

# Life after trafficking

## Citation for published version (APA):

Meshkovska, B. (2018). *Life after trafficking: (re)integration processes of women that have been trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation in Europe*. Boekenplan. <https://doi.org/10.26481/dis.20181122bm>

## Document status and date:

Published: 01/01/2018

## DOI:

[10.26481/dis.20181122bm](https://doi.org/10.26481/dis.20181122bm)

## Document Version:

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

## Please check the document version of this publication:

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## PROPOSITIONS ACCOMPANYING THE THESIS

### **Life after trafficking:**

(re) integration processes of women that have been trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation in Europe

by Biljana Meshkovska

1. There is no clear cut definition of success of the (re) integration process in post sex trafficking situations. There are steps of progress made and a continuum of success along different dimensions. (Chapter 4)
2. What is desired is ‘autonomy’ in decision making processes, not necessarily ‘independence’. Dependence on the support of family and friends is what may keep a person away from a situation of exploitation in the long run, as long as those relationships are built on a strong and healthy foundation. (Chapter 4, 5)
3. Marriage and a new family may bring stability and ensure the sustainability of a (re) integration process which is progressing in a positive direction. (Chapter 4, 5)
4. A relationship between the trafficked person and the service provider which is built on trust, makes it possible that the survivor reaches out in possible future situations of exploitation, or when assistance is needed. (Chapter 4, 5)
5. A trial against a trafficker in Southeastern Europe may last up to 10 years, during which time, survivors are asked to testify multiple times. Often, such an experience re-traumatises the trafficked person, and disrupts their newly formed lives. (Chapter 6)
6. Civil trials against the trafficker initiated by the trafficked person should be linked with criminal trials led by the state. Following a successful conviction, financial compensation of survivors should be assured. (Chapter 6)
7. Use the word ‘sex work’ and ‘sex worker’. Regardless of whether or not you believe that sex work can be a choice, using terms such as ‘prostitution’ only ensures that you perpetuate a culture where the person who you are attempting to support is the target of fierce discrimination and stigmatisation. (Chapter 7)
8. *‘Please don’t retouch my wrinkles. It took me so long to earn them.’* (Anna Magnani)
9. *‘How do you pick up the threads of an old life? How do you go on, when in your heart you begin to understand... there is no going back? There are some things that time cannot mend. Some hurts that go too deep, that have taken hold.’* (Lord of the Rings: Return of the King)