

December 2021

# IRELAND

## 'MIND THE GAP' REPORT FINDINGS

The Irish National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is extremely complex for victims to navigate and understand particularly for victims of trafficking from third-country nationals who are coming from outside of the European Union. Access to the NRM and support remains exclusively dependent on cooperation by a victim with a criminal investigation, and this leaves victims who are not cooperating with the investigation more vulnerable and exposes them to the possibility of further exploitation.

The Mind the Gap report analysis has shown that Ireland's complex NRM has affected the number of victims being identified due to its bureaucratic and single-agency approach, and this remains problematic as not all victims are ready to speak to the police. In addition, the gender-based violence support services which address the wider issues of violence against women are not incorporated into the NRM, which further affects not only the identification but equally the integration of victims who for example continue to be accommodated in unsuitable and inappropriate both gender centres. This further exposes women to the possibility of being re-trafficked. The COALESCE is focused on support for this cohort of women.

The report also shows that the 2008 Act does not provide for the identification of victims of trafficking, therefore the identification procedure remains an administrative and policy-based approach which lacks clarity and certainty for the applicant or their legal representative if they have

One and is discriminatory towards certain migrant VOTs, and in the process hinders their integration into the community.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Access Gender-specific Legal support through specialised Lawyers with experience**
- **Review of the National Referral Mechanism**
- **Empowerment of the voices of victims and survivors (including peer-to-peer support)**
- **Safe and appropriate gender-specific accommodation with staff that are trained in a trauma-informed approach. The staff should include experts in counselling**
- **Incorporating and learning from existing supports available in the broader area of gender-specific violence**
- **Counselling centres with sufficient long-term funding**
- **Attention to the issue of motherhood and an extension of funding support for affordable childcare**
- **Establishing gender-specific interpretation and cultural mediation**
- **Funding and support for research that looks at integration barriers and support for VOTs and women displaced by conflicts**
- **Targeted integration support and policy development in the areas of employment and education.**
- **Attention to motherhood and children**



## IRELAND PROJECT PARTNER

### Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI)

The Immigrant Council of Ireland Independent Law Centre (ICI) is an independent human rights organisation that promotes access to justice for migrants and their families, including Irish citizens, living in Ireland.

The Immigrant Council has adopted as one of its organisational priorities specific actions in the area of anti-human trafficking. As an Independent Law Centre we provide legal representation, advice and information to victims of human trafficking. More broadly, we conduct research and engage in collaborative actions regarding the needs of survivors of trafficking in areas such as accommodation, gender specific support services, integration supports such as education and employment, training on the holistic support of survivors of human trafficking and other associated areas.

[www.immigrantcouncil.ie](http://www.immigrantcouncil.ie)

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