

Life after trafficking

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Title: Life after trafficking: (re) integration processes of women that have been trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation in Europe

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Keywords: human trafficking, sex trafficking, sex work, (re) integration

This thesis answers the question of what determines successful recovery and (re) integration of women trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation, and how influencing factors interplay, in the short and long run. The analysis is based on qualitative research conducted in Europe (Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, the Netherlands and Italy). One of the main findings of this research is that the ability of forming healthy relationships, personal in which the survivor can practice her autonomy, and relationships with service providers, built on trust, are the most significant factors that could contribute toward successful long-term (re) integration of trafficking victims. Additionally, the significance of the newly formed family on successful (re)integration is recognised. When looking at the dynamics of the prosecution of the trafficker, it was found that trials often last a long time, and may require the victim testifying numerous times, which often causes re-traumatisation. Finally, when looking at the approach to sex work in the context of anti-trafficking, this thesis finds ongoing stigmatisation, not only of sex workers, by both service providers and victims of trafficking, but also reports of stigmatisation of trafficking victims.