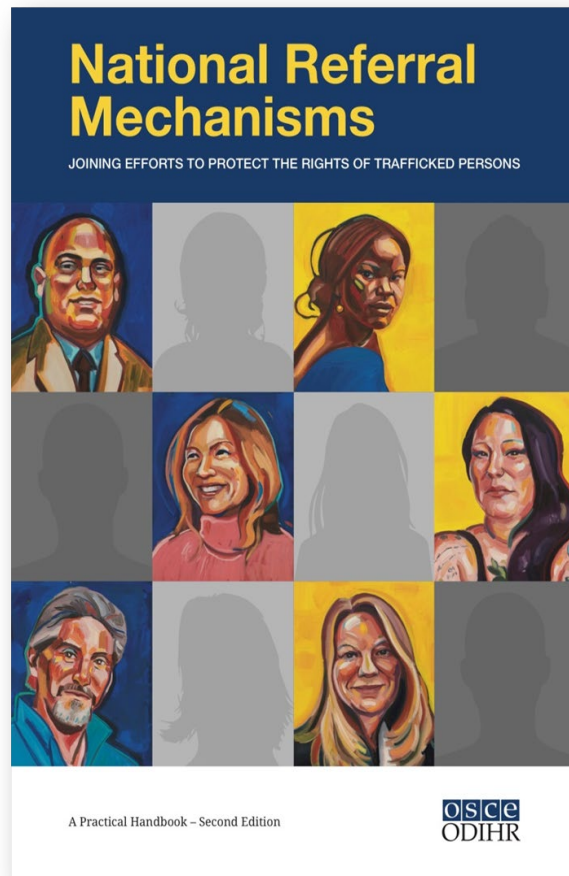


# NATIONAL REFERRAL MECHANISMS

JOINING EFFORTS TO PROTECT THE  
RIGHTS OF TRAFFICKED PERSONS

A Practical Handbook – Second Edition

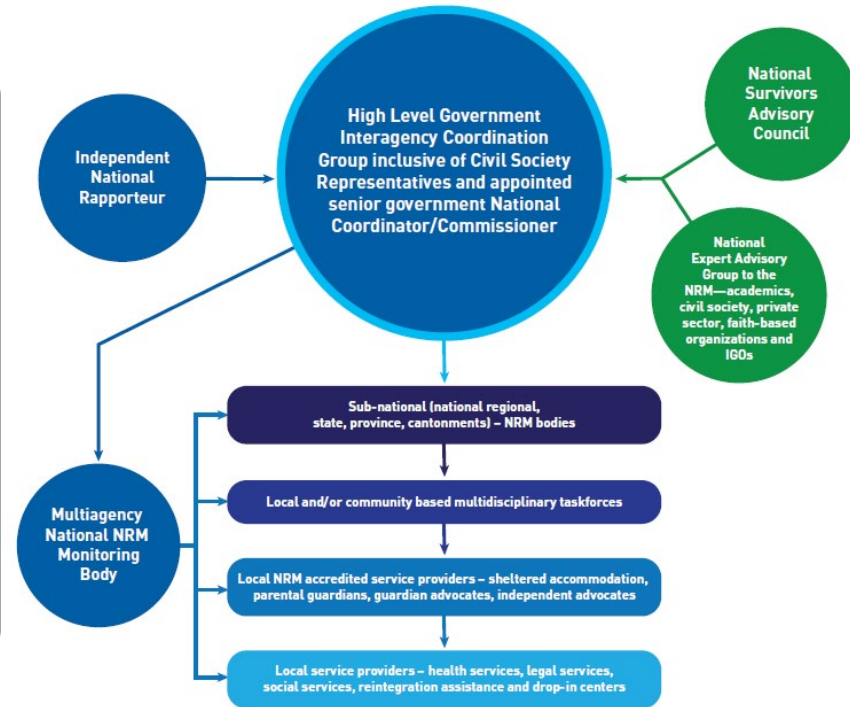
**OSCE** ODIHR



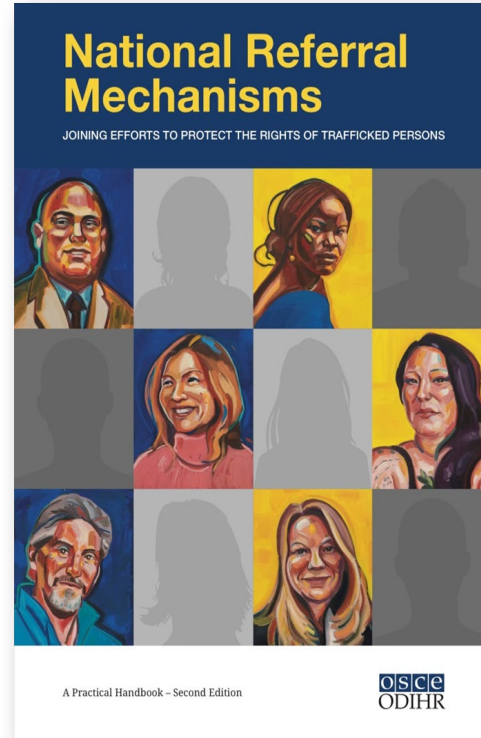
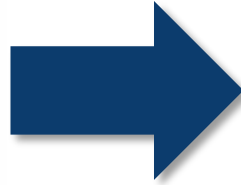
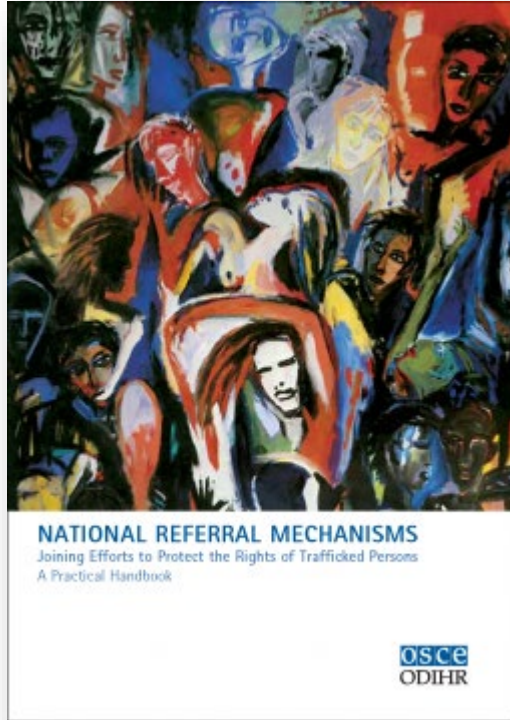
# What is an NRM?

A National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a **co-operative, national framework** through which governments fulfil their obligations to protect and promote the **human rights of victims of trafficking**.

It enables the **co-ordination** of their efforts in a **strategic partnership** with **civil society organisations, the private sector, survivor leaders** and other actors working in the field.



# NRM Handbook: 2004 and 2022



# The role of Survivors and Survivor Leaders is at the heart of NRMs

*“Survivor-Leaders are highly active in international efforts to combat trafficking. They have lived experienced, knowledge and insight into the methods and activities of traffickers, together with an unrivalled understanding of survivors’ individual needs, and the specific risks that they face.”*



# Why an update of the NRM Handbook?

To improve and strengthen  
National Referral Mechanisms



Countries with NRM are better able to address the vulnerability to THB of at-risk populations and to re-trafficking of survivors of trafficking

Lack of policies addressing gender dimensions in human trafficking

Lack of victim- and survivor-centered approach

Lack of NRMs for children

Low identification, prosecution and convictions rates

Reliance on self-identification of victims

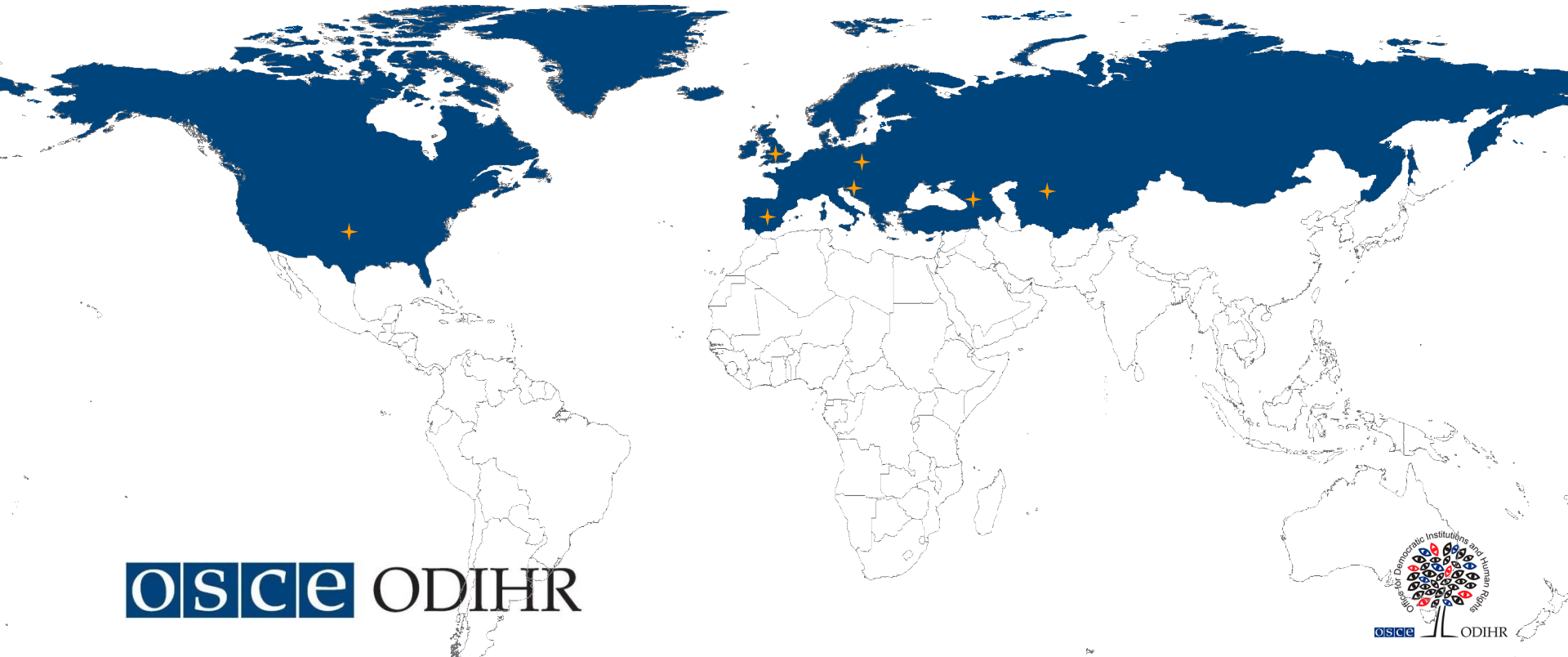
Issues related to accessing and receiving compensation for victims

Lack of systematized anti-trafficking data collection

Lack of a trauma-informed approach

# What informed the updated NRM Handbook?

ODIHR NRM assessment visits to 7 participating States



# Who informed the updated NRM Handbook?

## ODIHR NRM Advisory Group and international experts

Isoke Aikpitanyi | Jerome Elam | Ronny Marty | Judit Ola | Bridget Perrier | Shandra Woworuntu

Rachel Witkin

Kevin Hyland | Laura Lundy | Alexandra Malangone | Paul Rigby | Maia Rusakova | Kirsty Thomson

Esohe Aghatise | Silke Albert | Craig Barlow | Taina Bien-Aimé | Dr. Stana Buchowaska | Andrea Filippo  
Castronuovo | Pierre Cazenave | Sarah Elliott | Katarina Fajnorova | Vera Gracheva | Ruchira Gupta |  
Thiago Gurjao Alves Ribeiro | Korina Hatzinikolaou | Duco van Heel | Janice Helwig | Suzanne Hoff |  
Sigma Huda | Valbona Hystuna | Ana Ivanishvili | Alethia Jimenez | Alda Hrönn Jóhannsdóttir | Cem  
Kolcu | Heather Komenda | Helga Konrad | Thomas Laigaard | Dorchen Leidholdt | Dalia Lenarte |  
Veronica Lupu | Luiz Machado | Lola Maksudova | Eurídice Márquez | Ronny Marty | Siobhan Mullally |  
Andrea Pellegrino | José Luis Pérez Fernández | George Adrian Petrescu | Vineta Polatside | Valiant  
Richey | Venla Roth | Zoi Vangelistra Sakelliadou | Ketevan Sarajishvili | Maximilian Scheid | Gulnara  
Shahinian | Congressman Christopher H. Smith | Per-Anders Sunesson | Grégoire Théry | Boris Topic |  
Elisa Trossero and Madis Vainomaa | Antoaneta Vassileva | Martha Veldt-Foglia | Shandra Woworuntu

Jane Hunt | Cornelius Katona | Eileen Walsh | Laura Wood | Jocelyn Blumberg

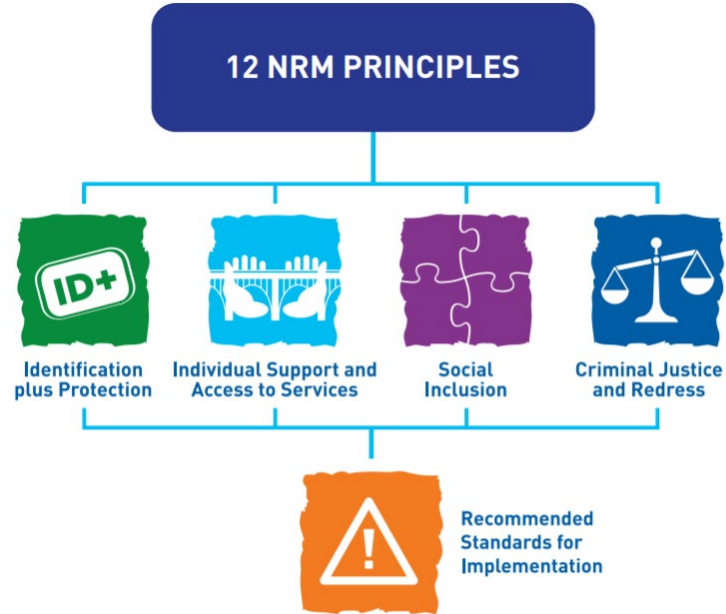
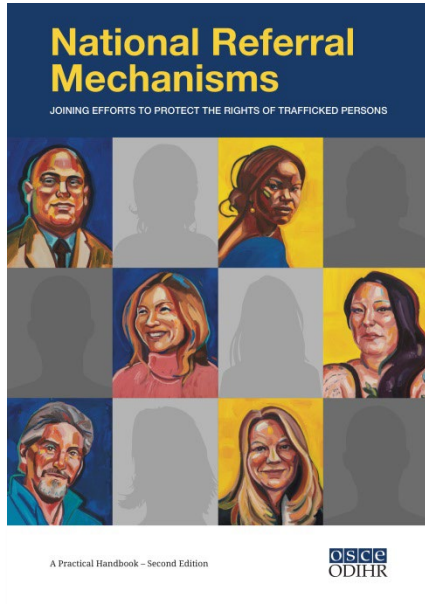
# Who informed the updated NRM Handbook?

Survivor leaders, including 1<sup>st</sup> International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council (ISTAC)





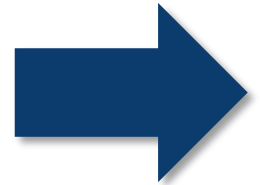
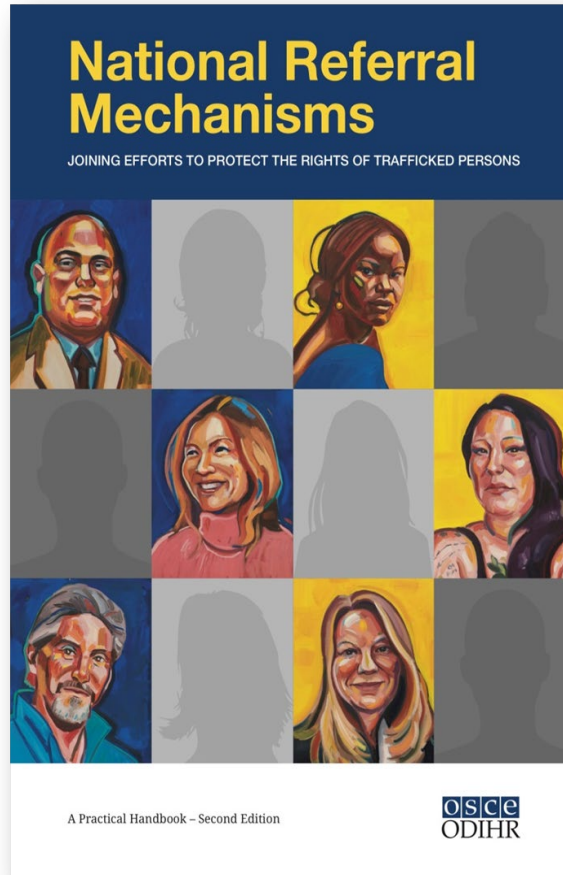
# What does the updated Handbook provide?



**Multi-disciplinary  
and multi-agency  
partnership** is the  
key to effective  
NRM



# Inside the updated NRM Handbook



## NRM Preparatory Guide:

### Ethical working methods

- Understanding 'vulnerability' and related needs and risks
- Advocates for adults and Guardian Advocates for Children
- Multi-agency, multi-disciplinary partnership
- NRM procedures and services for children
- Age dispute and age estimation assessment
- Effective professional communications and conduct
- Communications with children ; The Lundy Model
- Pastoral support and supervision for professionals

## NRM Protocol:

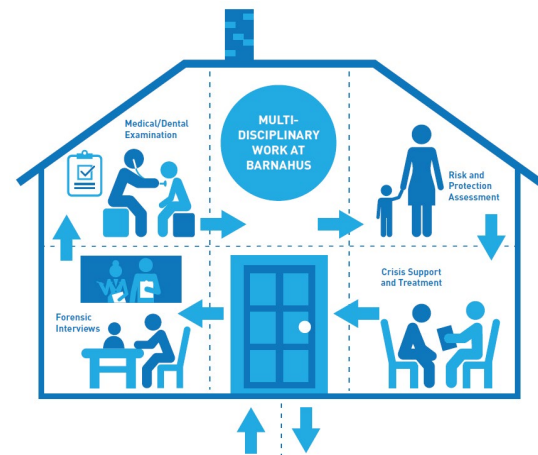
### Safe and effective Procedures

- Confidentiality and informed consent
- Data protection and information sharing
- Working with survivors who have disabilities
- Tailoring services for survivors
- Assessment and safety planning for adults and children
- Interpreters and cultural mediators
- Early access to healthcare services
- Early access to free legal advice and representation
- Prioritising practical, financial and material needs

# Child-centred NRM



- Child-specialist identification, protection and age assessment
- Guardian advocates for all children
- Safe, child-friendly accommodation
- Child centred criminal investigation procedures
- Best Interests of the Child (BIC) Assessment and Ongoing Safety and Care Plan
- Supporting vulnerable young people to social inclusion



The Barnahus model for child victims of trafficking

# Gender-sensitive approach



NRM procedures and services should be gender-sensitive, as well as being based on a developed national policy and strategy to address the gender dynamics of human trafficking. This should be tailored for victims of trafficking throughout the 4 NRM Pillars.

# Trauma-informed approach

- ✓ Establish and maintain a relationship of trust
- ✓ Instil a sense of calm security and safety
- ✓ Minimise risks of distress and re-traumatisation
- ✓ Remain well and avoid professional 'burn out'

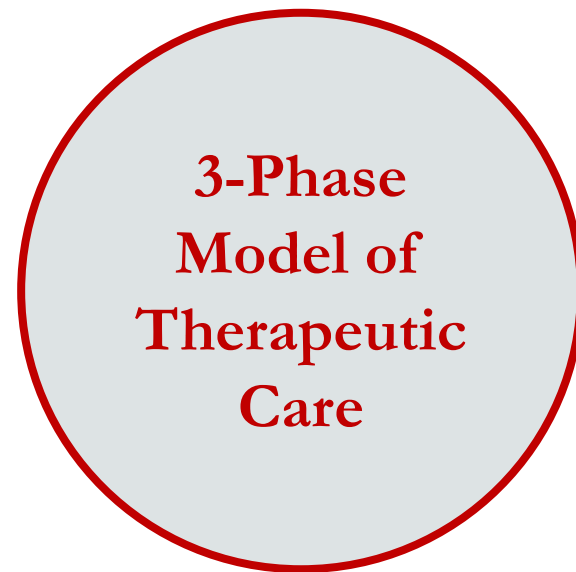


All NRM Stakeholders (including First Responders) should be trained in trauma-informed methods of communication.

# Healthcare at the heart of NRM



- Recognising urgent healthcare needs
- Common mental and physical health problems experienced by survivors
- The healthcare needs of children
- The value of medico-legal reports





# The Four NRM Pillars



## PILLAR ONE: Identification + Protection

"As a victim of trafficking, you learn to be very scared. My trafficker told me, 'there is another girl who didn't listen to me - she is in a wheelchair now.' He threatened to kill members of my family and convinced me that if I told my story, no one would ever believe me. So many victims are afraid of what the authorities will do to them, they don't know that they have any rights, and they don't know whom to turn.

We need a system that reaches out to help victims, rather than expecting them to simply come forward: clear, accessible information and guidance must be provided for all people who are in potential at-risk groups; early signs of human trafficking must be recognized and urgent action taken to prevent it; adults and children who have already been trafficked need swift initial identification and immediate protection."

— **Judit Olah**, Anti-trafficking activist and survivor leader



## PILLAR TWO: Individual Support and Access to Services

"After escaping human trafficking I was pushed straight into criminal justice and immigration procedures. However, I was still homeless and hungry, I felt entirely alone, and unsafe, I was not physically or mentally ready to talk about what had happened to me, or even to fully understand myself. I was in desperate need of rest and recovery.

Much later, an NGO assigned me a social worker who changed everything. She took time to learn about my personal background, my culture, and the context of my trafficking. She always looked pleased to see me; even a smile was a gift at that time. She explained everything carefully and prepared me for what would happen next. We focused on the things I needed: food, clothing, transport, accommodation. Then counselling, language classes and other activities helped me to move forward with my life. Survivors need to have this support in place from the beginning. I know it would have better equipped me for the pursuit of justice against my traffickers."

— **Shandra Woworuntu**, Chair of ISAC, Founder and CEO of Mentari Human Trafficking Survivor Empowerment Program Inc. and survivor leader



## PILLAR THREE: Social Inclusion

"Meaningful work and my family have always been the core themes of my life. After working in the hospitality industry for many years, I was falsely promised a job, exploited through use of debt bondage and trafficked for labour exploitation. The most terrible thing for me and the victims I was trapped with, were the vicious threats made to our families.

Unlike the others, I could speak the language and eventually I was able to get us help. We had a positive experience with the authorities because they were directly linked to organizations that gave us food, housing, everything we needed, and they treated us with respect and dignity. I got the services that I needed at the time that I needed them. Most significantly, I was able reunite with my family, which means everything to me. Know that most victims are not assisted in this way and can remain in danger for a lifetime. If we are to combat human trafficking we must offer linked support with services to all victims, without any conditions attached."

— **Romy Marty**, Member of ISAC, Independent Anti-Labor Trafficking Consultant, CEO of MPSC and survivor leader



## PILLAR FOUR: Access to Criminal Justice and Redress

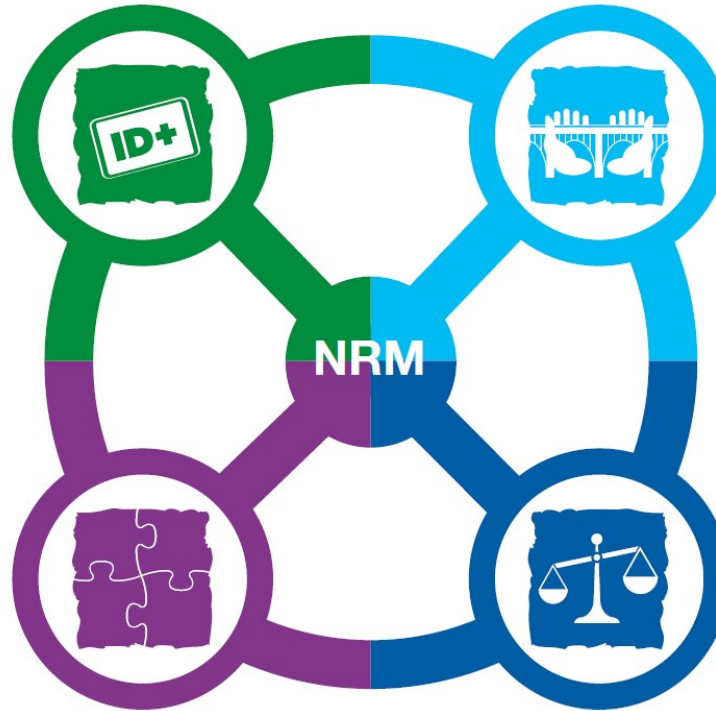
"Criminal justice systems place victims of trafficking under a microscope that doesn't apply to others. It can feel like a blurring culture that puts them on trial. Investigative interviews are intensive and re-traumatizing; you are expected to keep repeating your story to detectives, victim services, recovery centres: repeat, repeat, repeat.

Training across criminal justice systems and victim support should be survivor-led, survivor-focused and delivered by people with frontline experience. The police can better identify victims if they take someone like me with them; a survivor leader who has a strong, cultural understanding and can assist with building trust. Judges sit for years on the bench; they need updated guidance to secure strong convictions; anti-trafficking laws must be consistently revised and updated. Trauma-informed courts are essential; special protection measures must be automatic, and innovative methods, such as the use of therapy dogs, can lend calm and confidence to victims who are giving distressing evidence."

— **Bridget Perrier**, Co-Founder and First Nations Educator at Sastrade101 and survivor leader

# The Four NRM Pillars

**Pillar One:**  
Identification plus Protection

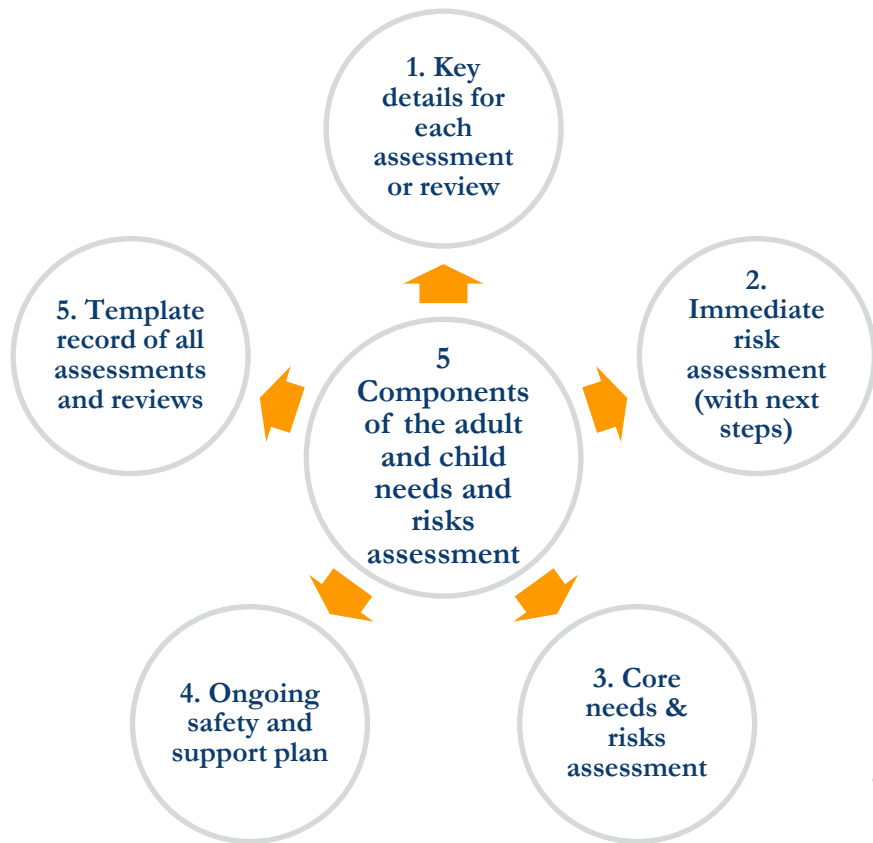


**Pillar Two:**  
Individual Support and  
Access to Services

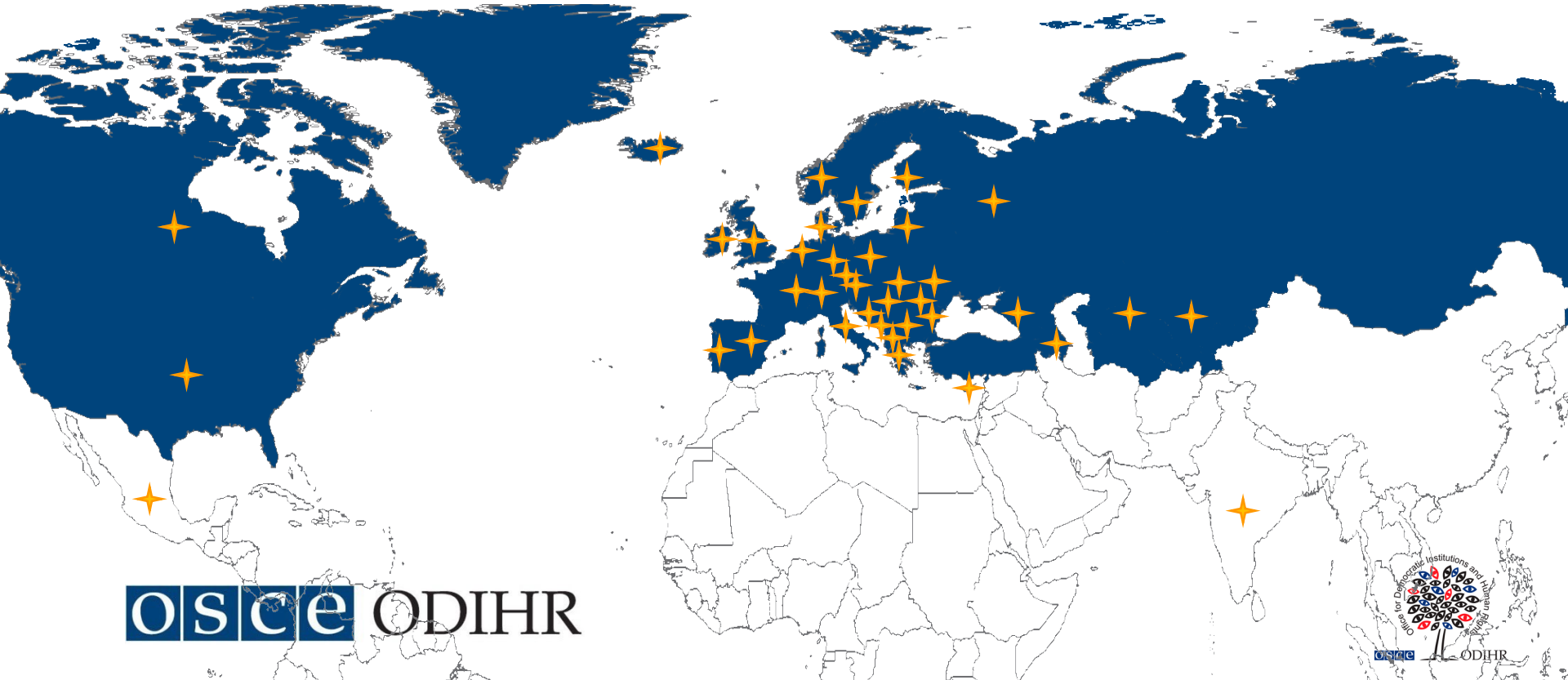
**Pillar Three:**  
Social Inclusion

**Pillar Four:**  
Access to Criminal Justice  
and Redress

# The Adult and Children Assessment Guides



# Promising Practices from across the OSCE



# Recognition of survivor leaders' inclusion in anti-trafficking policies



Trauma-informed Code of Conduct for All Professionals working with Survivors of Human Trafficking and Slavery (TiCC)



2<sup>nd</sup> cohort of the International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council



E-Learning Course on Capacity Building for Survivor Leaders of Trafficking in Human Being



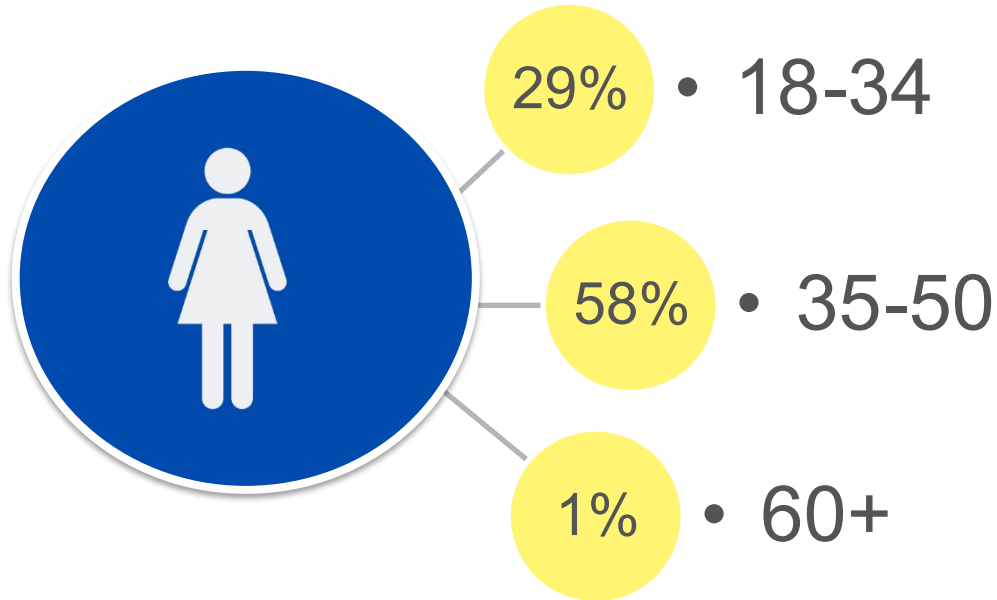
# ODIHR SURVEY ON THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF WOMEN REFUGEES FROM UKRAINE



Launched in August for  
1 month  
1.000 responses

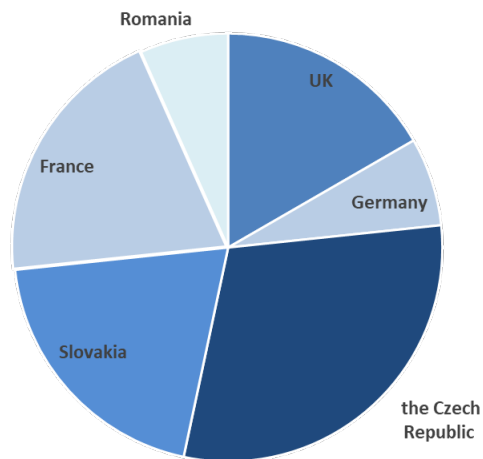


# Age groups

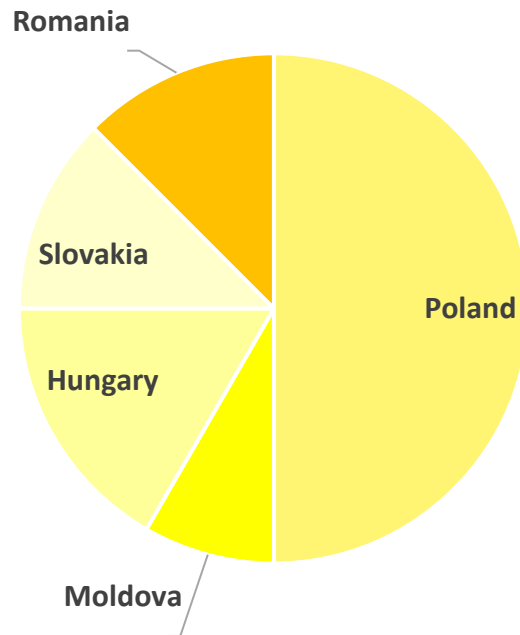




## Destination countries



## Transit countries





**73% of respondents  
are mothers with  
children**

**56% of them have never  
traveled abroad before  
fleeing Ukraine**

## ISSUES IN TRANSIT OR DESTINATION COUNTRIES:



More than **3 in 5** - Insufficient knowledge of the local language

Nearly **1 in 2** - Lack of financial resources

**1 in 3** - Unable to rent accommodation

**1 in 6** - Lack of health care

More than **1 in 6** - Lack of social networks and community

**1 in 50** - Domestic violence

**1 in 50** - Discrimination



**1 IN 8**  
experienced  
fraud



**1 IN 20**  
received  
threats



**1 IN 33**  
experienced  
blackmail or  
coercion

## LACK OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE THREAT OF BECOMING A TRAFFICKING VICTIM, AS WELL AS RIGHTS AFFORDED TO REFUGEES:



**ALMOST 3/4**

Received no legal assistance or offers of support for legal guidance

**OVER 1/2**

Were not sufficiently informed about their rights in a way they could understand

**4 IN 10**

Were not made aware of the risks of human trafficking

# SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

**1 in 22** - Sexual harassment

More than **1 in 50** - Domestic violence

**1 in 50** - Request for sexual favours

**1 in 100** - Received proposals to work in  
the sex industry

**1 in 250** - Received offers of surrogacy

**1 in 250** - Received proposals to produce  
pornographic materials

**1 in 500** - Sexual violence



# SAFETY OF CHILDREN

Refugees' children, or children in their care,  
had experienced the following:

- 1 in 33** – Bullying, discrimination or harassment in schools, universities or the local community
- 1 in 100** – Domestic violence
- 1 in 200** – Sexual harassment
- 1 in 250** – Requests for sexual favours
- 1 in 500** – Received proposals to produce pornographic materials



# Key reasons to feel unsafe since leaving Ukraine

insufficient  
knowledge of the  
local language

lack of financial  
resources

inability to rent  
accommodation

lack of health  
care

lack of social  
networks and  
community

domestic  
violence as well  
as discrimination

# Needs and wishes

- access to safe accommodation
- need for clearer information about their rights and status in a hosting country
- access to health care and psychological services
- access employment referral services
- language courses
- legal services
- financial support



# Recommendations

## Accommodation

- Establish vetting procedures for accommodation providers

## Employment

- Regulate employment agencies to prevent trafficking purpose of exploitation
- Increase labour inspections to identify trafficking for purpose of labour exploitation

## Information

- Monitor and remove online disinformation about Ukrainian refugees, including hate speech
- Provide awareness raising information both in Ukrainian and Russian at key locations
- Provide information on rights in easy-to understand language

# Recommendations

## Capacity- building

- Provide trainings to law-enforcement at national and local levels
- Train stakeholders working with refugees

## Address demand

- Address and reduce demand for trafficking for sexual and labour exploitation of Ukrainian women and children

## Children

- Set up robust system for all unaccompanied and separated children
- Appoint and monitor legal guardians within 24h and conduct Best Interest of Child assessment
- Address vulnerabilities of Ukrainian children to exploitation for the production of child sexual abuse materials (CSAM) and other forms of sexual exploitation online

For further information

[ODIHR Survey on the Safety and Security of Women Refugees  
from Ukraine | OSCE](#)

[Survey Recommendations](#)

[ODIHR National Referral Mechanisms Handbook, 2nd Edition |](#)  
[OSCE](#)