are single (6) but 4 of them are married to Romanian citizens. For 4 victims of trafficking no data was available about their marital status. In regards to their legal status 6 of them were asylum-seekers, 4 of them were in Romania for family reunification and 4 entered the country with work visas. Their places of residence reflect the migration trends in Romania, with more concentration in urban areas

close to the border. 6 of them resided in Bucharest, 5 in Timisoara, 2 in Craiova and 1 in Cluj-Napoca. Data related to their work experience is very scarce. What we know is that they were interested in being employed even if they didn't reach the final decision to stay in Romania. All except one of the African victims had low level education and were young without much work experience, but the Filipina women (3) had graduate degrees in IT, HORECA or nursing qualifications. They were working low-skilled (domestic and care work) jobs because of unrecognized qualifications.

## 6.6 Conclusions

When talking about trafficking of human beings for sexual exploitation it is common to list Romania in the category of either country of origin – as in supplying a significant number of victims of trafficking for the wealthier members of the EU – or a transit country through which trafficking victims from other countries (e.g. Republic of Moldova or Ukraine) are transported to reach their destination in the West. The specific intersection of third country national victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Romania has only recently surfaced in the awareness of specialized organizations, while the public is mostly ignorant of this phenomenon. As such the persons of the three target groups – representatives of TCN victims of sex trafficking, service providers and potential employers – that we turned to in order to compile this needs assessment manifested an exclusive duality in their approach, i.e. employers and service providers assessed the issue mostly through the lens of victims of sexual exploitation, while the representatives of TCN victims of sex trafficking inclined to prioritize the victims' needs primarily according to their legal status. It could be seen as a logical development, given the fact that the representatives of TCN victims of sex trafficking we interviewed are professionals working in the field of migration and refugees. The already limited capacity of social services offered to victims of trafficking, or more accurately, victims of sexual and gendered violence, are set up to primarily cater for Romanian nationals while the organizations that provide services for migrants and asylum seekers don't focus on victims of sex trafficking in particular. Only a few NGOs concentrated in large urban areas (e.g. ADPARE or the ICAR Foundation) have proved flexible enough to address the needs of victims of sex trafficking from third countries. This state of affairs has pervasive consequences. On the one hand information about TCN victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Romania is scarce and fragmented, on the other hand, even if legal provisions are in place, the social services available require more training and financial resources to deal with the specificities of victims of trafficking from third countries making the whole phenomenon largely invisible. This invisibility is particularly poignant in national statistics on human trafficking, which only tangentially mention victims of other nationalities (1 in 2018 and 12 in 2019) without offering other types of information like their gender or country of origin.

This fragmentation permeates the approach to the integration of TCN victims of sex trafficking as it is evident in the information gathered from our three target groups:

Potential employers were in general open to the idea of hiring victims of trafficking primarily in the hospitality sector (HORECA) and in manufacturing. Long-term commitment, willingness to learn and to handle stress were the most often mentioned qualities in an employee. Concerns focused on the potential lack of self-esteem and confidence in employees with this profile which they thought to mitigate by offering back office jobs at the beginning and slowly moving towards more direct involvement with clients or by finding employment in corporations that have more resources to provide for a smoother transition into the work-force (e.g by designating a mentor).

From the point of view of the service providers good practices mean learning about the victims' specific cultural backgrounds as well as involving the victims in the decisions about their own recovery, if possible, even in the budgeting details as a form of empowerment. Service providers directly involved with victims of trafficking recommend informing/training the work environment about the sensibilities of traumatized people and caution that the hospitality sector in particular can be a very triggering environment for victims of sexual exploitation. Instead they suggest forms of self-employment as more straightforward ways to empowerment and integration.

The representatives of TCN victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation see the language barrier and a generalized state of insecurity (due to legal status, desire to reach other member states, etc.) as the most important issue when it comes to integration in Romanian society. The management of the horizon of expectations can also present some difficulties. The available jobs are usually low-skilled, low-paid which can lead to financial issues and disappointment, especially if a family is accustomed to live on the father's single income. Married Muslim women may feel forced by circumstances to find employment and are particularly impacted by this change in gender roles. A possible solution is that of community support which can partially mitigate both language issues and the sense of insecurity. However, for victims of sexual exploitation a close-knit community can present both as a resource of resilience as well as increased social risks.

Professionals essentially agree that TCN victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Romania is a new, but growing phenomenon. The reasons that these realities are not reflected in national statistics are connected both to a certain unpreparedness of the system to identify and consistently support victims from third countries as well as a generalized instability in the victims' desire to remain in the country and follow through the integration program.



## 7. Annexes

### 7.1 Annex I: Qualitative tools

#### ***Focus groups with TCN women VoT***

Question	Research Topic
1. Could you tell us how much time you have been in name of country?	Introductory question
2. How is your life in name of country? Do you face any obstacles in your everyday life? a) If yes, could you share some of them with us? (e.g. everyday life, access to health care, adjustment, language, employment, material support)	Difficulties and respective needs of the women
3. What do you think are your rights in Name of Country? a) Could you briefly describe them? b) How did you become aware of these rights? (e.g. did you get the information from an organisation?)	Knowledge about rights existing services they can benefit from
4. Do you know any available services that could help you with any of the issues you deal with? a) If yes, could you mention some of them?	
5. Have you ever visited any of these services? a) If yes, could you describe the services that you were provided? How did you find the services? b) Is there anything you wanted to be done differently or additionally?	
6. If you did not happen to have visited any of these services, would you be willing to? Do you think this could help you in any way?	Needs of the women in terms of service provision

<p>7. What kind of support do you need? What kind of services do you think could improve your everyday life?</p> <p>Before proceeding to the next question, remind the participants that the aim of the project is to contribute to the integration of third country national women victims of trafficking in the labour market, in order to prevent the re-trafficking and assist in their financial independence.</p> <p>8. What kind of support would you need in order to get a job easier?</p> <p>9. What are your needs regarding employment?</p> <p>10. Do you feel you have adequate knowledge/ are adequately trained in order to enter the labour market?</p> <p>11. What skills do you think could help you find a job easier?</p>	Needs of women
<p>12. Would you be willing to take part in other stages of this project? (e.g. training)</p> <p>13. What are your expectations from the project?</p>	Closing question
<p>14. Is there anything you would like to add?</p>	

## **Interviews with TCN women VoT**

Question	Research Topic
1. Could you tell us with how many TCN women VoT for sexual exploitation you have worked? How many will you represent? 2. Could you tell us how much time they have been in name of country?	Introductory question
3. How is their life in name of country? Do they face any obstacles in their everyday life? a) If yes, could you share some of them with us? (e.g. everyday life, access to health care, adjustment, language, employment, material support)	Difficulties and respective needs of the women
4. What do they think are their rights in Name of Country? a) Could you briefly describe them? b) How did they become aware of these rights? (e.g. did they get the information from an organisation?) 5. Do they know any available services that could help them with any of the issues they deal with? a) If yes, could you mention some of them? 6. Have they ever visited any of these services? a) If yes, could you describe the services that they were provided? How did they find the services? b) Is there anything they wanted to be done differently or additionally?	Knowledge about rights existing services they can benefit from
7. If they did not happen to have visited any of these services, would they be willing to? Do they think this could help them in any way?	Needs of the women in terms of service provision

<p>8. What kind of support do they need? What kind of services do they think could improve their everyday life?</p> <p>Before proceeding to the next question, remind the participants that the aim of the project is to contribute to the integration of third country national women victims of trafficking in the labour market, in order to prevent the re-trafficking and assist in their financial independence.</p> <p>9. What kind of support would they need in order to get a job easier?</p> <p>10. What are their needs regarding employment?</p> <p>11. Do they feel they have adequate knowledge/ are adequately trained in order to enter the labour market?</p> <p>12. What skills do they think could help them find a job easier?</p>	Needs of women
<p>13. Would they be willing to take part in other stages of this project? (e.g. training)</p> <p>14. What would their expectations from the project be?</p>	Closing question
<p>15. Is there anything you would like to add?</p>	

## Workshops with support service providers

Question	Research Topic
1. Could you briefly describe your organisation and your work with women VoT?	Introductory question
2. What are the rights of women that have been identified as victims of in Name of Country? 3. What kind of support are they entitled to? 4. What are the rights of these women at a European level? Are there any differences between the rights they are entitled at the local level (Name of Country) and in a EU level?	Rights of women VoT – local and EU level
5. According to your knowledge and experience, could specific cultural elements affect human trafficking? (e.g. juju) If yes, in which way? Could you mention some examples? 6. How do you think such elements affect the victims? (Can such elements influence the way victims identify themselves?) e.g. According to your knowledge and experience, is the juju oath still binding Nigerian girls to sexual exploitation? a) Can such elements affect the way VoT seek support?	Cultural elements affecting human trafficking
7. Do you face any difficulties in your work with women? If yes, could you mention some of them? 8. Do you face difficulties in reaching the women? (e.g. difficulties in identifying and interacting with women VoT) (Guide for the researchers: You should provide the example only if the participants do not state anything relevant. You can ask about identification difficulties after all participants have fully expressed themselves.) a) If yes, could you mention some of them? b) If yes, what do you think you need in order to mitigate these difficulties?	Difficulties of reaching women VoT
9. Are there any difficulties in providing support to women VoT? If yes, could you mention some of them? 10. Are there any risks in providing support to women VoT? (e.g. secondary victimisation) a) If yes, could you mention some of them?	Risks in delivering support services

b) How do you think such risks could be mitigated?	
<p>11. Are there any gaps in the legislative instruments of Name of Country? If yes, could you mention some?</p> <p>12. If yes, how do these gaps affect the quality of your work?</p>	Gaps in legislation influencing the quality of their work
<p>13. Are there any success stories of women VoT? Could share some of them with us?</p> <p>14. Are there any good practices implemented in Name of Country?</p> <p>15. Are there any good practices, implemented in other countries, that could help these women?</p>	Success stories and good practices
<p>16. What support do you think should be provided to TCN women VoT, in terms of enhancing their hiring probability?</p> <p>17. Would you be willing to participate in future stages of the project? (e.g. round tables)</p> <p>18. Is there anything you would like to add?</p>	Closing questions

## **Interviews with employers**

Question	Research Topic
1. Could you briefly describe your work?	Introductory question
2. Which do you think are the current local market's needs? 3. Which sectors do you think currently have more vacancies? 4. Are there any vacant jobs in your area of work?	Local market demands
Before proceeding to the next question, remind the participants that the aim of the project is to contribute to the integration of third country national women victims of trafficking in the labour market, in order to prevent the re-trafficking and assist in their financial independence. 5. In which sector do you think these women could work? 6. Do you think they should attend any training, in order to facilitate their smoother integration in the labour market? a) If yes, what element do you think should be included in such trainings? 7. Are there any specific competences that TCN women VoT should develop for their smoother integration in the labour market? 8. Is there anything that could enhance the hiring probability of these women? (e.g. a good CV, guidance from a mentor)	Potential employment opportunities for TCN women VoT
9. Is there anything you would like to add regarding the local market demands and the potential employment opportunities of TCN women VoT? 10. Would you be willing to engage in future stages of the project? (e.g. round tables)	Closing question

## 7.2 Annex II: Quantitative tools

### ***TCN women VoT***

#### A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU

A1. Gender?

- Male
- Female
- Trans
- Intersex
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

A2. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

A3. Educational level:

- Going to/not completed secondary school
- Graduated from secondary school
- Vocational training
- Higher education
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

A4. What is your status?

- Married
- Not married, but I live together with a partner
- Married, but we live separately
- I have a partner, but we live separately
- Single
- Divorced



- Never married and I have never lived together with a partner
- Widowed
- Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

A5. What is your legal status?

- Asylum seeker
- Subsidiary protection
- Humanitarian protection
- Exceptional protection
- Protection of victims of trafficking
- Family reunification
- Other form of protection (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

A6. What is your country of origin?

(please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

A7. What is your city of residence in name of country?

(please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR EMPLOYMENT STATUS

B1. Have you ever worked?

B2. If yes, in which sector?

B3. Do you currently work?

- Yes

- No
- Don't want to answer

B4. If yes, what is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

B5. If not, would you like to work?

- Yes
- No
- Don't want to answer

B6. If yes, which sector do you think would be suitable for you?

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Representatives of TCN women VoT**

### A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT THE WOMEN

#### A1. Gender?

- Male
- Female
- Trans
- Intersex
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

#### A2. How old are they? \_\_\_\_\_

#### A3. Educational level:

- Going to/not completed secondary school
- Graduated from secondary school
- Vocational training
- Higher education
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

#### A4. What is their status?

- Married
- Not married, but I live together with a partner
- Married, but we live separately
- I have a partner, but we live separately
- Single
- Divorced
- Never married and I have never lived together with a partner
- Widowed

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

A5. What is their legal status?

- Asylum seeker
- Subsidiary protection
- Humanitarian protection
- Exceptional protection
- Protection of victims of trafficking
- Family reunification
- Other form of protection (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

A6. What is their country of origin?

(please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

A7. What is their city of residence in name of country?

(please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR EMPLOYMENT STATUS

B1. Have they ever worked?

B2. If yes, in which sector?

B3. Do they currently work?

- Yes
- No
- Don't want to answer

B4. If yes, what is their occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

B5. If not, would they like to work?

- Yes
- No
- Don't want to answer

B6. If yes, which sector do they think would be suitable for them?

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Support service providers**

### A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU

A1. Name of organisation?

(please specify)

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A2. Profession/ role?

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A3. Do you work with TCN women VoT?

- Yes
- No
- Somewhat
- I work with victims of trafficking
- I work with TCN women (who are not VoT)
- I work with women VoT (who are not TCN)
- Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

### QUESTIONS ABOUT THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF TCN WOMEN VOT

B1. What is the average number of victims of trafficking in name of country?\_\_\_\_\_

B2. What is the average number of TCN women VoT in name of country?\_\_\_\_\_

B3. What is their average age?\_\_\_\_\_

B4. What is their average educational level?

- Going to/not completed secondary school
- Graduated from secondary school
- Vocational training
- Higher education
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

B5. What are the most common cities of residence in name of country?

(please specify)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

B6. What are the most common countries of origin?

(please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

B7. What are the most common cases of trafficking in name of country?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR WORK AND YOUR ORGANISATION

C1. What kind of support do you provide to TCN women VoT? (You can choose more than one option)

- Psychological support
- Social support
- Material support
- Health care
- Support in employment
- Other (please specify)

-----

C2. What is the average number of victims of trafficking your organisation supports? \_\_\_\_\_

C3. What is the average number of TCN women VoT your organisation supports? \_\_\_\_\_

C4. What is the average age of TCN women VoT your organisation supports? \_\_\_\_\_

C5. What is the average educational level of TCN women VoT your organisation supports?

- Going to/not completed secondary school
- Graduated from secondary school
- Vocational training
- Higher education
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

C6. How many TCN women VoT your organisation supports have children (approximately)?

Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Unaware



C7. How many TCN women VoT your organisation supports work (approximately)?

Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Unaware

C8. What are the most common professional sectors TCN women VoT, supported by your organisation, are hired in?

(please specify)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

C9. Do you feel sufficiently trained in handling cases of TCN women VoT?

- Yes
- No
- Somewhat
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

C10. Have you attended any training in handling cases of TCN women VoT?

- Yes - if yes, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- No

## QUESTIONS ABOUT OTHER SERVICES

D1. Are there any other services providing support to victims of trafficking available in your region?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/ Don't want to answer

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

D2. If yes, what kind of support do they provide?

(please specify)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

D3. If yes, could you name some?

(please specify)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

D4. Are there any other services providing support specifically to TCN women VoT available in your region?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/ Don't want to answer
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

D5. If yes, what kind of support do they provide?

(please specify)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

D6. If yes, could you name some?

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---

(please specify)

1. -----
2. -----
3. -----
4. -----

## **Employers**

### A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU

A1. Name of company?

(please specify)

-----

A2. Profession/ role?

-----

A3. Educational level:

Going to/not completed secondary school

Graduated from secondary school

Vocational training

Higher education

Other (please specify)

-----

### QUESTIONS ABOUT THE LABOUR MARKET

B1. What is the unemployment rate in name of country?\_\_\_\_\_

B2. What is the unemployment rate affecting women in name of country?\_\_\_\_\_

B3. What is the region with the highest unemployment rates in name of country? \_\_\_\_\_

B4. What are the most important economic sectors in name of country?  
(please specify)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

B5. What are the most important skills employees should have in name of country?  
(please specify)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

B6. Which sectors have the most vacancies in name of country?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

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[WWW.HEALPROJECT.EU](http://WWW.HEALPROJECT.EU)



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