

**IMPROVING THE IDENTIFICATION
AND SUPPORT OF VICTIMS OF
TRAFFICKING FOR LABOUR
EXPLOITATION IN THE EU**

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“As Europeans, we cannot accept that in today’s Europe there are women, men, girls, and boys who are sold, who are bought, and who are exploited and treated as commodities.”

– Dimitris Avramopoulos, European Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship

SUMMARY

Human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation is a serious crime and a human rights violation.² Despite its pervasiveness across Europe³ and its harmful effects on victims, limited attention has been paid to the identification and support of victims of trafficking for labour exploitation. The Pro-Act project (Pro-active Identification and Support of Victims of Trafficking for Labour Exploitation in the EU) seeks to address this by improving responses to trafficking for labour exploitation throughout the European Union. The conclusions and recommendations presented in this briefing are the result of a 2-year project combining both extensive research and practical experience components. This policy brief presents three key issues identified through the project:

1. the need for sustainable support and access to accommodation for victims of trafficking for labour exploitation;
2. the increasing conflation of labour inspection and immigration control and the need for more proactive and victim-centred identification efforts;
3. the lack of access to legal remedies for victims of trafficking for labour exploitation.

This paper highlights the concerning position that, **in many European countries current responses to trafficking fall short of international and European obligations, and that more needs to be done both to effectively prevent trafficking for labour exploitation, and to support and protect its victims** from further victimization. It proposes a set of recommendations in order to ensure a sustainable and comprehensive approach to human trafficking for labour exploitation in the EU. It calls for the effective and full implementation of European obligations by Member States, and seeks to provide input to the post-2016 EU strategy on Trafficking in Human Beings.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Access to safe accommodation and support should be protected in national legislation and practice, and should be unconditional of cooperation with law enforcement.⁴

2

Proactive labour inspection should be a key component of strategies for the prevention and identification of trafficking for labour exploitation. Labour law enforcement should be victim-centred and a strict firewall should be maintained between labour inspection and immigration control.

3

The uptake of access to legal remedies for victims of trafficking for labour exploitation, including access to compensation, should be monitored and reviewed to ensure easy and prompt access to remedy for all victims.⁵

1. Remarks by Commissioner Avramopoulos on the occasion of the presentation of the first progress report on trafficking in human beings, available at: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-16-1849_en.htm.

2. See art. 4 European Convention on Human Rights; UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, among others.

3. In 2013-2014, over 3,300 victims of human trafficking for labour exploitation were registered in the EU (21% of total registered victims). It is believed that this is just the tip of the iceberg and Member States have reported that this form of exploitation is on the rise. See: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/organized-crime-and-human-trafficking/trafficking-in-human-beings/docs/commission_report_on_the_progress_made_in_the_fight_against_trafficking_in_human_beings_2016_en.pdf.

4. In accordance with art. 11 (3) of the Trafficking Directive (2011/36/EU) and with the Victims' Directive.

5. In accordance with art. 17 of the European Trafficking Directive (2011/36/EU).

BACKGROUND

The European Trafficking Convention (ECAT)⁶ and the EU Trafficking Directive (the Directive)⁷ set out Member States' responsibility to identify, protect, and support victims of human trafficking.⁸ Directive 2012/29/EU (the Victims Directive) further establishes minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime across the European Union. Whilst the adoption of these European instruments has represented an important step forward, **we must now ensure these obligations are fully and effectively implemented for all forms of human trafficking.**

As stressed by the European Commission, 'a victim-centred approach is at the heart of the EU anti-trafficking legislation and policy'.⁹ A rights-based, victim-centred approach is also key to the sustainability and effectiveness of any anti-trafficking response, ensuring victims are adequately supported and reducing the risk of re-trafficking.¹⁰ It requires appropriate and unconditional support for all trafficked persons; demands access to justice and assistance to victims exercising their legal rights; and opposes any measures that might harm the rights of trafficked persons or individuals vulnerable to labour exploitation.

At the heart of this Project is a victim-centred, human rights approach. Through research and in-depth engagement with trafficking victims, support providers, and other key stakeholders at the national and European level, the Project has incorporated the experiences and expressed needs of victims into the development of effective strategies for pro-active identification and support of victims of trafficking for labour exploitation. The Project partners — Focus on Labour Exploitation (FLEX, UK), FairWork (The Netherlands), ADPARE (Romania), Migrant Help (UK) and the Latin American Women's Rights Service (LAWRS, UK) — have further piloted the victim-centered strategies developed through the project in the Netherlands, the UK, and Romania. Their insights into the practical implementation and transferability of these strategies are reflected in this paper.



SUSTAINABLE SUPPORT & ACCESS TO ACCOMMODATION

Article 11 of the EU Trafficking Directive requires Member States to provide support as soon as the competent authorities have 'reasonable-grounds' to believe a person might be a victim. The 2011 Directive further establishes that:

Support must be provided on an informed, consensual basis, and regardless of the victim's willingness or ability to cooperate in the criminal investigation or prosecution.¹¹

- However, Pro-Act's findings indicate that victims of trafficking for labour exploitation had a limited awareness of their rights and entitlements. Furthermore, some victims had not given genuine and ongoing consent to their engagement with the anti-trafficking system.¹²
- In many EU countries, support to victims of trafficking is still tied to cooperation with the criminal investigation or prosecution,¹³ and according to the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, providing unconditional support and protection to victims of trafficking remains a challenge for most Member States.¹⁴

6. CoE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (ECAT), available at: <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168008371d>.

7. Directive 2011/36/EU, available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32011L0036>.

8. The Explanatory Report to the Convention clarifies that while the assistance can be provided in cooperation with non-governmental organisations, it is nevertheless the ultimate responsibility of the State (para 149).

9. European Commission, 2016. Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings.

10. An IOM Study on re-trafficking found that insufficient support and lack of move-on options due to funding restrictions resulted in instances of re-trafficking and victimisation. For more information see: http://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/causes_of_retrafficking.pdf.

11. Article 11, European Trafficking Directive (2011/36/EU).

Support should be based on the individual needs of the victim. Under the EU Trafficking Directive, support should be needs-oriented, and should include at least: appropriate and safe accommodation, material assistance, medical treatment, psychological assistance, counselling and information, translation and interpretation services.¹⁵

- The Pro-Act research found¹⁶ a wide range of support services available to victims of trafficking for labour exploitation in each of the project countries. However, participating victims and service providers, especially in the UK and Romania, also found that the **level of support was inadequate**, and that **support was not tailored to the needs of victims**, and particularly to the differing needs of men¹⁷ and women. Issues reported by victims and victim support organisations across Europe¹⁸ include unsafe or unsuitable accommodation, insufficient psychological assistance, delays in providing access to interpretation services, dispersal of victims away from support and safety networks, and lack of information.
- Furthermore, in many instances, the **length of the support provided is arbitrary** and is not related to the ongoing needs of victims. As a result, many victims are left without support too soon, and become vulnerable to re-trafficking and exploitation.

CASE STUDY

Struggling to provide support adequate to the needs of victims in Romania

In March 2016, the Romanian National Agency Against Trafficking in Persons (NAATIP) referred the case of two Romanian brothers to ADPARE. The brothers had been subjected to trafficking for labour exploitation in the Southern region of Romania. They had experienced physical, sexual and verbal abuse, including elements of torture, they had been held in insalubrious conditions, and had been threatened with death if they sought help from the authorities.

Initially the brothers insisted on remaining in their own house and receiving assistance from ADPARE in the community. However, the traffickers tracked down one of the brothers, who managed to escape. ADPARE and NAATIP convinced the brothers of the crucial need to relocate for their own protection, and provided support for the two men to move to Bucharest. However, finding suitable accommodation for the two men in Bucharest represented a significant challenge, as there are no dedicated shelters for male victims of human trafficking. As a result, there were few appropriate options available, and ADPARE had to work with a homelessness support organisation that could offer shelter for the two men. The two brothers ultimately decided that they wanted to return to their village to find work. Due to the lack of Government funding for support to male victims of trafficking, ADPARE has had to seek funding for psychological assistance and legal support for these victims from international funders and charity projects. With assistance from ADPARE, the two men have finally been able to access accommodation and support provided by a local NGO in their own community, which has enabled them to continue their recovery process according to their own needs.

12. The Pro-Act Project, 2015. Pro-Active Identification and Support in the Netherlands, the UK and Romania, available at: <http://www.labourexploitation.org/sites/default/files/publications/FINALREPORT.pdf>.

13. Information gathered through two EU-wide workshops organised in the framework of the Pro-Act project.

14. Remarks by EU Anti-trafficking coordinator Myria Vassiliadou on the occasion of the presentation of the First Progress Report on Trafficking in Human Beings, available at: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-16-1849_en.htm. 15. Article 11(5), European Trafficking Directive (2011/36/EU).

16. See above at 12.

17. Statistical data shows that 74% of the victims of trafficking for labour exploitation registered in the EU in 2013-2014 were male.

18. Information gathered through in-country research in the Netherlands, the UK and Romania, and through two EU-wide workshops organised as part of the Pro-Act project, involving a range of stakeholders, including service providers and organisations supporting victims of trafficking for labour exploitation.

Support should be outcome-focused and should contribute to the sustainability of anti-trafficking responses. Member States have a positive obligation to protect victims and potential victims of human trafficking for labour exploitation.¹⁹ Support should seek to bring about positive long-term outcomes for victims and to reduce potential risks of re-trafficking and further victimisation.

- However, there is **very little funding for move on options**, and as a result access to support post-reflection period is limited, especially in the UK and Romania. Access to housing and livelihoods are a key priority for victims of human trafficking.²⁰ However, limitations on the availability and access to mainstream housing, combined with a lack of awareness among responsible authorities and institutions (local authorities, social workers, etc.) **often leave victims at risk of destitution post-reflection and recovery period.**
- Pro-Act research found that **weak assistance programmes coupled with barriers to accessing safe work and accommodation are leaving trafficked persons extremely vulnerable to re-trafficking**, most notably in the UK and Romania.²¹

CASE STUDY

Insufficient Support and Vulnerability to Re-trafficking Post-Reflection Period in the UK

A Lithuanian victim of trafficking escaped the criminal gang for whom she was forced to work and was referred into the UK support system for victims of human trafficking, the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).²² In October 2014, she was officially recognized by the competent authority as a victim of human trafficking, and as a result, she was given 14 days to leave the supported accommodation.²³ However, as a citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA), she could only access mainstream support and welfare benefits if she was working in the UK. Unfortunately, the victim was unable to work as she was still recovering from the abuse suffered during her trafficking experience. Because she was an EEA national who did not satisfy the 'habitual residence test' and was not a jobseeker or a worker, she was ineligible for housing benefit and housing support, as well as other UK social benefits.

The victim thus faced an impossible choice between destitution in the UK, or returning to her country of origin where she would be at a high risk of re-trafficking and retaliation from her traffickers. Ultimately, with the assistance of lawyers, the victim was able to secure accommodation from her local council, based on the significant risk of re-trafficking in her case and the UK's positive obligation to assist and protect victims from re-trafficking and victimization under article 4 ECHR.²⁴

19. In *Rantsev v Cyprus and Russia*, the European Court of Human Rights established that under art. 4 of the European Convention on Human Rights, Member States have a positive obligation to identify victims and investigate human trafficking where it has already occurred and to adopt appropriate and effective legal and administrative frameworks to protect victims and prevent trafficking and re-trafficking.

20. Interviews conducted with victims of human trafficking in the UK, the Netherlands and Romania, as part of the Pro-Act project.

21. The Pro-Act project, 2015. Pro-Act Working Paper: Pilot Strategies for Pro-Active Identification and Support to Victims of Trafficking for Labour Exploitation. Available at: http://www.labourexploitation.org/sites/default/files/publications/d92434_68199eeaa0264abf8bd5c8ce99b5848c.pdf.

22. In the UK, support for victims of trafficking is provided through the 'national referral mechanism' (NRM). Access to support is provided following a decision by the competent authorities that there are 'reasonable grounds' to believe that a person is a victim of human trafficking. While cooperation with law enforcement is not a condition of support through the NRM, this support is only available to victims for up to 45 days.

23. Once the UK authorities make a 'conclusive grounds' decision that a person has been trafficked, the confirmed victim will have to exit support within two weeks of the decision. Potential victims who receive a negative conclusive grounds decision must exit support within 48 hours.

24. See above at 19.

Ongoing support:

Unconditional support is needed for all victims, regardless of their immigration status, and should include at least accommodation, counselling, medical treatment, and access to education and employment opportunities.

Comprehensive long-term reintegration programmes should be developed and funded.

Beyond the formal assistance currently offered as part of the 'reflection and recovery period' or 'national referral mechanism', ongoing support is needed to achieve long-term recovery and guard against further vulnerability.

- Victims' needs should be formally assessed, and **the length and level of support should be tailored and adapted to the needs of victims**, with a particular attention to gender, age and vulnerability. **Long-term outcomes for victims should be monitored** against their needs assessments and their own expectations as part of a post-support reintegration programme.
- **Extensions should be promptly granted** to all victims of trafficking requiring support for longer periods of time than the standard periods available under reflection and recovery periods.

Move-on options:

- Victims of trafficking should be a prioritized group for housing support.
- Move-on and reintegration plans should be a central component of any support provision, and victims of trafficking should be engaged in, and consulted throughout this process, becoming agents of their own reintegration.
- Language, education and employability services should be offered to trafficked persons.

Monitoring and knowledge-building:

- Record re-trafficking data to understand vulnerabilities post-support provision, monitor the effectiveness of the support system and understand and prevent re-trafficking.
- Increase awareness of human trafficking among social services, local authorities, and other agencies responsible for housing and social support.

2

PROACTIVE AND VICTIM-CENTRED LABOUR INSPECTION

In the context of trafficking for labour exploitation, **labour inspectorates have a vital role to play in the prevention of exploitation and the proactive identification of and assistance to victims.** This is recognised in the International Labour Organization (ILO) Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention (2014), which emphasises the need to strengthen labour inspection services as part of efforts to tackle forced labour.²⁵ In its 2015 report on severe labour exploitation, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) also stressed the crucial function of labour inspection services, and noted that “if Member States fail to provide effective monitoring structures, there is a serious risk that the rights of victims will not be upheld and that offenders will not be held to account. This can lead to endemic forms of severe labour exploitation gradually infiltrating sectors of the economy, thereby invalidating labour standards for workers.”²⁶

Under the European Trafficking Convention, States are required to adopt measures to identify victims, and to ensure that the competent authorities²⁷ are provided with staff that are trained and qualified to identify and assist victims of trafficking²⁸. However, the Pro-Act research found significant limitations to labour inspection and enforcement in all three project countries.²⁹

- The project found that the **response to trafficking for labour exploitation** by labour inspectorates in the project countries was **reactive rather than pro-active**, and labour inspectors’ ability to identify victims of trafficking for labour exploitation was limited. The project pilot showed that pro-active efforts, such as providing workers with information about their rights and raising awareness of the dangers of human trafficking for labour exploitation, contributed to improved disclosure and self-identification. Pilot results also highlighted the importance of involving other institutions, civil society and community organisations in the identification process.
- One of the key problems identified was the **increasing trend towards combined labour law enforcement and immigration operations**. This dangerous conflation of immigration control and labour inspection **jeopardizes the effectiveness of labour inspection**, and constitutes a significant barrier to the identification of victims of trafficking for labour exploitation. Not only are potential victims fearful of coming forward but inspectors fail to spot indicators of human trafficking. This view is supported by research conducted by European agencies such as the FRA, which recommended that “labour inspectors and police officers should be briefed and trained to give the rights of victims of severe labour exploitation priority over objectives relating to the management of migration.”³⁰

The ILO clearly states that the role of labour inspectors is to protect and uphold workers’ rights, not to combat the employment of undocumented workers.³¹ However, in many European countries it is common for labour inspectorates to carry out joint operations with immigration control. In other countries, such as the Netherlands and the UK, the labour inspectorate is also tasked with detecting and pursuing the employment of undocumented workers. **These competing tasks hinder labour inspectors’ ability to identify potential indicators of trafficking for labour exploitation, and to gain the trust of workers** often needed to uncover severe exploitation. Identification requires building trust, providing support and offering a positive alternative to the exploitative situation. Immigration control destroys trust and risks returning victims to situations or to countries where they may be subjected to further exploitation or to re-trafficking. Furthermore, immigration control provides traffickers with an additional tool to control and coerce their victims, as they often use fear of detention and deportation to hold people in situations of severe exploitation.

25. Article 2, ILO Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention (2014).

26. FRA (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights), 2015. Severe Labour Exploitation: Workers Moving Within or Into the European Union.

27. The Convention’s Explanatory Report explains that ‘competent authorities’ includes police, labour inspectorates and immigration authorities.

28. Article 10, CoE Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings.

29. See above at 12.

30. See above at 26, p. 15.

CASE STUDY

Failure to identify due to Competing Priorities in the Netherlands

Two Moroccan men were exploited for their labour in a laundromat in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The men lived and worked without a residence permit, they worked long days and rarely had a day off. They received very little pay and slept at the laundromat. The employer withheld their wages, claiming that the money was being used 'to pay for their residence permit'. However, the employer never arranged the promised residence permit, and instead threatened the men with reporting them to the police if they complained or caused any trouble.

The Dutch labour inspection services visited the laundromat on several occasions, and even raided the premises. They detected the undocumented workers but did not identify the exploitation. The two men were too afraid to disclose their situation to the labour inspectors. As a result, both men were placed in immigration detention on several occasions, and were subsequently returned to the laundromat. After many months, the men decided to seek help from FairWork, and were finally granted protection as victims of trafficking for labour exploitation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Victim-centred and proactive labour inspection:

- **A strict firewall should be maintained between labour inspection and immigration control** to ensure labour inspectors can gain the trust of workers needed to effectively identify victims of abuse. The sole focus of labour inspection should be the protection of workers and the prevention of abuse.
- **All labour inspectors should be trained** to understand and assess risk factors and identify the indicators of trafficking for labour exploitation and forced labour.
- **Labour inspection should be pro-active and adequately resourced** to encompass all sectors where trafficking for labour exploitation is prevalent.
- **Migrant and community organisations / NGOs should be engaged** in efforts to improve detection and to educate their respective communities about labour rights and legal entitlements as a means for preventing and ending abuse.

Non-prosecution of victims:

- **Victims of trafficking should be protected against prosecution** for criminal or immigration violations, and in particular for violations committed as a result of having been trafficked.
- **Law enforcement officials should be trained and aware of this non-prosecution principle** and should provide avenues for workers to report abuse without risking negative immigration consequences.

31. ILO Convention 81 (the Labour Inspection Convention 1947), states that the duties of labour inspectors should be focused on the enforcement of, and compliance with, labour law. Convention 81 expressly prohibits labour inspectors from carrying out duties beyond this scope where they interfere with the inspectors' impartial workplace inspection activity.

3

ACCESS TO LEGAL REMEDIES

Access to justice, and in particular access to compensation can play an important role in the recovery of victims of human trafficking. The receipt of an adequate compensation award can contribute to providing victims with a sense of justice and closure, as well as with the financial means to stay safe and rebuild their lives. However, in practice many victims of trafficking for labour exploitation are left without justice or compensation for the abuses suffered.

The European Convention on Action against Trafficking requires Member States to ensure trafficking victims' right to obtain compensation, both from the perpetrators and from the State.³² The EU Trafficking Directive further requires that victims of human trafficking have access to existing compensation schemes available to other victims of violent crimes.³³

- Legal avenues to compensation were available to victims of trafficking for labour exploitation in all three Pro-Act countries. However, numerous barriers to compensation remain for victims, and research showed that victims of trafficking for labour exploitation are rarely able to access and obtain compensation.³⁴ Difficulties reported by organisations supporting trafficking victims across Europe include the inadequacy of existing legal avenues to compensation, insufficient support to navigate the legal system, lack of information and low general awareness of victims' legal rights and options, and lack of access to free legal advice and representation.³⁵
- In its recent report on the progress made against human trafficking³⁶, the European Commission acknowledged the vital importance of access to justice for all victims of human trafficking, and stressed that "victims of human trafficking must be considered primarily as rights holders, and they must be able to understand and exercise their rights." However, the Pro-Act project found that there was a limited awareness and understanding of the legal rights and options of victims of human trafficking for labour exploitation both among victims and support providers.³⁷

The EU Trafficking Directive³⁸ establishes victims' right to legal aid, and requires Member States to ensure victims of trafficking have access 'without delay' to legal advice and representation, including for the purpose of claiming compensation. Similarly, the European (CoE) Trafficking Convention requires States to provide victims with access to legal assistance.³⁹

- The Pro-Act project found that legal assistance and representation, particularly in the context of criminal and civil proceedings, was available to some extent in all three Pro-Act countries. However, legal advice was not always freely available to trafficked persons, particularly for advice outside of criminal processes and prior to engagement with the authorities.⁴⁰
- Moreover, the project found that there was a limited number of specialist lawyers who could provide tailored and comprehensive advice to victims of trafficking for labour exploitation, particularly on the topic of compensation. As a result, advice was often limited to criminal justice or immigration issues.⁴¹

32. Article 15, CoE Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings.

33. Article 17, European Trafficking Directive (2011/36/EU).

34. See above at 12.

35. Information gathered through two EU-wide workshops organised as part of the Pro-Act project.

36. See above at 9.

37. The project developed a variety of information materials to address this issue in each of the project countries. For materials on the legal rights of victims in the UK, see: http://www.labourexploitation.org/sites/default/files/publications/FLEX%20Legal%20Rights_Options%20Pamphlet%20A5-English.pdf; in Romania: <https://www.facebook.com/eLiberare/?fref=ts>; in the Netherlands: <http://www.fairwork.nu/international/links.html>.

38. Article 12, European Trafficking Directive (2011/36/EU).

39. Article 15, CoE Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings.

40. See above at 21.

41. Ibid.

CASE STUDY

The uphill battle for compensation for victims of trafficking for labour exploitation in the UK

In June 2016 the High Court granted compensation to six Lithuanian men who had been trafficked to the UK. The men had brought a civil claim against the firm that employed them, alleging that they had been subjected to severe exploitation, including threats and assaults, working and living in inhuman and degrading conditions, being forced to work long shifts for little or no pay, and being denied sleep and toilet breaks. Due to the lack of a specific remedy for victims of trafficking in UK legislation, the litigation was highly complex, and the lawyers representing the men had to bring a variety of claims, none of which adequately reflected the reality of human trafficking and of the abuses suffered. In the end, the Court ruled that the men should be compensated by the exploitative employer. Commenting on the judgment, one of the victims said: **“it means at last that some justice has happened. We’ve waited four years and it’s been really hard being forced to remember [the experience] all the time to prove they did wrong.”**

After a long struggle, these victims of trafficking for labour exploitation finally obtained compensation. However, it was a challenging, uphill battle. After the men escaped, they were referred into the UK National Referral Mechanism and were recognized as victims of trafficking. They cooperated with the police, but no criminal charges were brought against their traffickers. Because the men were never introduced to lawyers who could advise them about compensation, it took two years before they were able to make a compensation claim against their exploiters. The victims also applied for legal aid, but only four of the six men received free legal assistance. Due to the lack of information and the length of the legal process, the victims had to wait for four years to obtain compensation. In the meantime, they faced severe difficulties, including loss of social benefits and risk of destitution due to the lack of long-term support from the UK authorities, leaving them vulnerable to re-trafficking and further exploitation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Effective legal remedies for all victims of trafficking:

- **Conduct a review** of the existing legislation, policies and practices in EU Member States, and on the possibilities and barriers to claiming compensation for victims of human trafficking for labour exploitation.
- **Improve existing legal avenues to compensation** for victims of trafficking of labour exploitation, establish specific avenues tailored to victims, and tackle any other issues identified by the review.
- Encourage the financial investigation, freezing and confiscation of assets at the initial stages of inquiry and ensure assets and fines from perpetrators are used to compensate victims of trafficking for the abuses suffered.

Access to legal advice and assistance for the purpose of claiming compensation:

- Access to free legal support / legal aid for the purpose of claiming compensation should be enshrined in national legislation and practice. **Legal assistance for victims of trafficking for labour exploitation should be easily accessible and sufficiently funded.**
- **Legal advice should be improved through the creation of networks of specialist lawyers.** Networks and cooperative relationships should be developed between service providers, lawyers and the authorities, to ensure easy referral and where possible, ongoing support for victims throughout the legal process.

Improved access to information on legal rights and options:

- **Accessible information on labour rights and legal remedies** —including compensation - should be provided in relevant languages and integrated into usual communication channels for potential and identified victims of trafficking.
- **Strengthen information pathways and promote training and awareness among all relevant stakeholders.** Information should be provided to lawyers, prosecutors, judges, service providers and frontline staff about the full range of legal options open to victims of labour exploitation, and the benefits of pursuing compensation claims.

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www.labourexploitation.org

info@labourexploitation.org



FAIRWORK

www.fairwork.nu

info@fairwork.nu



ADPARE

www.adpare.eu

adpare@adpare.eu



LATIN AMERICAN WOMEN'S RIGHTS SERVICE
Servicio por los Derechos de la Mujer Latinoamericana

www.lawrs.org.uk

lawrs@lawrs.org.uk



www.migranthelpuk.org

info@migranthelpuk.org