



Upholding Rights: Early Legal Intervention THE EZINE!

Ezine #2

Welcome to the latest 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

Explored in this Ezine:

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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.

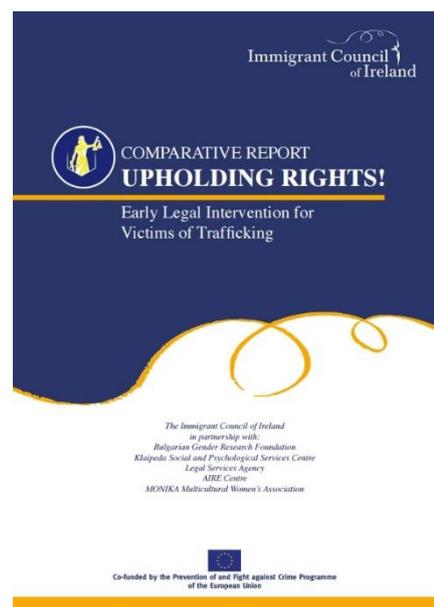
What have we accomplished recently?

Publication of Comparative Report and Summary Report

The Comparative Report and Summary Comparative Report have been completed. The summary report was printed in English with an online version in Bulgarian, Finnish and Lithuanian. 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 summary report is available both in hard copy and on the Early Legal Intervention website while the comparative report is available in an online version only.



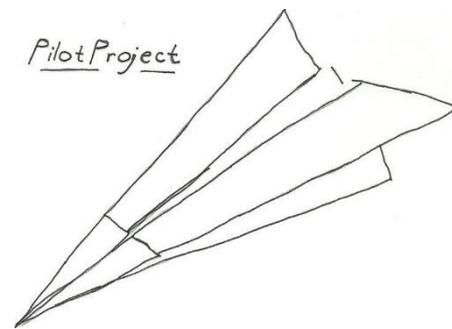
The ELI Full Comparative Report can be viewed in English here:
<http://www.earlylegalintervention.eu/resources/eli-comparative-report/>

The ELI Summary Comparative Report can be viewed in English here:
<http://www.immigrantcouncil.ie/images/documents/ELIREPORT.pdf>

Pilot Projects

The pilot projects for the Early Legal Information project are underway in Bulgaria, Croatia and Ireland. These pilot projects are an implementation of the learnings from the Comparative Report, and aim to provide a working example of Best Practice across Europe. It is hoped that these will prove an effective means of providing support to victims of trafficking, and will encourage uptake across Europe and beyond.

The best practice model, developed by the Legal Services Agency (LSA) in Scotland, sets down key principles that underpin the delivery of a human rights approach to legal intervention for VoT. A human rights based approach is defined within this model as 'ensuring that a victim of human trafficking is able to effectively realise their human rights under international law'. The best practice paper sets out principles that embody a human rights approach and which need to be embedded within each of the pilot projects, taking into account the differing national political, social and legal contexts in each of the three countries. This document complements these principles in outlining the stages for the development of the pilots and the framework, structures and conditions which need to be in place in order to ensure the operation of a best practice approach. A template was recently designed by the ICI to be completed for each client who receives ELI.



Recent Meetings

Irish National Advisory Committee meeting



On 15 January the Immigrant Council of Ireland hosted its inaugural meeting of a National Advisory Committee Meeting on the delivery of early legal intervention to victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation on the 15th of January.

The national Advisory Committee is made up of national experts in the area of anti-trafficking from government agencies such as the Department of Justice Anti Human Trafficking Unit, HSE and TUSLA and An Garda Síochána as well as members of civil society, academics and legal practitioners.

The ICI was delighted that Siobhan Mullally, professor of Law at UCC and member of GRETA spoke to the committee and shared her expertise as did Ursula O Hare, Acting Director of the Law Centre of Northern Ireland.

Croatian National Advisory Committee meeting



The Centre for Women War Victims – Rosa, the Croatian partners in the Upholding Rights: Early Legal Intervention for Victims of Trafficking project, held their first National Advisory Committee meeting in Croatia on the 26th of February.

There were 27 attendees at the meeting with representation from the legal sector, a variety of NGOs and from state institutions such as the office of the

National Coordinator for Suppression of Trafficking, the Governmental Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities, the Ministry for Social Welfare and Youth.

External speakers included Davor Derencinovic, professor of Criminal law and former member of GRETA, Nikica Hamer Vidmar, head of the Independent Sector for Support to Victims and Witnesses at the Ministry of Justice, Lana Peto Kujundzic, a president of the Association of Judges for Minors, Danijel Fosic, attorney at law, Ljiljana Stipišić, a judge from the County Court in Split, Maja Bukša, Deputy of National Coordinator for Suppression of Trafficking, Andrea Krznar, child protection expert from the Ministry for Social Welfare and Youth, Ramiza Memedi from Better Future and Selma Ilić, from Croatian Red Cross.



Upcoming

International Partner Meeting – Croatia



On 16-17 April, the partners of the Early Legal Information Project will meet in Zagreb, Croatia. This will be the third partner meeting for the project, and the focus will be on Media and Communications Strategies.

Jerry O'Connor, Communications Manager at the Immigrant Council of Ireland, will give a presentation on Media, Dissemination and Advocacy. Matt Moriarty, Legal Project Manager with the AIRE Centre, will give a Training Activities workshop. There will be a project update, International Advisory Committee meeting, pilot project update and brainstorming session for setting up the European Network for Early Legal Intervention.

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