



# Upholding Rights: Early Legal Intervention THE EZINE!

Welcome to the first EZINE for  
the Early Legal Intervention Project

Here you can follow the project's progress, check out our activities so far  
and find out what to expect in the coming months.

Make sure to check our website for more updates!  
[www.earlylegalintervention.eu](http://www.earlylegalintervention.eu)

## What is the Early Legal Intervention Project?

**Upholding Rights! Early Legal Intervention for Victims of Trafficking** aims to establish best practice in securing the protection of victims of trafficking (VoT) through early legal intervention, thus enhancing their social recovery and their role as witnesses. The project builds on the existing international consensus that the fight against trafficking must include a rights-based approach to protection of the victims. The EU has strengthened this position by adopting priorities and objectives that clearly outline the legal rights of VoT, and support the prompt collaboration between the State and civil society in upholding these rights. The ELI Partners are: Immigrant Council of Ireland (Lead Partner), LSA Glasgow, AIRE London, MONIKA Finland, BGRF Bulgaria and KSPSC Lithuania.

An essential component in securing the human rights and dignity of VoT is the provision of understandable correct information on the legal and administrative options available. The concept of Early Legal Intervention (ELI) incorporates the provision of confidential advocacy at the first encounter between victims and authorities, risk assessment of immediate protection needs, decision on the best/most appropriate route for protection by State, ensuring recovery and reflection (R&R) prior to interviews, assessing criminalisation risks e.g. immigration offences, alternative protection route in case the exploitation is not part of a human trafficking crime, in the full legal term.

# Who are we?



**The Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI)** is an organisation where migrant and Irish people work together to provide information, support and legal advice to immigrants and their families. The ICI is very active in lobbying for legislative and policy reforms and has contributed to some very significant reforms, as well as to attitudinal change and improved understanding of issues facing migrants in Ireland.



**Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation** works since its inception in 1998 on research, awareness raising, education, monitoring and proposing legislation and policy in the field of gender equality and protection of women against violence in all its forms – domestic violence, trafficking in women, sexual harassment at the workplace, etc.



**Legal Services Agency (LSA)** is Scotland's largest law centre tackling the unmet legal needs of those in disadvantage. It does so through the provision of legal advice, representation in courts/tribunals, research, publications, seminars and education. LSA undertakes work in protecting the rights of refugee and migrant women and children, preventing homelessness, defended eviction and mortgage repossession, mental health, dementia and social welfare law.



**AIRE Centre, England** is a UK-based charity whose mission is to promote awareness of European law rights and assist marginalised individuals and those in vulnerable circumstances to assert those rights. Our work involves providing advice to individuals and legal advisers with regards to EU free movement law and the application of the European Convention of Human Rights. We also provide training to legal advisers and key stakeholders so as to increase awareness of using European Law to assist marginalised individuals.



**Klaipeda Social and Psychological Services Centre, Lithuania's** vision is to have women, children, and families socially and psychologically safe in a spiritually harmonious society. We work in cooperation with National and international NGO's, along with the Department of Social Support at Klaipeda Municipality.



**Monika – Multicultural Women's Association, Finland** operates as the umbrella organization for several associations for women of ethnic minorities. We support efforts to enhance cultural tolerance and promote a safe everyday life for everyone. We support the well-being of migrant women in different forms. We encourage migrant women to participate actively in social issues and we provide services and guidance to victims of domestic violence. MONIKA Finland participated in the first stage of the project, and it was replaced in the second part by the Centre for Women War Victims (ROSA) in Croatia.

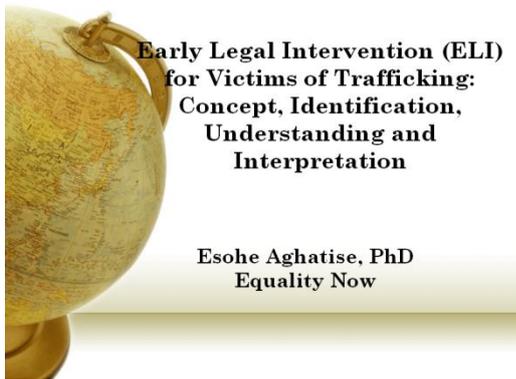


**Centre for Women War Victims, Croatia (CWWV)** is a non-governmental, feminist organization, founded in 1992 with the aim of supporting women in opposing war violence against women. As one of the oldest women's organizations in Croatia, the work was always devoted to sensitizing the public and promoting women's rights through direct aid to women, sharing knowledge and experience, networking with women's organizations and lobbying to influence state institutions and legislation in favour of women.

# What have we accomplished recently?

## Second Partner Meeting, London

The AIRE centre in London was host to the second Partner meeting for the Upholding Rights! ELI project.



The two-day event included updates from all partners on their work to date, an International advisory group meeting, consultation with leading international experts and training for pilots on early legal intervention for victims of human trafficking to be delivered according to best practice principles across three of our partner groups. It also involved the formal introduction of the Centre for Women War Victims, who have joined the project as MONIKA have completed their work with the partnership.

The pilots will be delivered through the Immigrant Council of Ireland, BGRF (Bulgaria) and Centre for Women War Victims – ROSA (Croatia). This work will be completed along an agreed Conceptual Framework informed by the research, aimed at testing the model for ELI within real parameters (e.g. brothel raids, hospitals, asylum centres).

Presentations were delivered by 2 members of the project’s International Advisory Committee, Esohe Aghatise (UN advisor and leading legal practitioner in Europe ) and Ann Hamilton (Member of the EC Expert group and Former Director of the UK human trafficking foundation).

## EU Anti-Trafficking Day



On October 17<sup>th</sup>, as a lead partner of the Early Legal Intervention project, the Immigrant Council of Ireland, hosted an event to mark the EU Anti-Trafficking Day. The event was chaired by Denise Charlton, CEO of the Immigrant Council and a member of the EC Expert Group on Human Trafficking, and presentations delivered by Lauren Hersh of Sanctuary for Families NYC, and Katie Mannion, solicitor with the Immigrant Council law centre.

A keynote address was delivered by Irish Minister for Justice and Equality Frances Fitzgerald welcomed the initiative of the ELI partnership and the EC ISEC programme sponsoring its implementation. The Minister’s positive comments towards commitment to change in the context of early legal intervention to victims were met with resounding applause from the full house in attendance.

Guests at the event included representatives from across the civic and political spectrum, including John O’Driscoll, Chief Superintendent of the Garda National Investigation Bureau, a variety of ambassadors and TDs (Members of the Irish Parliament), trade unions and representatives of dozens of national-level organisations.

The Immigrant Council of Ireland have welcomed the Minister’s remarks and look forward to assisting her in working to ensure safe and early legal intervention for victims of trafficking in the Ireland.



## European Parliament briefing



The ISEC ELI project was presented at the European Parliament on 15 Oct. 2014 to EU-level policy makers and stakeholders. Nusha Yonkova, Anti-Trafficking Manager at the Immigrant Council of Ireland outlined the rationale and the objectives of the ELI project. The event, hosted by Ms Malin Bjork, MEP

included a range of high profile speakers. Zoi Sakeliadou, from the Office of the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, welcomed the project and presented on the EU legal and policy framework addressing trafficking in human beings with a particular focus on early legal intervention.

A renowned international legal expert, Ms Lauren Hersh, Director of Anti-Trafficking Policy and Advocacy at the Sanctuary for Families, New York, USA shared her expertise in establishing an effective human-rights based approach to victims of trafficking in the USA.



There was a large turnout for the event, with over 50 people in attendance. Lively discussions ensued following the presentations, with many participating in the questions and answers session.

## Expert roundtable

Following the public launch, a Roundtable Discussion was held with a group of international experts, specialising in the area protection of victims’ rights: Ms Esohe Aghatise, Grainne Brophy, Dr. George Joseph, Ann Hamilton, Eero Janson and Jackie Turner. The meeting was chaired by Ms Denise Charlton, CEO of the Immigrant Council of Ireland and a member of the EC expert group on Trafficking in Human Beings. Representative of the project presented the research work completed



prior to the meeting. Dr. Monica O' Connor, presented on the preliminary findings of the Comparative report based on national enquiry in the six member states. Kirsty Thomson, solicitor at Legal Services Agency detailed the best practices identified and potential barriers considered in early legal intervention. Katie Mannion, Solicitor at the Immigrant Council of Ireland presented on a practical example of the importance of ELI.

A discussion surrounding the comparative research, and the upcoming pilots followed. Information was shared with regards to obstacles and solutions for early legal intervention, awareness of similar ongoing projects, as well as the measuring of outcomes for victims and the evaluation process.

## **Kick-off partner meeting in Dublin**



The Immigrant Council of Ireland in cooperation with the partners organised and hosted the inaugural event of the ISEC funded project. ELI was launched through at a multinational meeting in Dublin April 2014, where partners from the participating Member States met for the first time. Each partner had prepared a written and verbal update according to an information gathering template, developed in advance of the meeting and aimed at spear-heading the research activities within the national contexts. During the 2-

day meeting a roundtable with Irish stakeholders and policy makers was organised where information was exchanged and the Irish situation with regard to early legal intervention presented in practical terms.

A training session on the completion of the research programme in each of the participating countries took place on the following day, which was led by the lead researcher. The interview schedule was presented and discussed among the partners and the parameters of the data collection and analysis agreed. Timeline for the research work, as well as for the overall activities was agreed, the project tasks unpacked and the agenda for the following meeting brainstormed.

The meeting took place in the Lord Mayor of Dublin residence, the Mansion house, ensuring the approval and engagement at local level in the capital city of Ireland.

# Upcoming

We are currently in the process of publishing both our Comparative Report and Summary Report for the project. These reports explore the situation with Early Legal Intervention across a selection of EU countries and outline best practice principles in delivery of enhanced and timely legal aid to victims of human trafficking in the EU.

A number of steps were taken in the completion of the project reports. These included: a policy and legislative template being completed and returned by the six original partners; a consultation day with the six partners of the project; interviews with key stakeholders in each country who have a remit in relation to trafficking and six national reports being completed, combined and analysed.

The launch of both the complete and summary reports will be marked in Dublin in the coming weeks, and will be available both in hard copy and on the Early Legal Intervention website.

**Follow us on our website [www.earlylegalintervention.ie](http://www.earlylegalintervention.ie) for more updates!**

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