



net-works

WHAT WORKS

National report of Italy, Latvia, Spain, Germany,
Lithuania, and Sweden



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Introduction

The NET-WORKS project aims to ensure the long-term integration of third-country nationals' survivors of trafficking promoting job opportunities and work-life balance measures. It develops a holistic and durable integration pathway based on victim-centered and gender approaches, with a focus on preventing re-trafficking through job inclusion and measures to guarantee the work-life balance and the economic independence of women victims of sexual exploitation.

Integration pathway built within the project will be implemented in 5 countries - **Italy, Spain, and Germany** - that according to recent GRETA reports continue to be primarily countries of destination/ transit for trafficked persons, and **Latvia and Lithuania**, which have always been considered countries of origin for victims of THB but in recent years destination countries as well. **Sweden** is at the forefront of protecting the rights of survivors of trafficking, providing valuable expertise within this project.

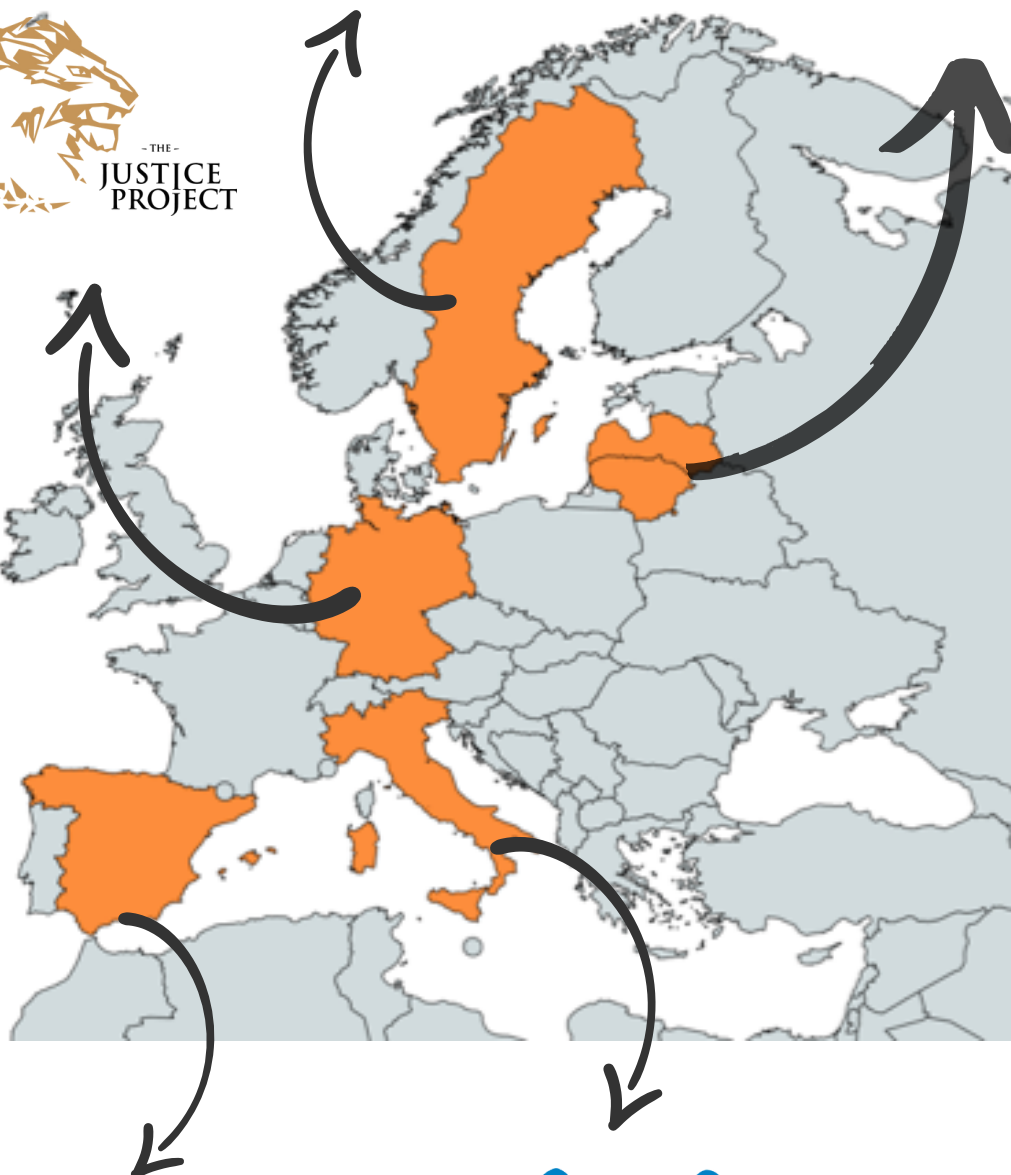
Each partner, through its direct experience on the field has developed practices that can be inspiring at the European level and useful in fostering the integration of trafficking survivors, considering also the national background. These themes were elaborated and summarized in the following report.



(Latvia)



(Lithuania)



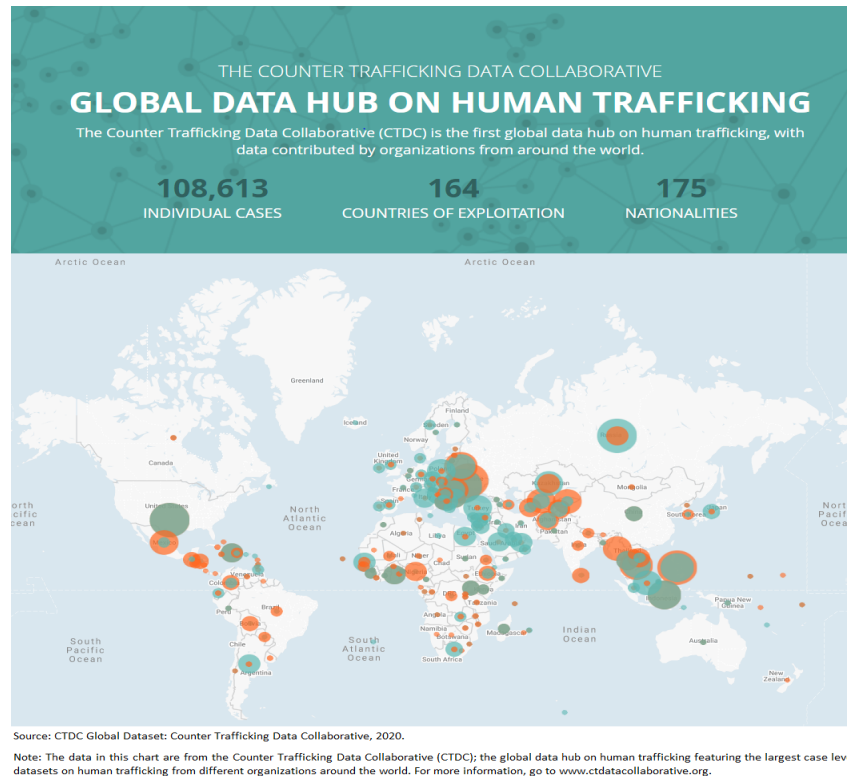
1.

human trafficking : the illegal practice of pr
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Legal framework
related to different
forms of human
trafficking

1. Legal framework related to different forms of human trafficking

The crime of human trafficking is complex and dynamic. It takes place in a wide variety of contexts and it is difficult to detect. One of the greatest challenges in developing targeted counter-trafficking responses and measuring their impact is the **lack of reliable, high-quality data** related to the scale of human trafficking and the profile of victims.



All forms of trafficking in human beings are prohibited in the European Union but at the same time, this phenomenon has increased considerably in recent years in most of the EU countries. **Women**, often very young, are more at risk of becoming victims of trafficking.

According to the European Commission's report on the prevalence of trafficking in human beings in the European Union in 2020, 72% of all victims of trafficking in the EU were women.¹

¹ EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2020). Third report on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings (2020) as required under Article 20 of Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims

Online: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0661&rid=4>

In this context, there is the legal and policy framework within the European Union that recognizes trafficking as a gender phenomenon and requires member states to implement actions to promote gender equality. Directive 2011/36/EU[1] of the European Parliament adopted a gender approach to the phenomenon of trafficking, recognizing that women and men, girls and boys are trafficked in different circumstances. There are **anti-trafficking national laws and policies in all European countries** but the gender approach slowly starts to take its place in these laws and policies, by considering relevant international treaties and making amendments. The **process** is more influenced by a **person's legal status** than gender.

In Germany trafficking in human beings and others forms of exploitation are punishable by imprisonment according to §232 StGB[2] and survivors have the right to file criminal charges. However, most of them are dropped due to the lack of evidence. Survivors of human trafficking who are third country nationals have a right to apply for asylum. **A legal procedure for asylum seekers hardly differs and survivors of human trafficking fall under the normal asylum system.**

Survivors of trafficking have a three-month stabilization and reflection period during which they can consider filing charges against their traffickers and be stabilized for the interviewing. These three months can be activated if there are concrete indications that a foreign person has been a victim of human trafficking under §232 Strafgesetzbuch (StGB). At this time and if a report has been filed and is still pending, survivors cannot be deported from Germany.

In Latvia trafficking in human beings is a crime specified in the Criminal Law of the Republic of Latvia from 2002 (Section 154.2)[3]. Anti-trafficking policies in Latvia are changing, considering local trends, international treaties, and the policies of international organizations.

Since 2021 the prevention policy for human trafficking is based on Cabinet Regulation No 690 “National Action Plan against trafficking in human beings 2021-2023”. This plan places emphasis on modern slavery or forced labour, which is the most common form of trafficking in human beings in Latvia in recent years (in 2020: 10 cases of sexual exploitation, 37 cases of forced labour). In 2007, a law regarding the residence of a victim of trafficking human beings in the Republic of Latvia was adopted, which lays down the conditions for the residence of victims of human trafficking from third countries in Latvia. It is important to note that **in Latvia any person can be recognized as a victim**

of human trafficking by State Police or two non-governmental organizations, Centre MARTA² and Shelter “Safe House”³ but it doesn't guarantee the initiation of criminal proceedings. This law regulates the rights of victims of trafficking who are third country nationals, depending on whether criminal proceedings are being initiated. If proceedings are initiated, a third country national is granted a temporary residence permit for a period not less than 6 months with the right to work without any limitations. If the criminal proceedings are stopped, the temporary residence permit is also revoked. Third country nationals who are not recognized as a victim under the Criminal Law and are not a subject to criminal proceedings can be granted a **30-day waiting period** and within these 30 days, law enforcement authorities conclude initiating or not initiating criminal proceedings. **After these 30 days, if the criminal proceedings are not initiated, the third country national should leave** Latvia. However, in most cases these persons succeed in staying in Latvia by finding the employer who is prepared to employ and apply to the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs with an application/request for the employment of that person. Recommendations have been made to extend this 30-day period to 180 days, which also corresponds to a social rehabilitation service that can be received by every single victim, including those who have not been identified as victims of human trafficking under Criminal Law⁴.

This legal framework doesn't recognise trafficking as a gender phenomenon yet but goes in the right direction by recognising gender equality and gender-sensitive approach when providing services to survivors, based on the European Commission's report on the prevalence of trafficking in human beings in the European Union in 2020.

Furthermore, GRETA urges the Latvian authorities to make full use of the available measures to protect victims and witnesses, and to prevent intimidation during the investigation, as well as during and after the court proceedings. GRETA welcomes the existence of police investigators and prosecutors specialised in trafficking in human beings and considers that the Latvian authorities should also promote specialisation and training of labour inspectors and judges. Further, GRETA considers that the Latvian authorities should ensure adequate human and technical resources of the Police Unit for the Fight against Human Trafficking⁵.

² <https://marta.lv/en/>

³ <https://www.annalindhfoundation.org/members/society-shelter-safe-house>

⁴ © Child10

⁵ <https://rm.coe.int/greta-implementation-report-third-evaluation-round-on-latvia/1680a59480>

In Italy the legal framework recognises trafficking as a **gender phenomenon**. Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament, that adopted a gender approach to the phenomenon of trafficking, was transposed by Italy with Legislative Decree No 24 of 4/3/2014⁶. It introduced significant changes to the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure and strengthened the protection provided by the Italian legal system to vulnerable persons, such as minors, unaccompanied minors, the elderly, the disabled, women, particularly if pregnant, single parents with minor children, persons with mental disorders and persons who have suffered torture, rape, or other serious forms of psychological, physical, sexual or gender-based violence. The Italian Government, with the aim of defining multi-year intervention strategies for preventing and combating human trafficking and exploitation of human beings, as well as actions aimed at awareness-raising, social prevention, emersion, and social integration of the victims. On 26 February 2016, adopted the first National Action Plan⁷ against trafficking and the serious exploitation of human beings for the years 2016-2018 as provided for by article 9 of the Legislative Decree No 24 of 4/3/2014, which aims to rationalize and systematize the Government's action on the issue of trafficking and encourage a coordinated approach between various administrations dealing with human trafficking.

In Sweden most common form of human trafficking is sexual exploitation and around 400-600 (estimated number) women and children are sex trafficked into Sweden every year. The victims documented have all been **women and young girls** brought over from Eastern European countries such as Albania, Poland, Hungary, Russia, but some come all the way from Nigeria and Thailand, proving that the trafficking in human beings is a gender phenomenon. Sweden has applied the abolitionist approach as a policy since 1999, for which it is widely regarded as a success story by organizations such as European Women's Lobby (EWL)⁸ and Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW)⁹. In 1998, the Swedish legislature passed the Act that Prohibits the Purchase of Sexual Services¹⁰, which took force on January 1, 1999. **The law imposes a penalty on the consumer, and not on the woman, or potentially trafficked victim, as selling of sexual services is not punishable.** However, the purchase of sexual services is interpreted as violence against women and the offender can be fined and sentenced up to 6 months in jail. Sweden makes domestic efforts, such as legislation,

⁶ <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2014/03/14/14G00036/sg>

⁷ <https://www.osservatoriointerventitratta.it/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/piano-nazionale-di-azione-contro-la-tratta-e-il-grave-sfruttamento-2016-2018.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.womenlobby.org/?lang=en>

⁹ <https://catwinternational.org/>

¹⁰ The Act on prohibiting the purchase of sexual services (SFS 1998:408) entered into force on 1 January 1999. In connection with the sexual crimes reform of 2005, the Act was revoked and replaced by new legislation on the purchase of sexual services (Chapter 6, Section 11 of the Swedish Penal Code).

letting governmental priorities and inter-agency implementation, enforcement against prostitution and trafficking, and awareness raising, as well as international efforts, such as implementing an across-the-board collaboration among government agencies and playing a leading role in regional anti-trafficking initiatives such as Baltic Sea Task Force¹¹. Altogether, up to 2010, the government invested 30.3 million USD in the effort of preventing and combating human trafficking.

In Lithuania, amendments in the Criminal Code of the Republic of Lithuania¹² were made considering relevant international treaties during the period of 2005-2020. Articles 147 and 157 of the Criminal Code criminalize sex trafficking and labour trafficking and prescribe penalties ranging from two to twelve years imprisonment which are sufficiently stringent. Regarding sex trafficking, they shall be commensurate with those prescribed for other serious crimes, such as rape. On 30 June 2012, the law on amending the Criminal Code was adopted with the aim to broaden the definition of trafficking in human beings' crime, to include more aggravating circumstances and to prosecute the users of forced labour and services considering the European Union Directive 2011/EU/36 and the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. The Republic of Lithuania is implementing measures related to the fight against trafficking in human beings in accordance with the Inter-institutional Action Plan Implementing the Programme for the Development of Public Safety (2015-2025)¹³ and the Action Plan for the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings (2017-2019)¹⁴. With the amendments and action plans, Lithuanian government meets the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking.

Also, in **Spain**, Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament has brought significant improvements in Spanish legislation. First amendments were incorporated in the Criminal Code, which until 2010 only included criminalization of conducts that in certain situations could be related to trafficking, by establishing trafficking in human beings as an autonomous criminal offense. Amendments were similarly made in the Rights and Freedoms of Foreigners in Spain and their Social Integration Law, such as extension of reflection period to 90 days to decide during the victim identification process whether victims wish to cooperate with the authorities. Special attention was given to the victims who are minors. Several Action plans have been implemented in Spain and currently the National Strategic Plan against

¹¹ <http://www.cbss.st/task-force-on-organised-crime-in-the-baltic-sea-region/>

¹² <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/28b18041843311e89188e16a6495e98c>

¹³ <https://rm.coe.int/profile-lithuania-may-2021-1-2768-1133-2099-v-1/1680a2b115>

¹⁴ <https://rm.coe.int/greta-2019-08-fgr-lithuania-en/1680950076>

Trafficking and Exploitation of Human Beings 2021-2023¹⁵ is being implemented. Mentionable instrument in human trafficking in Spain is the Framework Protocol¹⁶ for the protection of victims of human trafficking with an aim to establish guidelines for detection, identification, assistance and protection of victims.

Gender approach is also an important factor in Spanish legislation. Law 12/2009 of 30 October 2009 regulating the right to asylum and subsidiary protection introduces a gender perspective. Special mention should be made of article 46 of this law which refers to **the general protection regime for minors and other vulnerable persons, a group that expressly includes victims of trafficking, for whose applications for international protection their specific situation should be considered.**



¹⁵ https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/lang/en/gobierno/news/Paginas/2022/20220112_human-beings.aspx

¹⁶ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/anti-human-trafficking/spain>

2.



Legal status and rights
awarded to victims of
human trafficking for
sexual purposes

2. Legal status and rights awarded to victims of human trafficking for sexual purposes

Victims of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation are initially treated no differently than survivors of other trafficking forms (labour exploitation, organ trafficking etc.). Survivors have the right to file criminal charges as trafficking is considered as a particularly serious crime. **Legal status and rights awarded depend more on the migration circumstances, laws that regulate migration and whether the trafficking situation has any influence on that.** For example, in Germany survivors of trafficking who are third country nationals fall under the normal asylum system and aspect of human trafficking usually has no effect on the asylum decision. During the asylum procedure, survivors are entitled to monthly social benefits to cover daily needs for themselves and, if necessary, for their children. Health care (in most cases exclusive psychological support) is covered financially, and housing is provided as for other asylum seekers. Any asylum seeker, also survivors of trafficking, when denied protection, can try to stay in Germany through **educational toleration (Ausbildungsduldung)** according to §60 Aufenthaltsgesetz (AufenthG). For this, survivors of trafficking must first learn the German language and find a training place in a state-recognised training area. If an applicant can provide a passport from his/her country, they get Ausbildungsduldung until the end of their training, usually 3 years. If they start to work after their training in the same area, they can apply for employment. After 8 years (with children after 6 years) of being tolerated, they can, with a passport and enough income, get a residence permit.

In Italy, all immigrant victims of human trafficking have a right to choose from two distinct paths, alternative to each other, for the issuance of a residence permit. One is a legal procedure: the victim reports to the authorities those responsible for the facts of violence and serious exploitation suffered. In this case, the residence permit is issued by the Police Headquarters on the proposal or subject to the favourable opinion of the Public Prosecutor's Office. The other choice is a social path: the victim does not file a complaint against his exploiters but trusts himself/herself to a structure registered in the second section of the register of associations, bodies and other private organizations that carry out activities in favour of migrants. In this case the residence permit is issued by the Police Headquarters on the proposal of the social services or antitrafficking organisation that has taken charge of the victim, without the prior acquisition of the opinion of the Public Prosecutor's Office. This residence permit is marked "special

cases” and has a duration of six months and can be renewed for one year or longer. It entitles the holder to access welfare services and study, to register on employment lists and to carry out subordinate work. Any third country national can apply for asylum in Italy, but if he/she does not meet the requirements to be recognised as a refugee and provided that there are reasonable grounds for believing that if he/she returned to the country of origin or residence there would be a risk of serious harm, the Police Headquarters will issue a residence permit for subsidiary protection, which will last for five years and will be renewable if the situation of risk exists.

In Sweden, proposed by a parliamentary commission and effective October 2014, the Smuggling of Human Beings, a **time-limited residence permit** to injured parties and witnesses envisions that the victim, under a temporary permit, should be given health care benefits similar to those accorded asylum seekers, have legal proceeding’ costs met by the government to prosecute the traffickers, be allowed a “period of deliberation” where they might be awarded permanent residency. Services for victims are provided by municipalities in collaboration with NGOs and other government agencies. Although Sweden lacked shelters dedicated solely to trafficking victims, some municipalities ran shelters offering services to sex trafficking victims. Women victims of trafficking could receive services at shelters for victims of domestic and honour-related violence. Authorities referred child victims to social services officials, who placed them in foster care or group housing. There was no protected housing available to men victims of trafficking. The Gender Equality Agency, which managed anti-trafficking efforts for the government, led a network of approximately 40 NGOs that run safe houses. However, in 2020, NGOs reported insufficient funding as the pandemic hindered the ability to assist victims. Furthermore, social distancing protocols to contain the spread of the pandemic contributed to victims staying at shelters for longer periods than anticipated, thereby unintentionally preventing other victims from receiving safe housing, when they had reached maximum capacity.

In Spain victims’ rights are classified in general rights (international protection, non-refoulement etc.), rights in the legal and administrative regulation and return field (reflection period, renewable residence permit, issuance of the documents, legal aid etc.) and rights in the field of integrated assistance (interpretation, physical, psychological and social recovery, safety, training, education etc.), providing very holistic support. Legal framework also regulates access to the services of national systems, such as health care, for those who are not part of them. For example, victims of human trafficking whose temporary stay in Spain has been authorised in a period of recovery and reflection can access basic common portfolio of care services. Health crises caused by Covid-19 in Spain was a turning point for

establishing a common framework for protection of women victims of different forms of violence, including trafficking.

Several laws and strategies were amended to extend essential services to comprehensive assistance. For example, the Contingency Plan was amended to focus on the protection of victims of trafficking, sexual exploitation, and vulnerable women in prostitution, guaranteeing and ensuring services like specialized shelter, alternative housing, and minimum vital income.

The access to this comprehensive support system is different in all the country, as there are three levels of administration: State, Autonomous Communities and Local Entities, and there can be specialized services for some groups, such as migrant women, in some areas, not accessible to all.

In **Latvia**, as in other countries, rights awarded does not depend on the type of trafficking but on the legal status. Person can be identified as a victim of human trafficking by the authorities (the State Police) or two authorised NGOs. If the person is an EU citizen, he/she has a right to receive social rehabilitation for 180 days, that is comprehensive (health, education, shelter, employment etc.). Person also has a right to make a claim against exploiters and cooperate with legal authorities who can initiate criminal proceedings. If criminal proceedings are initiated, there is additional support, such as free additional legal aid, protection, if needed, and compensations. Victims who do not want to make a claim can still receive social rehabilitation. If victims are **third country nationals, their rights depend on their legal status** and depend on laws that regulate it. Third country nationals who are victims of human trafficking have the same right to make a claim against their exploiters. They are granted a 30-day waiting period during which competent legal authorities will or will not initiate criminal proceedings. Temporary residence permit for not less than 6 months should be granted if the criminal proceedings are initiated, with the rights to work without restrictions, but in the case of not initiating criminal proceedings, at the end of the 30-day waiting period a person should leave the country. Most victims from third countries during the 30-day period find employment possibilities according to Immigration Law, receive residence permit and can legally stay in Latvia but that requires cooperation between employers, Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs and the victim. The positive aspect is that **no matter how long a victim can stay in Latvia (30 days, 6 months or longer), they still have a right to receive the same social rehabilitation services as other victims, and additionally receive support services that are granted to third country nationals in Latvia (language courses, integration courses, free legal consultations, interpretation etc.).**

Similar situation is in Lithuania, where the Law on the Legal Status of Aliens ¹⁷(Art. 130¹⁸) establishes that a foreigner (third country national) should not be expelled from Lithuania if he/she has been granted the reflection period. The reflection period is 30 days, during which the victim can decide whether to cooperate with law enforcement or the court. The Law transposes the Council Directive 2004/81/EC on the residence permit issued to third country nationals who are victims of trafficking of human beings or who have been the subject of an action to facilitate illegal immigration. It provides that a temporary residence permit may be issued to a adult foreigner, who is or has been a victim of human trafficking, and who cooperates with the pre-trial investigation authorities or the court. The residence permit is for 6 months and can be renewed.



¹⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/library-document/law-legal-status-aliens-new-amendments_en

¹⁸ 1. It shall be prohibited to expel or return a foreigner to a country where his life or freedom is in danger or where he may be subjected to persecution on grounds of race, religion, nationality, membership of a certain social group or political opinion or to a country from where he may later be expelled to such country. 2. An alien shall not be expelled from the Republic of Lithuania or returned to a country where there are serious grounds for believing that in that country the alien will be tortured, subjected to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. 3. The provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article shall not apply to an alien who, for serious reasons, represents a threat to the security of the Republic of Lithuania or who has been convicted by an effective court judgment of a grave crime and constitutes a threat to the community. 4. An alien shall not be expelled from the Republic of Lithuania or returned to a foreign state if he has been granted the cooling-off period in accordance with the procedure established by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, during which he, as a present or former victim of crimes related to trafficking in human beings, must take a decision on cooperation with a pre-trial investigation body or the court. 5. An alien who is not expelled from the Republic of Lithuania or is not returned to a foreign country in the cases referred to in paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 of this Article shall be issued a temporary residence permit valid for a period not exceeding one year.

3.



Long-term support
and social inclusion

3. Long-term support and social inclusion

SOCIAL INCLUSION is a multidimensional, dynamic, and ever-changing process based on participatory procedures and policies in which the beneficiary is the main agent of change. It aims at eliminating any form of discrimination, from a perspective that encourages the beneficiary's leadership in his/her integration process, while respecting diversity¹⁹. Social inclusion, understood as social and economic inclusion in the host country, is an important stage in the emancipation and autonomy path of the person who has experienced trafficking and exploitation. Its success depends on the future of the person's migration path.

In the EU member states, while there is a support system that meets the immediate needs of victims, long-term assistance is less present. *During the transition to independent living, very specific needs emerge, and the lack of specific long-term support may not only undermine the person's life project in regaining their confidence, but also trigger dangerous dynamics that can lead to re-victimisation.* One of the keys to facilitating social inclusion and fostering independence is to help victims identify their needs, recognise their skills or abilities while building new ones. Activities like professional training, simulating job interviews, testing the real working environment and others are necessary for successful social inclusion.

In Italy the experimental project FAIRJOB²⁰ promoted by the Piedmont Region is one example of promotion of social inclusion for former victims of trafficking. With the support of case managers, former victims are guided in their personal integration path for work autonomy (that includes work orientation activities, non-professional training courses, creation of traineeships) and housing autonomy (that includes search for housing solutions with innovative ideas, such as co-housing, economical support for transitional period, furniture according to the need), and additional socio-cultural support (workshops, socialization etc.). This good practice also represents the importance of cooperation of different organizations and institutions, as the range of services offered by all parties gives more choice for the beneficiaries, allowing to customize the pathway as close to the needs as possible.

¹⁹ Resources: Artibani S., Balestrin P., Ciambezi I., Galati M., Godino M.E., Liotti R., Luciani V., Moroni V., Pellegrino V., Resta C., Taricco M., (2020). Opportunities and challenges. Guidelines on the integration of trafficking survivors. Online: https://www.apg23.org/downloads/files/La%20vita/Antitratta/RIGHT_WAY_ENG_WEB.pdf

²⁰ https://www.piemonteimmigrazione.it/images/progetti/Scheda_FAIRJOB.pdf

When we speak about women as survivors of trafficking in human beings, motherhood is a frequently underestimated issue in the social inclusion process and can become as an obstacle or the cause for discrimination.

Good practices that support women with children can improve the integration path. Such a good practice was implemented in Italy, Trieste by Casa “La Madre²¹”, where mothers with minors, asylum seekers, are assisted in all stages of their care programme by competent and culturally sensitive operators and by volunteers who provide maternity support also to start training and work paths outside the home. In Germany long-term support and social inclusion is provided by a specialized counselling centre and supported by a variety of initiatives, projects, and good practices. Support is individually tailored to the survivors, and available as soon as needed, especially psycho-social counselling. This is particularly important because the waiting lists for therapy places in Germany are very long, and hence those affected by trafficking and in urgent need for the therapy, can only receive offers for therapy after months of waiting. For highly vulnerable and endangered women, Germany has a shelter that offers an anonymous and safe place, where women and their children can live for 15 months to get close-meshed support from social workers and other essential support. There women have an opportunity to meet other survivors of trafficking and hence support each other (peer-to-peer approach). Several projects in Germany have a good effect on social inclusion of survivors of trafficking. For example, “Kulturküche” regularly offers an open women's meeting where women with special concerns can come, as well as workshops and lectures on various topics, and free legal aid is offered. In “Kulturküche”, The Justice Project²² e.V. can register women with special concerns, and provide different support, such as finding an apartment that can be a struggle due to the lack of cultural and language skills. Also, in this good practice motherhood is acknowledged and support for childcare is offered, because in Germany it can take months or even a year to find a childcare place and job training and language courses very rarely offer childcare. The Justice Project e.V. therefore offers childcare at its integration course for survivors of trafficking “Kompass”. This course includes German language, culture classes, trauma education and social skills and it is designed to enable survivors to live independent lives in Germany, but without proper childcare during the course, this opportunity would not be feasible for women. Similar good practice in Germany is called BEF Alpha-program²³ as a work-integrating measure of Bildung und Berufliche Qualifizierung (BBQ) -

²¹ <https://caritastrieste.org/accoglienza/>

²² <https://www.thejusticeproject.net/>

²³ <https://www.ids-offenburg.de/de/kurse/projekte/bildungsjahr-fuer-erwachsene-fluechtlinge-bef-alpha/>

it is a program with the themes of vocational orientation and German language support with the aim of placing asylum seekers and refugees in the labour market to ensure the best possible work integration. This program enables survivors of human trafficking, compared to normal German language courses, to qualify, prepare and enter the working life and thus also the work integration in Germany. This program also offers childcare.

In Sweden to be able to provide long-term support and social inclusion, a lot of good initiatives and practices are implemented for prevention. To understand the different human trafficking patterns and trends, data collection process can help. Structured interviews with foreign workers employed at-risk sectors, civil society organizations and municipalities are conducted every year to fully analyse the situation. Annual trainings and courses are provided to specialists of different fields, such as police, to be able to identify signs of human trafficking more successfully. One of the long-term support mechanisms is trauma therapy. Many victims of trafficking, especially children, experience severe trauma symptoms and need trauma therapy. During the trauma therapy, victims are rescued from an exploitative environment, encouraged to process the trauma with the help of a counsellor or therapist and then victims are encouraged to create a new sense of self and a new future. A good practice of trauma therapy in Sweden is the Talita Long-Term Support programme (2002-2022)²⁴. This initiative is run by the very experienced organization “Talita” and supported by the Swedish government. This private international initiative provides long-term support for survivors of sexual exploitation or prostitution (mostly women) for period of twelve months. This programme is designed to consider all the aspects of the well-being of the victim and provide trauma therapy, safe housing, education and life skills, job training, integration in the society and other aspects. When survivors have worked with their trauma and have stable mental health, they are linked with the job opportunities and supported during the process. Within this initiative and all the NGOs in Sweden, upon the completion of the trauma therapy, victims are encouraged to be actors against human trafficking, and this is a powerful way to support the victims as a degree of power is allocated to them. Victims of human trafficking in Sweden can choose to be integrated or to return to their country of origin.

In Spain, in most cases, specialized resources and programs are developed by social entities through the funding of programs by the public administration. These resources and programs are usually aimed at women victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation and can be partial or comprehensive (including social, psychological, health, legal, employment and other support). During the health crisis of Covid-19 the Spanish government implemented the Minimum Vital Income that comes in

²⁴ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23490057/>

addition to the different models of minimum income designed by each autonomous community to provide social protection to the most vulnerable households. In cases of victims of human trafficking, the beneficiary must be of a legal age, and are exempted from a lot of requirements, such as having a legal residence in Spain, having lived independently, having been registered in any of the Social Security regimes for at least twelve months and other obligations. For victims to access this benefit, a requirement is for an accreditation report carried out by professionals from social services, specialized services or shelters for victims of violence against women of the competent public administration, organizations specialized or with accredited experience. Process is quite complicated and there are several obstacles, such as an opening of bank accounts, essential for the collection of the benefit, impossibility of processing the benefit for women in an irregular situation, even with recognised rights, and other obstacles. In Spain there is also Active Insertion Income that is a special unemployment benefit for people with great difficulty in finding work and in a situation of economic need. It is a state benefit of 430 euros per month but managed by Autonomous Regions. As mentioned before, there is absence of a universal support system in Spain, and this benefit is accessible only in Galicia that includes victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation among the beneficiaries of this benefit in its territory. The same applies to inclusion policies, they vary greatly according to the Autonomous Communities, causing inequalities between vulnerable groups.

There are also some affirmative action measures from a gender perspective in Spain that are aimed at women victims of trafficking. Some good practices are related with employment, for example, companies that include in their workforce's people who have been accredited by the competent administration as victims of gender violence or victims of domestic violence by a member of the family unit, victims of terrorism or victims of human trafficking, may benefit from social security hiring bonuses. There is also a program of improving employability and access to employability for women victims of different types of gender-based violence, victims of trafficking, victims of sexual exploitation. This program aims to develop different activities aimed at the acquisition and improvement of personal, socio-occupational, and technical-professional skills, which will enable progress to be made in the concept of employability, maintaining the employment, and improvement of the skills. This program, compared with other public programs for employability, considers a lot of important aspects, such as individual needs, cultural diversity, gender-specific needs etc. It is also worth mentioning the project "Proyecto RAI – Recuperación, Apoderamiento e Inserción sociolaboral, implemented in Spain, Barcelona (locally) since 2012. This good practice targets women victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, by giving them the

possibility of having some time to recover emotionally with a goal of finding employment. Women from countries such as Nigeria, Romania, Morocco, Republic of Congo have access to different training actions (language, IT, formal and non-formal technical training), therapy for psychological recovery and individual and group activities for defining their professional and life paths.

In Latvia, the aid linked to social inclusion for all victims of trafficking in human beings is 180 days, during which a person with different kinds of support mechanisms should be able to overcome all challenges (trauma, physical and mental health, employment, residence, etc.). These 180 days are assigned to all victims, no matter how much and what kind of trauma has been experienced, regardless of the person's needs. In various cases (for example, if a person is treated for a long period in a medical institution), the social rehabilitation service may be suspended for a period (not exceeding six months). In the third evaluation of Latvia's implementation of the Council of Europe's anti-trafficking convention by GRETA²⁵ (published in 2022), the lack of long-term support for human trafficking victims is also noted. GRETA is concerned by the absence of support for the reintegration of victims of human trafficking. As noted previously, the state support is limited to six months, which may not correspond to the needs of some victims.

The leading implementer of social inclusion policy in Latvia is the Ministry of Welfare (also the funder for social rehabilitation programs for victims of trafficking in human beings), which has set the objective of social inclusion policy: to improve the minimum income support system by providing support to the most vulnerable groups of society at risk of poverty and income inequality. Planned results of the policy: an improved system of minimum income support aimed at supporting low-income population groups most at risk of poverty by matching support with the available financial resources of state and local governments. The Ministry of Welfare has also defined population groups at risk of poverty and social exclusion in Latvia, among which are victims of trafficking in human beings. Individuals who are victims of trafficking can seek long-term support not related to their situation as victims of trafficking in human beings. Such aid may be received in Latvia by different target groups and aid may vary from one municipality to another. Third-country nationals may receive support for their integration in Latvia, people in need may receive different types of support in the municipality, while other target groups may receive support through different initiatives, programs, and projects. However, none of these support mechanisms considers a person's situation related to victims' experience of trafficking in human beings. Organizations providing social rehabilitation services have repeatedly raised the issue of her insufficient duration, but it

²⁵ <https://rm.coe.int/greta-11th-general-report-of-activities-2022-en/1680a72bb8>

is not planned to change these services soon. In addition, societies, aware of the lack of long-term support, seek to provide service beneficiaries with different resources and networks with other organizations and institutions that can continue to provide support to a person.


Similar situation is in Lithuania, where The Ministry of Social Security and Labour is responsible for the coordination of victim assistance, including presumed victims of trafficking, as regards policy formation and funding but The Ministry of Interior has the overall coordinating role in the work against trafficking in human beings.

The services provided to victims of trafficking include social and psychological support, prevention, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, outreach in schools and other relevant institutions as well as legal and medical crisis assistance. NGOs provide counselling, assistance in liaising with state and local government authorities, safe accommodation, health services, psychological assistance, legal aid etc. Similar like in Latvia, support for victims of human trafficking is granted regardless of victims willing to cooperate with law enforcement authorities but the long-term support relies on linked municipal and state institutions.



4.

WORK LIFE

A wooden balance scale is shown, with the words 'WORK' and 'LIFE' in large, light-colored wooden block letters resting on a horizontal wooden beam. The beam is balanced on a triangular wooden fulcrum. A hand is visible on the right side, holding the beam. The background is a dark blue gradient, and the surface below the scale is a wooden table.

Work-life balance
policies

4. Work-life balance policies

Work-life balance is a necessity for all, especially for women who are mothers with minors to care for, and it is an essential aspect of gender equality.

Directive (EU) 2019/1158²⁶ of the European Parliament and the Council of 20 June 2019 on work-life balance for parents and carers highlights following:

- Work-life balance policies should contribute to the achievement of gender equality by promoting the participation of women in the labour market, the equal sharing of caring responsibilities between men and women, and the closing of the gender gaps in earnings and pays.
- Having a sick or dependent relative has also been shown to have a negative impact on women's employment and results in some of them dropping out of the labour market entirely.

For survivors of human trafficking who are mothers or about to be mothers economic aid, work, housing is not enough to guarantee effective and lasting results. Accompaniment and support are essential at all stages of reception to provide survivors with tools and keys to understand new reality, in which it is possible to fit in and build a different future that they probably never dared hope for in their lives. Maternity support in the integration process must be considered and provided.

Volunteers who make their professional skills available (paediatricians, doctors, midwives etc.), family volunteers who support the mothers in looking after their children when they are at work, accompaniments to get to know the area, language courses, entrepreneurs who actively participate in the integration projects and other important support. Furthermore, it is necessary step by step, in the integration process, to inform them about maternity protection.

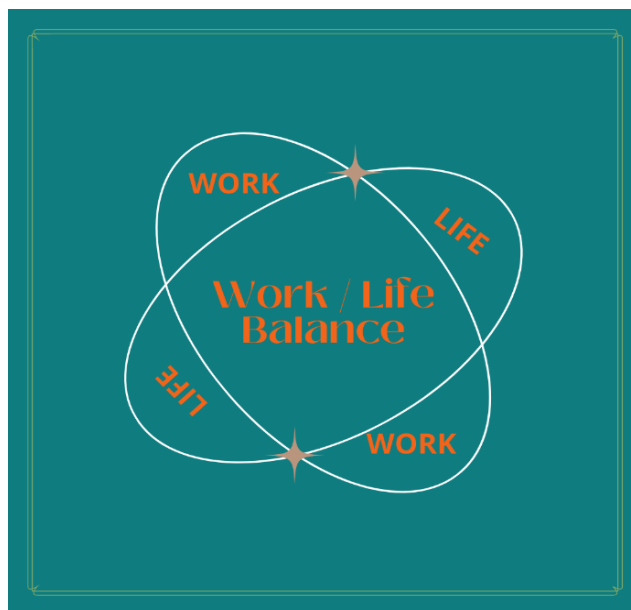
In Italy, when a woman is pregnant, she has the right to urgent, essential outpatient or hospital care, even continuous, free of charge during pregnancy and childbirth at National Health Service hospitals, as Italian nationals. If she is irregular, she may apply for a residency permit for medical treatment until the child is six months old. The residency permit for medical treatment may be converted into a family permit if she lives in Italy with her husband who holds a residency permit and meets the requirements for family reunification, or it may be converted into a work permit before it expires if she meets the requirements.

²⁶ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32019L1158>

Moreover, all minors under the age of 18 are protected by Italian law and by international conventions and are entitled to obtain a residence permit; minors, even if irregular, are entitled to health care and to attend compulsory school. It is important to know that if you have a regular employment relationship in Italy, you are entitled to the same social security and insurance treatment as Italian workers (maternity, sickness, family allowances, accidents and occupational diseases, invalidity, old age and survivors' pensions, unemployment, etc.). Furthermore, to protect workers who have carried out part of their activity abroad, Italy applies the European Social Security Regulations and International Social Security Conventions²⁷, with the states with which they have been stipulated.

Social assistance in Italy is aimed at all those who live in situations of indigence; there are benefits for civil invalidity, social allowance, single allowance including bonus crèche²⁸, bonus bébé²⁹. The various social benefits are linked to income limits. The tool used to ascertain the economic condition in Italy is the ISEE (Equivalent Economic Situation Indicator), which can be requested through tax assistance centres (CAF).

However, in addition to income requirements and residence, i.e., the effective, stable, and habitual abode on Italian territory of the interested party, for access to social assistance for foreigners it is also necessary to hold the required residence permit. Every citizen, including foreigners regularly residing in Italy, to apply for social assistance benefits must submit the application telematically to Inps, either by accessing it with their SPID or with the help of the patronages and the tax assistance service of the Caf, which provide comprehensive and in-depth advice on the right to protection for each applicant and competently assess the existence of the requirements.



²⁷ <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/resources/docs/qe-02-16-992-en-n.pdf>

²⁸ In the 2019 Stability Law in Article 1 paragraph 488, the nursery voucher was extended and extended. The 2019 Nest Bonus is EUR 1,500. The 2019 Manoeuvre also raised the bonus to EUR 1,500 in the years 2020 and 2021, from 2022 the bonus will return to EUR 1,000, unless further action is taken

²⁹ birth allowance, which is granted to families for each child born, adopted or in pre-adoptive foster care. Beneficiaries are entitled to an economic contribution that varies according to ISEE, from 80 euros to 160 euros per month for one year in the case of the first child. Increased by 20% for each subsequent child

In Germany work-life balance is an important but also difficult field. Most of the survivors of trafficking are from West Africa and they do not have good prospects of obtaining international protection in Germany, so they are left with an option to learn the German language to use their language skills to obtain a training position. Most survivors have one or more children with them in Germany, many of whom are still very young, and they face the problem of childcare due to the long waiting lists for kindergartens and other forms of childcare. Almost no language courses or training centres offer childcare, and survivors lack the social networks and family in Germany that could support them. For survivors, this means that they cannot take language courses, cannot start job training, and cannot work because they have no way to care for their children during that time. Even if survivors do find childcare, it is an exhausting task to combine school or work, family, visits to authorities, medical appointments, and counselling services without a large network of helpers. In addition, processes in the asylum procedure in Germany usually take a long time and leave clients feeling a permanent sense of insecurity. Important tools for a healthy work-life balance are therapeutic measures and trauma stabilization, as well as providing childcare during this process (Kompass and Kulturkuche).

Sweden is a second country on the OECD Better Life Index for work-life balance. The initiatives that ensure work-life balance in Sweden firstly are childcare and parental leave. The Swedish government has taken the initiative to reduce the work-life balance conflict experienced mostly by women, by promoting men's participation in housework and the upbringing of children. Parental leave is structured so that it encourages men to stay at home more with their new-born babies. Moreover, the Swedish welfare system includes an extensive child-care system that guarantees a place in a public day-care facility for all children between the age of 2 and 6 years. Parents in Sweden are entitled to 480 days of paid parental leave when a child is born or adopted. Affordable childcare means that most parents in Sweden choose to go back to work after their parental leave. Additionally, workers can take up to 120 paid days off work per year to care for a sick child. Second initiative that ensures work-life balance is related to working hours. Sweden offers flexible hours known as flextid. Flextid gives employees the right to decide how they wish to complete their 40-hour week. Flextid can, for example, mean that if you work overtime one day you can work fewer hours the following day. Managers also understand the demands of family life; therefore no one will react if someone leaves work earlier to pick up their children from childcare or school, they will trust the person to complete their work hours from home or in following days. Swedish labour law also gives all employees in Sweden the right to take 25 paid vacation days per year and additional official holidays.

In Latvia work-life balance is also looked at through gender equality issues. Cabinet Regulation No. 578 “On the Plan to Promote Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men 2021-2023”, which sets out more specific directions of action: improved support for work-life balance and research of good practices for balancing work and private life. In 2021 a compilation “Work-life balance in Latvia. Legal framework and good practice” were published. The summary contains several conclusions which also affect the balance between work and private life for those who are victims of trafficking in human beings. There is insufficient access to professional services for children and persons who need care. About a third of Latvia's workers have some care responsibility: most often – for children, but for a small part – for adults. Most care obligations are covered by women, aged between 25 and 44, middle - and low-educated. Good practice on this issue in Latvia is the ability to agree with companies on flexible working time, the ability to work remotely. This is influenced by the fact that for employers it is increasingly difficult to attract employees, so employers are also cultivating their competitiveness by improving job and privacy balancing opportunities. Various businesses have a nursery, child-sitting in the workplace, remote job opportunities and flexible work schedules. Women are more active than men to use the mentioned opportunities for both childcare and adult care.

When it comes to supporting and helping victims of trafficking in human beings, the balance between work and private life is not considered. Of course, the individual rehabilitation plan considers the person's individual needs, even if these needs relate to the possibility for a person to be fully involved in carrying out the rehabilitation plan while caring for dependent children. In a social rehabilitation plan, mothers can be helped to find a kindergarten or school for children, help with the accession process, there is an opportunity to attract volunteers from the service providers who can look after children so that a person can receive a service. However, social rehabilitation services are not granted to the minor children of a person: if a mother receives social rehabilitation, no assistance is paid to her children but support is provided to enable her to perform her mother's role more successfully. A social worker, in cooperation with other specialists (psychologist, lawyer), shall consider all personal circumstances. Assistance is planned to consider these circumstances, with an aim to improve them.

In Lithuania authorities adopted on 17 November 2016 the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, which prohibits harassment, sexual harassment, and any form of discrimination (direct or indirect) on the bases of sex in the fields of employment, education and science, the supply of goods and services, and social security. The National Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men for 2015-2021, adopted by the Government on 4 February 2015 and supplemented by the Action Plan for its

implementation (2015-2017), aims at promoting gender equality and eliminating differences in the status of women and men. The Ministry of Social Security and labour is responsible for the coordination of activities under this Programme and its Action Plan. Unfortunately, victims of human trafficking for sexual purposes still cannot enjoy the implementation of these laws. In Lithuania women are ready to work long hours including overtime, so that they can provide a good standard of living for their families. Loyalty and the ability to work long hours are often considered by employers as necessary characteristics of a good employee. Because of the difficulties in finding a good job and fear of losing it to someone else, young people must be willing to work hard for long hours. The desire for career development is a major impediment to achieving a better work-life balance. Gender equality in Lithuania is growing with men and women being considered to a greater extent as equal “breadwinners”. Work-family issues are being considered less of a “women's problem” among college graduates and the urban population. However, Lithuanian society is still conservative when it comes to the sharing of parental obligations between women and men.

In Spain, as in most countries, no work-life balance measures are specifically aimed at survivors of trafficking, so the solutions aimed at the public can be applied to the survivors as well. There are several legal acts in Spain that are determining gender equality and non-discrimination, such as General Social Security Law (Act 39/1999) and Organic Law 3/2007 for the effective equality of women and men. To improve the equality and work-life balance, there are several instruments that provides it:

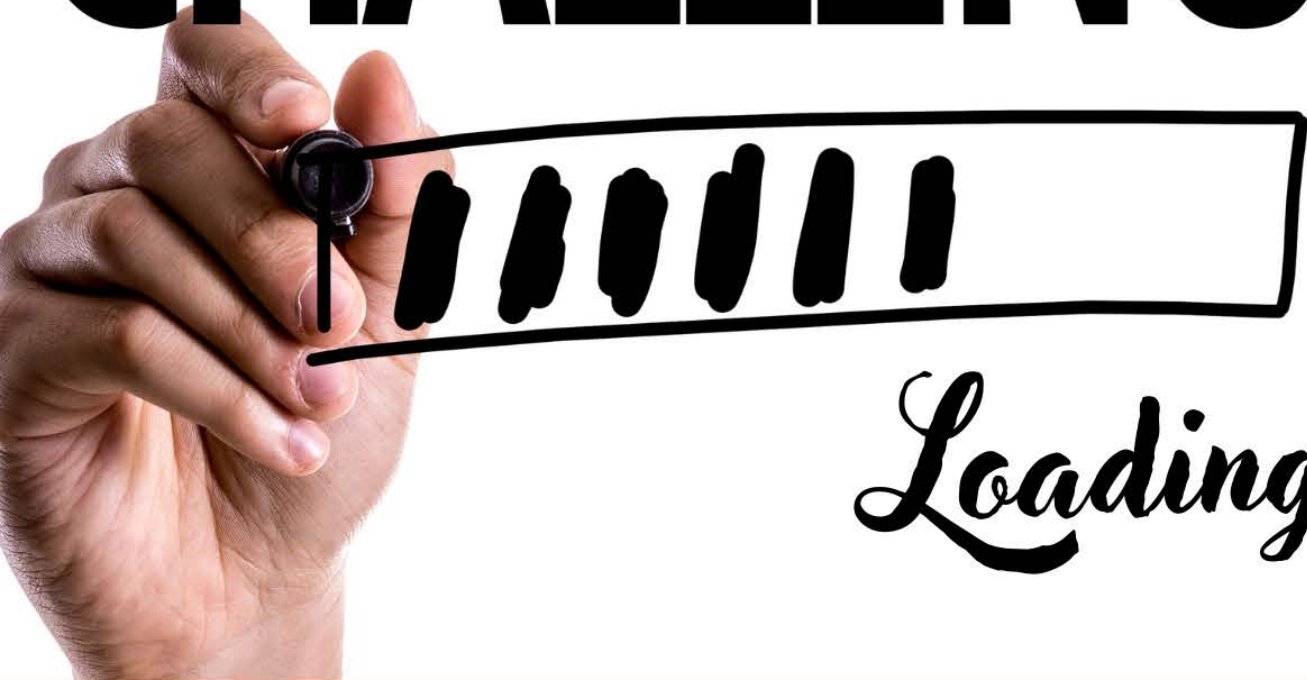
- 1) Paid leave. Maternity and paternity leave that has a duration of 16 weeks and both mother and father can receive 100% of their salary during this period. Parents also have a right to leave for a nursing child: this is the right to be absent from work for one hour when a child is born or adopted. For mothers-to-be there are several improvements in the work environment, such as: the company is obligated to adapt the working conditions and time to the pregnant worker's situation if possible. If not possible, the insurance company must take her off work for risk during pregnancy, receiving full salary.
- 2) Unpaid leave. Reduction of the working day is a right granted to parents for the care of children under 12 years of age, children with a serious illness or dependent family member. If the employee has been with the company for at least one year, he/she can apply for a voluntary leave for a period not less than 4 months and not more than 5 years. Person does not receive a salary but retains the right to be reinstated at the end of the period.

- 3) Adaptation of working hours is the right that can be requested by workers but can be refused by the employer.
- 4) Access to public nursery/schools: the current offer of the public schools is insufficient to cater for preschool children and therefore many families use private nursery schools. Survivors of trafficking face difficulties to obtain places in kindergarten because of the lack of documentation from them.

There is a growing awareness of the need to implement work-life balance measures by the administration in Spain that brings a greater number of strategies and innovations in this regard, and those often are non-profit organizations in Spain that play an essential role in supporting the work-life balance of workers in general and survivors of trafficking. For example, the “work-life balance hotline” is a free of charge service provided by the association “Yo no Renuncio” aimed at helping women and mothers who encounter problems in their jobs and do not know how to solve them. Additionally, more and more companies are taking co-responsibility in work-life balance with providing their staff with free or low-cost childcare facilities.

5.

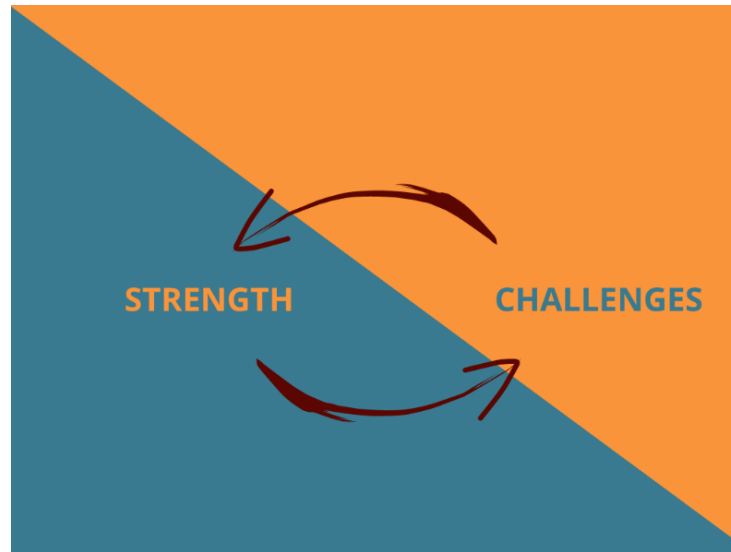
CHALLENGE



Loading...

Strengths and
challenges

4. Strengths and challenges



Even though all European Union countries follow the same directives on human trafficking, gender equality, migration, social integration, human rights, and other important fields, when amending their national legal framework, capabilities and performance vary greatly and each of the countries has their own success stories and challenges as well. It also cannot be denied that Covid-19 pandemic created a new reality with additional challenges.

In Italy the main obstacles and challenges can be found in three fronts:

The residence permits. The 'social pathway' for issuing residence permits to victims of trafficking is not consistently applied and some officials still interpret the conditions for issuing an article 18 permit restrictively, i.e. the existence of a 'real risk' and 'seriousness and imminence of danger'. Furthermore, there are long waiting periods for the issuance of residence permits and difficulties in converting the residence permit granted to victims into a work permit, which is conditional on the existence of a work contract. At the same time, GRETA noted that the number of people granted some form of international protection because of trafficking has increased, although the implications of the abolition of humanitarian protection status for victims of trafficking in 2018 remain to be assessed. ***Professional training.*** As a result of the pandemic, language courses and vocational training courses have also decreased. Therefore, it is necessary to renew the offer of vocational training courses, removing any formal obstacles and developing the tool of work experience placements, aimed at the development of basic and technical-practical skills with a focus on the excellence of the area where the victim is placed and on personal motivation, empowerment, and cultural background in the encounter between cultural differences and

everyone's resources. At the same time, it is necessary to train operators involved in job search more specifically in an approach based on intercultural competences and on the knowledge of the markers of differences in the integration process (conception of work, wages, conception of time, spaces, conception of the body...), not delegating any intervention to linguistic mediators alone. In the assessment of good practices for trafficking victims, a further challenge emerged, namely, to identify reconciliation measures for trafficked women who are pregnant and/or have dependent children to ensure their participation in training courses to acquire linguistic and cultural skills and knowledge (baby-sitting services, access to voluntary maternity support figures, courses in time slots that encourage parenting support, possibility of breastfeeding in spaces set aside for mothers).

Employment opportunities and economic support measures. The sudden interruption of training courses or, in the case of temporary workers, the reduction of wages and working hours, the closure of jobs, the increase in unemployment and the reduction of remittances, with the increase in living costs and the difficulty of supporting social networks, has created new situations of precariousness even for people who have come out of trafficking and who were already on their way to working and living autonomy. For this reason, an important challenge for lasting labor integration is the access to forms of microcredit and subsidies and economic support measures, as in the case of victims of violence, of which the freedom income is an example. In addition, the development of post-contractual work integration pathways should be encouraged by strengthening apprenticeships in the 18 - 29 age group or with three-year contribution relief for companies that hire those under 35 years of age, but also by providing not only for cooperatives but also for companies contribution relief in the hiring of victims of gender-based violence and also of trafficking and serious exploitation, in synergy with the Ministry of labour (expanding on the provisions of the Decree of 11 May 2018 on 'Contribution relief for the hiring of women victims of gender-based violence'). Finally, vocational training and job placement interventions should also be provided to disabled trafficking victims and persons in charge of mental health Centres, reducing the obstacles for disability certification and functional diagnosis and consequently access to targeted employment, with greater involvement of the Ministry of labour, social policies and Inps.

The strengths come from the work of several organizations and their good practices implemented in Italy, and they are:

The support of a mentor-mediator. The approach to the world of work often entails relationships based on the "assimilationist" model whereby the survivors must adapt to our behaviour, our mentality and acquire the language of the host country, causing a disconnection and a loss of their own identity. It

is therefore necessary to accompany the woman through a supportive cultural mediation and/or a tutor - preferably female staff - to moderate long adaptation times and ways of reacting to requests that are not always explicit. Among the markers of differences that come into play most, we can find: a different conception of time and of the way of living it, and above all that of work-related spaces that are different from those of private life, especially when there are minors to care for and there is no community to entrust them to. On this last aspect, alongside the figure of the tutor, an integrated maternity support project is indispensable. A good practice in this regard is the one developed by the Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII and the Il Pungiglione Cooperative, through job placement in the honey and wax industry in synergy with the Tuscany Region's Satis project and the Youth Guarantee programme. In addition, Save the Children-Italy's Nuovi Percorsi is a relevant parenting support project for trafficking victims with minors in their charge not only in Tuscany but also in 10 other regions where the Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII hosts mothers with children with special needs, thanks to the significant cooperation between the two Italian NGOs, their operators, mediators and mentors. . The training and apprenticeship pathway not only allows the survivor to develop specific skills but also to get to know and value the excellences of the territory, also guaranteeing in the integration process of women who have come out of trafficking a decisive transition from unskilled to skilled professions.

Personalized vocational training paths. It is necessary to create a customized pathway for each woman, starting from her previous knowledge (a barrier encountered by survivors entering the world of work is the equivalence of previous qualifications and/or the reliability of information on their past work experience, in fact they are almost never in possession of the relevant documentation). It is important to refer to the aspirations that each person has for the construction of a life project, without settling for any job, building together a curriculum vitae to analyse together where to work to be able to spend time in the world of work in Europe. A good practice is the one activated by Cisl Emilia-Romagna and Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII³⁰ in 2021 through the collaboration agreement called "Exit from violence. Start again from work". The network made up of 11 Job Centers in the provinces of the Region, through its own internal services and its contracted network (IAL, Employment Agencies) guarantees the following services to women victims of trafficking and violence assisted by the Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII, which can be customized: guidance counselling, orientation workshops, support in the search for job opportunities; promotion of internships, matching job supply/demand, training aimed at job placement. In

³⁰ Online: <https://www.apg23.org/it/post/lavoro-per-vittime-di-tratta-cisl.html>

addition, joint awareness-raising initiatives on equal opportunities, women's dignity and exit from violence are continued.

Places of integration and empowerment of women. The place where a work placement or apprenticeship is carried out is fundamental, because if it turns out to be a place of employment where one is "exploited" only because it is cheap, the beneficiaries of the project will not feel that they can redeem themselves through honest work. At the same time, if one carries out the placement in a reality belonging to the organization where one is welcomed, having as colleagues the volunteers one has always known, there is a risk that the work experience will not be taken seriously and one will not give one's best effort. These projects have shown that certain relational and environmental factors favour integration: for example, the 1-to-1 ratio, at least in the first training phase, succeeds in keeping the beneficiary's attention higher and in ensuring that a good relationship is established between the survivor and the project itself; as well as involving the women in the creation of a micro-project to be carried out together, starting from conception and drafting to implementation, in which they can find space for their own expressiveness and creativity, feeling that they are part of a non-discriminating work team but motivated by the achievement of a common goal of starting to become independent. These opportunities for women's empowerment are possible when, in addition to caring for the places and relationships in the training and work environment, the organisation is also involved in raising awareness in local communities to strengthen corporate social responsibility, on human rights, on overcoming prejudices and stereotypes, and on the prevention of discrimination based on gender, ethnicity or the stigmatisation of prostitution. A good practice in caring for the working environment and relationships, with the prospect of setting up a women's micro-business, is the ethnic tailoring workshop of the Newhope Cooperative³¹, which operates in collaboration with Casa Ruth and the Diocese of Caserta. In addition to running a craft workshop for making handicrafts with ethnic fabrics, leather, paper, and other materials, through educational guidance, job training and raising community awareness on the issue of immigration and trafficking, the project provides support for the creation and start-up of micro-enterprises run by immigrant women. The person at each stage is considered a 'positive resource for the whole community'. Or the project promoted by the Abruzzo Region, OASI, which envisages the job placement of Nigerian trafficking survivors through vocational training courses in the catering and school canteen sectors.

³¹ <https://coop-newhope.it/>

In Latvia there are several challenges, when it comes to the social integration of human trafficking victims from third countries, especially those who are women. In trying to overcome the difficulties, the non-governmental sector is playing a major role in strengthening social integration policies.

The inability of different authorities to recognize the signs of trafficking in human beings and inability to understand the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings. Social workers, border guards and police officers are still facing difficulties to recognize the signs of human trafficking, especially between minors and migrants (for example asylum seekers). There are also lack of knowledge about human trafficking between prosecutors and judges that causes long investigation and trial process, insufficient penalties for convicted persons and other issues. This is the challenge also recognized by GRETA. The strength in the new National Plan against trafficking in human beings for 2021-2023 a set of educational activities are planned for state and municipal authorities, different field professionals (one of the topics is gender-based support) and special educational activities for judges and other court workers.

The access to employment and professional training. An important element of the recovery and successful social inclusion of trafficked persons is their economic empowerment, which can be achieved through job placement, microbusinesses, and social enterprises. GRETA has stressed the need to develop public-private partnerships with a view to creating appropriate work opportunities for victims of trafficking. The Latvian authorities have not provided information on any measures taken in Latvia to enable victims of trafficking to have access to the labour market and vocational training. There is no additional support regarding employment and training to be prepared for a job. There is a need for support mechanisms regarding job integration (training courses, professional support of career choosing and others).

The strength of organization Shelter “Safe House”, who is one of two social rehabilitation service providers for victims of human trafficking, are also providers of support for legal migrants in Latvia from third countries. It means that they have additional knowledge and skills to support victims from third countries (such as, explaining the rights of the employment, offering Latvian language courses, providing interpretations). Organization is also building relationships with companies who are willing to employ people from third countries and supporting migrants (survivors as well) to develop their own businesses.

Long-term support for victims of human trafficking. Professionals who provide social rehabilitation services for victims of human trafficking are facing difficulties to provide effective assistance and support for all the victims. Most of them need more than 180 days, provided by the government. Victims who are third country nationals usually face additional obstacles regarding social inclusion, such as not speaking

Latvian language, not having cultural and other information about life in Latvia, not being able to find a job because of the legal requirements and language barrier, not being able joint vocational training or educational institutions, because of the same reasons, and many other additional obstacles. There is a need to recognize the individual needs of the victim of human trafficking, based on their gender, legal status, age, and other aspects. It would allow the service provider to organize support within a more reasonable time frame.

The strength of organizations who are providing social rehabilitation for victims of human trafficking, are making sure that the person leaving the 180-day program has resources (mostly informational) to continue their lives. The support that will affect the person in the long-term is very important (support to find a job, support, to access education, to join the community through NGOs and different initiatives, to receive support from the Social Service and others).

In Germany most challenging aspects in area of social integration of survivors of human trafficking is the beginning process: asylum process or process for obtaining a residence permit. The lengthy asylum procedure, in which survivors are hardly treated differently from other asylum seekers, is the first challenge. People from West African countries almost never receive residence permits, even if they are or have been trafficked. For a residence title and a quick integration in Germany, it is important to quickly learn the German language and start an education and this process hardly allows survivors of trafficking to stabilize, deal with psychological stress and anxiety. Additional stress is caused by long waiting lists for services like childcare, language courses and therapy. Most survivors of trafficking also face learning difficulties, due to the experienced trauma and little previous education.

However, there are some strengths and resources to ease the process. When applying for asylum, survivors can apply for special interview officers (Sonderbeauftragter) and decision makers for the asylum interview, who are trained for various sensitive issues and can deal with emotionally challenging issues or psychological stress among survivors of trafficking. Another strength is long-term individualized and close to survivor support that allows to build relationships with social workers. It gives survivors of trafficking security and peace of mind to know that they can turn to their social worker with any concern. Additional long-term psycho-social and trauma stabilizing support can greatly help trafficking survivors move forward in their lives in Germany.

In terms of work integration, non-governmental organizations, and initiatives, such as “Bildung und Berufliche Qualifizierung” (BBQ) and integrations course “Kompass” provide holistic support: work-preparatory German language courses with childcare and subsequent internships, support to find

internship and funding, easing trafficking survivors' worries about learning German and integrating into the labour market afterwards.

In Lithuania challenges are very versatile. Challenges such as lack of specialized shelters for victims of trafficking (survivors need to be placed in other shelters, such as crisis centres, family support centres, social service centres with short term accommodation), collection on evidence abroad, lack of effective measures to prevent vulnerable children to become presumed victims of trafficking, disclosure of trafficking in human beings' crime under changing modus operandi. Usually, the Anti-trafficking NGOs cannot identify the crime victims without confirmation from the side of the law enforcement – this creates massive misunderstanding of the statistics regarding the third country nationals. For example, starting from 2017 up till now all the pre-trial investigations considering the possible Human Trafficking of the women from the Third World (Kenya, Columbia, Thailand, India) exploited in Lithuania were cancelled due to the inability of the local police to collect evidence. So officially such victims are not existing in Lithuania or at least their numbers are extremely low – so the State is not obliged to create any programmes of integration for them.

Although Sweden is considered as a good example in most areas related to the fight against human trafficking and provision of support services for survivors of trafficking, there are still some challenges faced. When a victim of human trafficking is a child, the Migration Agency and the Social Services seem to lack routines for collaboration. However, in all human trafficking cases involving a child the social services are notified directly after identification, but there are signs showing that these cases are not always followed up and in very few cases criminal proceedings are initiated. The trafficked child is often viewed as a child in distress and not as a victim of trafficking. This might result in the child being exploited even after the initial identification as the signs of trafficking were not considered when developing a plan of assistance.

One of the key issues concerning protection of exploited migrants relates to residence permits. To stay in Sweden legally and access the assistance and integration measures, the person must have a valid residence permit. A formal identification of the victim is a central component of the Swedish assistance system. Preliminary investigations are often not initiated, even if an increase can be noted. One reason is that migrants often are exploited already in their home-countries or during the journey to Sweden.

As sometimes victims of human trafficking have low education or are illiterate, integration for migrants with minimal education is a key long-term challenge for Sweden. Building up the basic skills to be functional in the labour market will require some time. So far, no specialized programs have been

established for migrants lacking education from their country of origin. However, the general programs for labour integration are available to this group as well.

Sweden's success story stems from well-thought and well-implemented national initiatives. Some of the strengths are that the Swedish Gender Equality Agency, responsible for national coordination of the work against human trafficking, have established county Coordinators against trafficking in all Swedish administrative regions, following the same administrative division as the Swedish Police Authority. The county coordinators are responsible for referral of victims of human trafficking regionally as well as for ensuring that their needs are fulfilled. The referral responsibility of the coordinators is vertical as well as horizontal since they cooperate with national stakeholders as well as local stakeholders, with the aim to provide the victim with assistance. The impact of this practice has not been officially evaluated, but interviewed experts emphasized that this structure has improved local coordination and has been found useful by many actors, especially at the local level. There are multiple NGOs providing integration measures to victims of human trafficking. Victims might be provided with language courses, vocational training, social activities, and transitional accommodation, given that they have acquired a residence permit of some kind. Some municipalities have signed agreements and MoUs with NGOs regarding the provision of support to victims of human trafficking. Recently, legislation regulating labour integration of newly arrived migrants have been revised and harmonized to correspond with regulations covering labour integration of the general population. Furthermore, Swedish integration programs are shaped as individual plans consisting of language courses as well as other measures expected to aid migrants in the process of entering the labour market and may last up to 24 months.

Moreover, Sweden has introduced a fast-track program, meaning that newly arrived migrants with a certain expertise or degree in a field from their country of origin that has been identified as a priority field in Sweden, are provided with an individual integration plan consisting of language courses combined with vocational training. The aim of the fast track is to swiftly make the newly arrived migrant prepared to take on a profession in Sweden. Professional training programmes offered to key personnel working in the field of human trafficking. Policemen and policewomen, judges, prosecutors, and social service agents receive training on how to investigate a human trafficking case. They are also trained on how to interact with the victims to ensure their safety.

In Spain, as mentioned before, there are a lot of support and opportunities for survivors of human trafficking, mostly set out in different regulations, but there are also some barriers to access them. There is no universal system of care, with equitable and resourcing between different communities and

provinces: victims' documentation processes are implementing access to the rights set out in the regulations, difficulty in registering victims, limitations in access to health care for all victims, limitations of the protection systems in terms of resources and in terms of the design and coverage they offer, lack of intersectoral approach. Resources, programs, and measures to make these rights effective have been developed unevenly in Spain. In those territories where trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation has been recognized as a form of gender-based violence, coverage of this form of violence has been progressively extended, and in some cases, specialized resources have been created within this system.

At the state level, measures are being promoted and economic resources are available to guarantee assistance throughout the territory. However, in the absence of a State Plan against trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation in force, the main instrument for guaranteeing the rights of victims is currently the State Pact against gender violence, which includes specific measures.

6.



Concluding remarks

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Trafficking in human beings has been recognised as a gender phenomenon in the European Union. With legal instruments like Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament that adopted a gender approach to the phenomenon of trafficking, all EU countries are making amendments in their national legal frameworks on their own pace according to the possibilities and local trends of trafficking in human beings. In most countries migration circumstances and legal status of the survivors of trafficking from third countries play a more influential role than a gender or form of trafficking. In most countries the main challenges arise from legal barriers that are affecting equal provision of support for all survivors of trafficking in human beings.

One of the keys to facilitating social inclusion and promoting independence is to help victims identify their needs, recognise their skills or abilities while building new ones. The key words of care, women with or without children, are relationships, accompaniment, support. Building relationships of trust, formal and informal support networks, takes a long time. The future of the person's migration path depends on the success of social integration, understood as social and economic inclusion in the host country. The main obstacles and challenges for improving the quality of integration projects for victims of trafficking can be found on three fronts: long waiting periods for issuing residence permits and difficulties in conversion, a decrease in language courses and vocational training pathways, and a lack of microcredit standards and subsidies and economic support measures.

Integration is not solely to be defined as an activity in which a person contributes to society by being productive and understanding the language spoken in the country of destination. Integration also involves a social aspect which should be considered, particularly when having victims of human trafficking in mind who might have experiences of trauma. It is essential that victims are assisted in the process of finding their role in a new society through social activities, such as projects and workshops carried out by NGOs in cooperation with the private sector, museums, or cultural centres. Activities such as these must be intended to equip the victim and prevent re-victimisation.

For women who are survivors of trafficking, facing these legal obstacles, dealing with trauma and new realities, provided care should be based on relationships, accompaniment and support that is provided for long-term. While national policies and support provided by the State responds to the needs of these

survivors, different level initiatives and good practices can become the most important instrument responding to the complicated and individual situations of women survivors. Empowerment for greater self-esteem, immediate access to trauma therapy, childcare for mothers in need of vocational training, language/integration courses or employment, safe specialized shelters, accompaniment through different systems are good practices most often offered by non-governmental organizations and are the most influential support that survivors will receive to reach effective and lasting integration. To implement balance in this complicated integration process, it should be built as a long-term process, as the problems and difficulties survivors face takes a long time to solve. And this search for balance, starting from the needs of women workers, is more important when we refer to women who have come out of trafficking and especially mothers. Effective and lasting integration into the world of work, as emerged in the previous paragraphs, in fact requires constant support and mentoring by workers with intercultural competences and an intersectional approach for customised inclusion paths to work successfully.

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