MINORITY WOMEN’S FORCED MIGRATION AND THEIR INTEGRATION IN AUSTRIA AND GERMANY

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Study

Minority Women’s Forced Migration and Integration in Austria and Germany

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Abstract

Sinjar region is the main area of Iraq where the genocide on the Ezidi people took place and attracted the world’s attention. Around 6,000 Ezidi people were captured by the Islamic State (IS) and were subjected to unimaginable cruel treatment; women in particular were subjected to sexual and physical violence and psychological trauma following the torture they endured.¹

More than 400,000 Ezidis have been forced to leave their houses and tents. There are more than 22 mass graves and around 3,500 Ezidi women are currently held in captivity. Minorities face constant danger in Iraq, the situation has become difficult and unsustainable for them, forcing them to run away at every chance they get. There are more than 2 million refugees in Iraq and Kurdistan and it is difficult to provide them protection and guarantee all necessary services. Around 140,000 Christians have fled from Mosul and Neynava and have sought refuge in Kurdistan, where they have been spread around three cities: Suleymanieh, Erbil, and Duhok. More than 110,000 members of minorities left their country and fled to neighboring countries, mostly to Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan, while others have proceeded towards other countries, or Europe.²

The aim of this research is to examine the impact of forced migration on Ezidis, Christians and other minorities, which were forced to abandon their country by the ruling and majority group in 2014. Specifically, it attempts to explore and understand the situation of women in exile. My examination of the discourses, various political and social factors that surrounded or underlay these events, shows that women of a minority group in Iraq were being pulled into different directions as a result of multiple forces operating in the context of structures of violence and ethnic-cleansing by fundamentalism based social movements. There are no suitable structures and clinics in northern Iraq that can provide support and therapy for the victims. This is the reason for relocating the victims to Germany so that they can get necessary and adequate support and treatment of their traumas what is important and lifesaving.

1. Introduction and research background

Since January 2014, over 3.2 million Iraqis have been displaced within their own country and have been classified as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The Islamic State (IS) is particularly persecuting ethnic and religious minorities and systematically killing, robbing and enslaving them. According to Amnesty International, thousands of men, women and children from the Ezidi community have been or are victims of IS. Distressing news has

¹ More information refer to S.B.Hosseini (2016): “we need help, please…” current situation of Yezidi women in Iraq, frauenosolidarität magazine, Vienna. Austria.
² Interview with sub-branch of Endowment organization in Erbil, focusing on Ezidi in KRG, in Duhok, June 10 2016
emerged on how young girls aged between 8 and 25 were separated from their families and sold as sex slaves or given to the combatants and forced to convert to Islam. Those who were lucky enough to be rescued from their captors and returned to their communities, face further difficulties as some of them are stigmatized and even banished by their families and communities because of what happened to them.

After consultation with the Ezidi community in Germany, the State Ministry of Baden-Württemberg decided to welcome more than 1,000 women and children mostly Ezidis but also members of other minority groups to Germany, where they will receive the appropriate support to overcome their terrible experiences and assist them to start a new life. In addition to this project some women came to Austria with their families or alone and settled inside the camps, because of limited numbers available in the project in Germany. All of them are either victims of extreme forms of violence or have witnessed extreme violence and were living in camps in the northern Iraqi province of Dohuk. Some were enslaved while others are the only survivors of their families which were murdered and the women were witnesses of the crimes. The horror stories we read in the media, the ones that highlight the brutality of the current conflict in Iraq are their stories. Through their stories, one can easily understand why millions are often forced to leave everything behind and flee for their lives. Survivors of extreme circumstances require high level of assistance while those who are still at risk must be moved to safe places.

Through the generosity of the people of Baden-Württemberg, more than 1,000 vulnerable Iraqis were moved to Germany since the beginning of the program in March 2015. They will receive shelter, monetary assistance, free health and psychosocial care, free education and the opportunity to receive German citizenship. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Iraq provides cultural orientation, clothing vouchers, medical care, and transportation and company to Germany. IOM, which assists displaced persons in Iraq and around the world, is implementing this project together with the German State Ministry of Baden-Württemberg, in cooperation with local authorities in Iraq. The aim is to save the lives of these vulnerable people and enable them to rebuild their shattered lives after their terrible experiences. The Sonderkontingent Iraq (Special Quota for Iraq) in the State Ministry of Baden-Württemberg says that the HAP assists people in need of treatment and can benefit from specialized services available in Germany.

IS has targeted women from Ezidis, Christians and Shia communities, because women are considered valuable under the traditions of these societies, therefore by inflicting humiliation on women through rape and enslavement the whole community is affected, thus their plan was/is to eradicate and displace women. However, Ezidi men are defying these vicious intentions by marrying women who have been captives and have endured systematic abuse and rape, to show that they still consider their abused women valuable despite what happened to them. Survivors like Nadia Murad and many other women have started to raise and have their voices heard and are seeking peace. These women have to
cope with heavy losses; they have lost their families, their livelihoods, their life’s anchors and their home country. Their cities and villages have been destroyed and whatever kept them and made them feel safe, is now gone. Their families and friends were either left behind or killed, and their communities dispersed.

Christian women whose families have bought them back from IS, are sent to Europe, as the type of violence they have endured is considered a shame for the family, and most victims remain silent and hide what has happened to them. The situation of Shia women is far worse than that of Christians and Ezidis. IS considers them as unbelievers although they are Muslims but they are not Sunni Muslims, and they cannot progress to become Sunni Muslims, as Ezidis or Christians could. Thus, in many occasions they either kill them or burn them instead of enslaving them. However, if they were lucky enough to be released or to escape from their captors, their families force them to marry or/and require them to remain silent because of what IS did to them. They have no support and it is often extremely difficult for them to trust people or rebuild emotional strength. Once back home they do not feel safe and there are not enough treatment options available to them. Moreover, because of the general shortage of tents available, they are forced to share a tent with up to ten people. Coping with all the losses and traumas will only be possible away from home, in a place where they feel safe and where the necessary infrastructure for appropriate medical treatment and psychosocial support is available. Many can consider themselves lucky because they only had to flee their homes, but others are not as lucky and were victims of brutal acts of violence: rape, forced marriage, enslavement and forced conversion.

Despite the generosity extended by the State Ministry of Baden-Württemberg to provide specialized psychosocial support for victims in Germany, only a very limited number of those in need of such assistance have been able to benefit from it. Most of the victims remain in the camps, in their modest dwellings, with few chances to overcome their painful experiences.

And yet many of these people do not have great demands, they are happy and grateful to have been saved. They have little ambitions since they do not have the strength to think about the future actively. Beyond their personal loss and trauma, women who have been raped and sexually humiliated have to deal with an additional level of challenge that is coping with their painful experiences. Thus, for many of them, relocation to European countries is tantamount to salvation, as the perception is that disoriented children are supposed to destroy the cultural identity of the Ezidis. The clergy has informed these women that they would remain daughters of their community and this gave them some reassurance and strength. However, we can see how IS destroyed religious hierarchy. In Ezidi tradition when a person is forced to convert as IS did by imposing conversion into Islam, they cannot return to their original religion, which would leave many in a precarious situation. Recognizing that conversion is forced, Baba Sheikh - an Ezidi clergyman – issued a Fatwa (judicial decree) that would allow former captive women to go and wash their faces with
holy water at Lalish - a holy site for the Ezidis. After this ritual they are allowed to return to their Ezidi community and their original religion.

1.1. **Context of the study**

Generally, women have been considered weak by terrorist groups and have been attacked in a different manner than men because of the role they play in such patriarchal societies in these regions. Women are generally under immense social pressure and it is a common belief that a closed social culture is more secure and stable. As a result of the pressure put on minorities by terrorists, kidnapping, many women were forced to leave a country or were made to convert to Islam at gunpoint (Al-Ali 2016: 12).

Forced displacement or forced migration is a phenomenon that marked and affected the lives of thousands of people throughout the last years in Iraq.

Gender mainstreaming in humanitarian programs with forced migrants is based on a belief that such an approach will lead to greater gender equality, while raising the status of women through their empowerment. Forced migration of people will persist in the near future, and with the previous period in mind, it is imperative to inspect its gendered and generational essence, especially in the context of interposition by international humanitarian organizations. (Hyndman 1998: 242). This research prospects the impact of gender susceptible protection and support of refugees in Germany and Austria.

The camp, as a gendered place, was a site of re-meditation of gender relations, including identities and ideologies. As of 2014, there has been an attempt by UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations to recognize the special needs of refugee women. This was a result of numerous acts of gender based violence, added to the fact that the majority of refugees were women and children (Martin 2004: 76). Rape is the most common type of violence perpetrated against women during violent conflicts and it often happens alongside genocide and state terrorism as a strategy to humiliate, subjugate, ethnically cleansing, or silence opponents (Lykes, Brabeck, Ferns & Radan 1993: 174). Sometimes a rape is referred to as genocidal rape (Ortbals and Staudinger 2013: 21). Rape in general is used as a strategic psychological warfare, but it is also used as a tool to diminish the value of women within a group with an intended negative effect on the whole community in target.

Once these women arrive in Europe in a variety of ways, and they are recognized as victims of criminal religious extremism, they are afforded access to assistance and get inserted into a network designed to provide assistance, support and protection to victims of slavery. At the same time, they are required to collaborate with law enforcement and the judiciary in their investigations and subsequent persecution of trafficking.

There is greater awareness of victim protection and a general agreement that activities and services for victims of trafficking must be geared towards enabling a recovery from their experiences and facilitating their (re)integration into society, using healthcare, protection, or get deported to their home-countries.
This research focuses on services provided to women who have been victims of slavery. It aims to provide an outline of the activities carried out by organizations to facilitate the integration process in the host countries. It also lists services and activities of Non-Governmental and Inter-Governmental Organizations working to address the social exclusion of women in societies. It considers the factors that must be taken into account in developing future services and activities from an empowerment perspective. Many efforts are underway to assist women, as a lot of international attention is focused on the phenomenon of sexual slavery. However, further strengthening is also required within national and international legislations, in expanding the capacity of structures to shelter women and to offer them opportunities to make a living. As stated earlier, the main purpose of the study is to investigate the experiences of enslaved girls and women returnees in their reintegration process in the society. In this research, I discuss the rehabilitation of women refugees in Germany and Austria. I focus on the programs introduced through humanitarian organizations for women in shelters. Then I present my analysis of how refugee women were negotiated, deconstructed, and were influenced and manipulated by humanitarian programming which aimed to support gender equality and women’s empowerment. I conclude with comments on the obstacles to the success of such programming in the context of forced migration and refugees.

2. Theoretical approach

2.1. Empowerment theory

The concept empowerment is defined in many ways; however, the word ‘power’ defines the meaning of empowerment. According to Kabeer (2005: 13), power can be understood in terms of the ability to make choices. Empowerment is the process of giving the powerless the ‘power’ to make choices or change their own situation. “To be disempowered means to be denied choice, while empowerment refers to the processes by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such an ability”. Mosedale also outlined the concept by giving four aspects of empowerment. She said

“to be empowered one must have been disempowered. Empowerment cannot be bestowed by a third party a definition of empowerment, usually include a sense of people making decisions on matters which are important in their lives and being able to carry them out, moreover, empowerment is an ongoing process rather than a product” (Mosedale 2003: 3).

However, I conceptualized empowerment as a process of gaining the ability to make choices or decisions to control situations and achieve the changes for positive development. Moreover, to analyze this study, two important pillars of empowerment - the state of powerlessness and getting back strength through interventions are discussed below.
2.2. Powerlessness

Empowerment is a procedure that reshapes the state of powerlessness to an express of having power over life, a choice and environment (Sadan 2004:144). Powerlessness derives from the inability of having control over one’s body and a situation and being oppressed physically and psychologically. People in a powerless situation often lack self-esteem, have an inclination to self-blame and prefer living isolated from their community and other people.

Solomon (1976) mentions that powerless people often develop adaptive mechanisms, which are only isolate themselves from the rest, humiliate themselves for the situation and accepting society’s judgment about their triviality and ineptitude. They accept these social norms that separate them from other people. The situation makes sense to them, they cannot oppose the oppression or injustice against them, but they have to accept the blame from others and consider themselves as the sinful ones. Powerlessness is not only the situation that deprives people of reaching the ability to advance power against social prejudice, but it is also a state that makes them vulnerable to new forms of injustice.

2.3. Problem solving

As stated by Healy (2005: 109), problem-solving procedures are specified by collaborative, highly formed, time-limited and problem-focused methods to practice. The connection of problem solving methods in this study is that it provides a general substructure through which to understand the revival programs which are given to the women returnees.

Furthermore, as stated by Healy (2005: 109), the application of this view conveys an understanding of the competence of the social workers associated with women coalition programs and organizations to meet the increasing request from funding representation for cost-effective and responsible services.

Implicit in the problem solving is the idea of a task centered procedure. The approach aids practitioners in their intention to magnify clarification about the target and the process of intervention between social workers and service users. Moreover, the assignment centered practice is focused on permitting customers to make small and significant changes in their lives by restricting the number of problems. By doing so, it endeavors to address client’s problems in restricted and empirical terms. The use of a task centered method in the study is envisaged to shed light on the reintegration programs by shelters’ visions of both the women’s slaved returnees and the service providers.

Moreover, it is worth mentioning that the problem-solving approach accented the participation of service users in deciding practice goals, procedures and consequences. The approach is, therefore, constant with core social work values of respect and self-determination (Healy 2005: 151-2). The underlying idea is to empower service users to address the problems they face in their daily lives without ongoing support from social service agencies. Given this, the use of the problem-solving approach in this study may not
only contribute to exploring the social practices and their effectiveness but also to understanding the strategies for communicating the experiences of the social work practice with other stakeholders, particularly those using and funding services.

2.4. **Strengths perspective**

The request of the problem-solving approach in this study is later completed by the use of strengths perspective. The strength approach mostly centers on the positions and capabilities of service users (Saleebey 2006: 210). It is committed to permitting individuals and communities to be effective, and work towards their hopes for the future, rather than dwelling on the problems of the past (Saleebey 2006:198, Healy 2005: 112). This approach, therefore, requires practitioners to discuss a hopeful trend towards the individuals and associations with whom they work.

To be more precise the strengths perspective is focused on the capabilities and assets of service users and their communities. An essence of this approach is perhaps its recognition of the power of optimism, on the part of both service worker and service users, for achieving significant improvements in the quality of service users’ lives. As it was stated by Paulo Freire (1973), the dialogue between service providers and users is central to this perspective. Through a dialogue, both groups overcome barriers of mistrust and attempt to heal the rift among themselves, others and institutions (Osma 2013: 23).

Saleebey (2006: 202) mentions that strength perspective is powerfully lined up with resolution focused and empowerment methods. From this point the use of strength perspective is also important in the study to address how the slaved women returnees are empowered and reintegrated into the society.

To summarize, the empowerment strategies consist of mostly problem solving and strength landscapes, and are related in the analysis of how the interest and ability of the trafficked returnees are increased via interpositions of social work representations namely stakeholders.

3. **Methodology**

Since this study is intended to prospect the reintegration experience and understanding of Iraqi women slaved returnees, it can consequently be contended that the study is within the domain of interpretive pattern. Interpretive studies attempt to show the statement of people and their actions in narrative or expressive ways by giving situations to the experience of people (Merriam 2009: 88). Based on the above mentioned, this study also strives to describe how the Iraqi slaved returnees have experienced their reintegration by conducting interviews with them and other key persons. It is worth mentioning that the interviews have been further supported by the review of documents, reports and previous studies on research background and fieldwork in Iraq. This research consists of information based on observations, individual interviews and focus group discussions with predominantly women survivors. This research starts by explaining true narratives and
determines why sharing true narratives is important for women who have been hurt. In-depth, structured interviews were conducted with participants of the Ezidis, Christian women survivors, observers of their situation, before arriving to Germany and Austria, as well as refugee stakeholders, and psychologist.

Sampling occurred in two phases. First, interviewees were selected through purposive sampling, based on their expertise and close relationship to the participants and refugees stakeholders in Austria and Germany. These were identified through the preliminary policy and a document review. The primary source of information for relevant stakeholders in most cities was the city website, where information on the institutional and organizational structure could be found to various extents for each of the cases. Second, snowball sampling was used as each respondent was asked to indicate one or more relevant person(s) for further contact. At first, three types of stakeholders especially focusing on women empowerment in Austria as well as in Germany were identified. Information was gathered through desk research and consultations. The languages of the primary and secondary data were German, English, Arabic, and Kurdish. For the purpose of the report, interviews, stakeholder consultations, and academic research have been translated into English.

The progress of the study consulted stakeholders felt the most important areas to examine in relation to women refugee integration were health, education, empowerment, housing and social integration; these five areas, therefore formed the themes for the stakeholder dialogue. To rise comprehension of condition of integration service in application, the project invited stakeholders with recognized experience of integration in their relative area to take part in central point of discussions on the identified themes. They were service providers, policy makers, NGO workers, and volunteers. For example, stakeholders for the health meeting included psychologists, painting therapy pedagogics, and therapeutic handworkers. Participants at the focus meeting on empowerment included teachers, girls’ centrum, and the self-organized women migrant counseling. A full list of stakeholders who participated in the focus discussions is provided in the Annex. All meetings were structured around questions on refugee-specific obstacles and facilitators to refugee integration, and examples of policies and practices the participants wanted to highlight. The meetings also provided an opportunity to discuss issues that had come up during the interviews for the study, through group interviews and individual interviews allowed to see trends to emerge and usefully highlight experiences in relation to refugee integration. Group interviews were preferred because they opened up the possibility for participants to share and compare experiences with each other.

3.1. Analysis

Merriam (2009: 216-17) states that data analysis in a qualitative study is deliberated to supply an answer to the particular research question(s). This study has applied the data analysis approaches anchored in the qualitative paradigm. Generally speaking, qualitative data analysis is a proceeding of searching samples and relationships in the data by contrasting individuals’ stories and experiences. In fact, data analysis is the way of making
sense out of data and requires consolidation, reduction and interpretation of what people had said and what the researcher saw and read. Meaning and understanding constitute the findings of the study. As stated earlier, thematic analysis and interpretation have been employed in this study. The data analysis followed the bottom-up approach starting from primary data and then breaking them into units of practical meaning that led to emergence of themes. Critical analysis and a discussion of these categorized themes helped to make comparisons and identify contrasts among the women. In addition a set of theoretical ideas were also used while analyzing the raw data.

3.2. Ethics

The deliberation of research ethics is important as it is in agreement with the matters of research participants’ rights and health along with the researcher’s commitment to the themes. It is imperative to be perceptive and be aware that the women chosen for the study must retain anonymity and protection, and extend confidentiality. In addition, for their own safety, the interviewees were given the opportunity to choose whether to participate in the interview or not, and whether to use the city and name of the shelters they are in.

One has also to consider the impact of discussing and revisiting these issues, as they have led to the feelings of helplessness, low self-esteem, stigma and painful memories. At the outset of the interviews the women were also assured that the information provided by them will only be used for the purpose of the study and will be completely confidential in order to avoid any negative impact on their daily life or in the future.

I should emphasize that interviewing the women and getting inside the shelters presents a huge difficulty; the interviewees were suspicious and refuse to answer questions if they were not familiar with the interviewer. Fortunately, some of them knew me as I knew their families in Iraq and this made my work slightly easier. On the other hand, it was much more difficult obtaining information from the social workers and stakeholders of the shelters. Because of security issues and protection for the women, they hesitated to share information with anyone.

The women bear the responsibility of holding their families together under situations of insecurity. Traumatic events that are dangerous and symbolized by their extreme or sudden force typically cause fear, anxiety, and withdrawal. Working with survivors of trafficking was a humbling and interesting experience, but it was also psychologically very demanding because of the sensitive nature of the issues involved. I had to be mentally prepared before talking with the survivors, so that I could act in the appropriate manner, and create a comfortable and trusting interaction with them. At first, I introduced myself and described the purpose of my visit – why I would like to talk to them and for which purposes I would use the information.
4. How Post Traumatic Stress Disorder impacts integration

Repeated acts of physical, mental, and sexual violence and exploitation have significant repercussions on the mental health of women and children involved in sex slavery. For instance, sexual slavery is a type of trafficking that has recognized by UN trafficking protocol (Kane 2013: 116), and it remarked that slavery is just one of several possible consequences of trafficking. Experts on sex trafficking recognize that victims suffer from a wide range of psychological and emotional problems comprising: Chatterjee et al 2006: 169-171 identifies impatience, distemper, violent, lack of adaptation, distrust towards others, lack of self-confidence, emotional instability, depression, stress, feelings of isolation, hopelessness for the future, embarrassment, loss of virginity, negative attitudes, withdrawal, post-traumatic stress disorder, and self-mutilation. Jayasree mentions that forty percent of the sex workers suffered from depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), mood disorders, and schizophrenia. It was also common for sex workers to attempt suicide and engage in intentional self-harm by cutting their veins, taking poison, and burning themselves (Jayashree 2004: 61).

Women sex slaves take part in widespread slavery, are unable to protect themselves, trafficking victims mostly comply with whatever they are asked to do so as to keep themselves alive, as disobeying would mean allowing the perpetrator to take actions and inflict harm on the victims in order to maintain actual and psychological control over them. These actions destroy the mental strength of victims and make them susceptible to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This report will explain the issues of PTSD as a possible mental health condition relevant to victims of human trafficking. Trauma is described as a situation, which involves intimidation and threatens one’s sense of welfare and safety, as either a single or repeating event which may or may not including physical injury. Generally, it interferes with the ability of an individual to cope and manage the feelings and ideas connected to the negative experience and the emotions emanating from it.

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV-TR, a traumatic event is one that involves “actual or threatened death or serious injury, response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror” (American Psychiatric Association 2005: 218–219 cited in LuGris 2013: 232). A wide variety of events can be characterized as traumatic. Examples include naturally occurring or human made catastrophic events such as dangerous storms and war, or interpersonal violence such as domestic violence, rape, and emotional or physical abuse. Victims of trafficking are among these individuals whose experience of captivity and threats of harm often leaves them vulnerable to developing PTSD.

Particularly vulnerable to PTSD are trafficking victims that have experienced severe physical and sexual assaults. Given that 70 percent of trafficking victims are trafficked for sexual exploitation and sexual assault such an experience is by nature a traumatic experience which is most likely to lead victims to develop PTSD. Furthermore, 80 percent of trafficking victims

3 [http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/protocolslavery.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/protocolslavery.pdf)
are women and girls. Research suggests that women are more susceptible to developing PTSD than men (Seedat et al. 2005: 411) and that PTSD symptoms last longer in women than in men (Breslau et al. 1998: 626).

The second criterion associated with PTSD diagnosis includes a persistent and distressing re-experiencing of the traumatic event through intrusive images, thoughts, or perceptions in the form of dreams, illusions, hallucinations, flashbacks, and physiological reactions to trauma. The third criterion consists of symptoms that include avoidance, numbing, and selective amnesia of aspects related to the trauma. Avoidance can also manifest in a significantly decreased interest or participation in activities, detachment and estrangement, restricted range of feelings, and a feeling of a restrictive coming future.

The fourth criterion, generally observed in individuals with anxiety disorders, includes hyper excitement such as difficulty falling or staying asleep, irritability or angry outbursts.

**Psychological trauma**

Armed disputes traumatize fighters and citizens on an everyday basis and sometimes for the rest of their lives, after the war has ended. Many studies on the psychology of refugees expresses that war and violence have a long lasting deep effect on the psyche of the inhabitants and ex combatants. People’s responses differ according to their own personalities, the levels and types of violence they experienced, and their cultural interpretations of the conflict. And yet it is increasingly clear that if left untreated, the psychological impact of war can severely diminish the quality of life and even threaten a whole society. War-affected populations suffer high rates of anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorders. Those who have been tortured may require intensive therapy in order to carry on with their lives. Refugees who leave their communities and countries also experience what one specialist calls cultural deprivation, a sorrow and longing for home, language or historical conventions. Those who are granted asylum in rich countries with very different cultures from their own, experience social isolation and high levels of depression.

5. **Research findings**

5.1. **Stakeholder and refugee consultations**

In depth interviews have also been valuable to comprehend the effectiveness of rehabilitation/reintegration programs provided by the refugee stakeholders. The successful reintegration of victims of slavery depends on a wide range of factors and situations, including the person’s individual profile, the environment into which she is to reintegrate and the different support mechanisms for reintegration in the host countries.

Again, in this context it is important to consider the role the state, civil society and local communities play in this process. In this section, special attention will be paid to factors influencing reintegration: Shelters, provision of psychological therapy, counseling, painting therapy, hand therapy, music therapy, yoga therapy and swing.
Meeting with social services is a part of adjusting to a new life. The shelters offer women counseling, social housing, benefits, medical care and other integration services. Women meet in groups to speak with social workers about their experiences and ask for guidance on an everyday life in new countries. They receive shelter, basic livelihood needs, and therapy options. Through repatriation a woman places herself under the protection of the state, this requires that she benefits from a legal status in the host country. When repatriation takes place, a woman recovers her citizenship and the rights inherent and responsibilities attached to that status. As a citizen, she should have the same full recognition of her rights, as other nationals do. This recognition encompasses political, social, cultural and economic rights, such as the rights to freedom of movement, freedom of expression, food, housing, education, property, work and health. The effective re-establishment of national protection relies on the attitudes and efforts of state authorities as well as those of the refugee herself.

Stakeholders interpret social integration as being about the processes of everyday life, human relations and feelings of belonging. They agreed that the responsibility to improve integration is shared by the Government, the municipalities, the private sector, the civil sector and individuals. Regarding the responsibility of the individual, they suggested that refugees could contribute to social integration through their choice of residence in country and learning the language, and also through their efforts to find a job and their level of engagement with society.

What makes them feel integrated is to have lived in Germany and Austria, and have contact with native people, and as social workers confirm that the host people are willing to help refugee with different activities. Thus, it feels like home. Knowing the language also contributes to their feelings of integration. A language training is developed with German courses for migrants. This enables trainees to acquire basic skills in the language of the host country and to learn the psychological follow-up is available on an individual basis and through support groups.

Stakeholders providing this service work with cultural mediators and psychologists who speak the women’s mother tongues. However, this specialized service is not readily available and locally based psychologists are reticent to give therapy due to the language barriers.

The orientation courses also provide information on the host society: its culture, history, geography, labor market, and its political and economic make-up. They are said to be extremely useful in that they immediately give migrants an idea of the country in which they live and provide essential information on access to services. Some organizations have special space only for women and girls and men are not allowed to attend, thus making it easier for women to attend this space. As an association for women and girls activity stated:

“We provide save spaces where women find place and time to connect with each other. So far they are able to build up networks in country, discover new places on their own, get mobility and self-conscious and practice their German. We also focus on activities that make it easy to access and to connect. For example, we offer several
arts and crafts activities. The women can focus on their strengths or experience success in exchanging knowledge and learning new things.”

Another organization mentioned how sometimes it was hard for victims to open up and talk about violence perpetrated on them:

“We provide women counseling and therapy, legal advice, social counseling, and sometimes it takes years for people to open up and talk about stories that happened to them, this women center is only for women, and a family feels safe to send girls there. They are active with learning aid, meeting point, workshop, playing and chilling, reading books, excursions, festivals and events, health advice, individual advice, social consulting, health advice, building and job advice, sexual advice, mediation and accompaniment to social institutions violence happened to them.”

According to hand working therapy therapists and teachers, hand working teaching environments can help women to concentrate and forget about the past for a while. Feeling of sadness sometimes overwhelms students. Their emotions make it difficult to concentrate and complete their studies. Stakeholders mentioned that it was not fair to bring women and leave them alone without help: “women aren’t accustomed to live with rules, we teach them to be self-confident and independent. They did not go outside alone, we helped them to do the shopping, and showed them where to go to a shop. It isn’t fair to bring women and not to help them, they do not have a normal life here too”. The level of interaction between women and their children varies from one individual to another and their specific circumstances and it depends to their traumatize situation; some women prefer staying at home rather than picking the children up from schools or engage with them in some activities, they have a passive attitude. Some are so traumatized that they are totally removed from their children, they would prefer to stay in their rooms, isolated and with no communication with the outside world. The other aspect of the problem concerns women who are very aggressive toward their children. This manifests through shouting and lack of tolerance for a child’s normal behavior.

First, when the victims arrive they have poor health, and shelters deal with the problem and they help them to improve their health. Then it is important to teach them German, assure them repeatedly that this is a safe place for them and that they should not fear, nonetheless, they often talk about their fear and what happened to them and express their problems. It becomes difficult to push them to learn German while they are in such a traumatized state of mind. They talk about their experiences; the amount of days without sunshine, eating dry bread, losing their homes, and family properties. They have nothing in the new country and although they get a therapy, as they are special refugees, more often they feel they have no real life purpose, no work or career and they have little knowledge of a language. It is difficult that they can show improvement if in some ways they are still affected by IS.

Some volunteers have engaged with refugee children by organizing football games, so that they can interact with other German or Austrian children. More voluntary engagement is
needed so that more activities could be introduced. A painting therapy has proved to be very helpful for some women and they accept it, while others do not. Illiteracy is one of the main problems. Women do pedagogic painting which helps them to focus on the activity and helps them to stop thinking about IS at least for some time. They like and they prefer being involved in what they perceive as useful activities rather than fun activities, this is more as a result of their cultural beliefs. They resist participating in and do not accept talking based therapy, which does not involve giving them medications. While they welcome therapies like weaving wool.

There are many issues when it comes to dealing with young children who have been abused by IS. Because of a language barrier any therapy is carried out through a translator, but this does not seem to be suitable and helpful for them. They are constantly scared and feel insecure as they have been separated from their mothers by force and taken in captivity. In some small cities in Baden-Wurttemberg where these shelters are located there are not enough schools to send the children to, but also the teachers are not equipped to deal with such children. The hospitals lack female doctors and at times women refugees have to travel 20 minutes to the city to have access to female doctors. Although the city is safe, it does not provide the culturally appropriate services and support for women and young girls. There are plenty of volunteers who come to the shelters to teach women different things, such as preparing German food, assisting in looking after children on a daily basis, helping women to do homework after their classes where they learn German, gather women to drink tea together, organize dancing group, they also go to parks and organize various activities for children.

Often the children are engaged in watching videos depicting IS activities; through this they try to understand why they were abused, they try to identify those that abused them and in general they look at the faces in search of something, to find answers. Some of these victims are stronger than others, although they suffer, they have power to deal with it, while for others it becomes a big problem and it makes it difficult to plan their life. Some women have also the tendency of talking about traumatic experiences in front of children what makes recovery difficult. Obviously, there are conflicts and misunderstandings amongst women in the shelter, there are fights regarding cleaning duties and similar other chores, and there is jealousy among those who have husbands and those who do not have. Social workers have various attitudes towards the women inside the shelters; they recognize that some women will get to the point of returning back to Iraq, in situations where, they cannot be live with their family here, they are unable to adopt to the new society.

5.2. Post-migration health factors - current situation of women after exile - breakdown of family

Language studies support that a common problem in the integration process among refugees is lost documentary evidence of previous education, training and professional experience. As a majority of women are illiterate, they have to start with the basics by learning the alphabet. Stakeholders noted that the most common problem when they first
arrived was doing the shopping, going to a doctor, or doing simple daily activities of the host country. Based on stakeholders’ experiences, when refugees have personal problems such as having family members in captivity, lost or stuck in Kurdistan, it is harder for them to focus on education and their primary focus is to overcome these difficulties by trying to find news, access or reunification with their family.

As discussed in the section on Health and Refugee Integration, many refugees also suffer from PTSD symptoms. For this reason, it is difficult for them to concentrate on any type of education. It is impossible to quantify how the factors of health and family reunification affect the education outcome, but the consulted stakeholders felt that these factors are very real problems that affect most refugees. The literature review highlights some effects of current policies and practice in the area of family reunification. As one social worker mentioned:

“The whole family has refugee status, once the women and children arrive, but they are separated from their husbands or fathers, who are trying to be reunited with them either legally or illegally arriving to Europe. With all these issues they find it difficult to take courses or start learning something new.”

Several women expressed confusion and ambivalence about the existence of God, while others described God as cruel, hostile, angry, and filled with revenge. Although two women felt the presence of God in their lives as they were going through the trauma and one entered a convent, they were the exceptions. Most of the women suffered spiritual damage, but still most of them believe in their religion, and they are trying to follow their customs and rituals, as they ban children taking a shower or going to a swimming pool on Wednesday, as Wednesday is a holy day for Ezidis. Among Muslim women religion calms them down. Providing the place for religious practice for minorities is one of the important issues which should be considered by the government, especially for those refugees who have a high traumatic situation after the war.

Both women and children who are separated from their husbands and fathers are mainly concerned with finding a way of bringing them to Europe and being reunited. This is of more priority to them than going for a therapy and opening up about their traumas. They do not believe a therapy may help them to solve this problem. Although the social workers in the shelters are there to assist them with their daily problems, they are powerless to assist them with bigger issues such as family separation or reunification. Women express that for them it is difficult to look after their children alone without their men.

Life for women in diaspora can be doubly painful as they struggle with the material and spiritual insecurities of exile, with the demands of a family and work, and with the claims of old and new patriarchies. Despite these hardships, they may refuse the option of a return when it appears, especially when the terms are dictated by men. At the same time, women in diaspora remain attached to and empowered by a ‘home’ culture and a tradition-selectively, fundamental values of a propriety and religion, speech and social patterns, food, body, and dress protocols are preserved and adapted in a network of ongoing connections.
outside the host country (Clifford 1994: 314). Displacement tends to alter the structure of families and households and to change gender roles. Adult males often become separated from the family as they are abducted or stay behind to maintain land, or in captivity of IS, as in conflict situations men tend to serve or are suspected to be serving as combatants.

Displacement has both good and bad impact on women and they deal with it in stages. Upon their first arrival in shelters, women are more likely to be emotional and crying a lot as they feel overwhelmed by the new country which is foreign to them, the different language, they perceive the host people, the new culture and tradition as strange. They feel lost from their homeland and their families. After a few weeks, they start accepting and slowly start adopting to their new home, but Iraq is still in their minds, and they are convinced that going back home is better. However, this notion of Iraq - which for many holds their families – as being better is immediately replaced by realizing that in reality they do not have a home or a land to go to, as this has been taken over by IS and home is now full of enemies who forced them to flee. Thus, it is hard for them to process displacement and put it in the right perspective.

When I asked one woman why she did not attend courses provided by the shelters she told me her story:

“I was captured and I suffered the worst types of crimes and sexual enslavement because I was a Christian and I have a cross tattooed on my hand. I was in captivity with another Christian captive called (A) who also suffered the worst kinds of sexual violence, she was called Mama by (K, M, A) because she was 60 years old. While in captivity I was beaten and violently tortured, IS combatants pushed me downstairs, pulled my hair and threw me on the floor in a room where I met another Ezidi girl on the other side of the room. Two men wearing traditional outfits from maybe India, Afghanistan or Pakistani entered the room and violently raped me and the Ezidi girl at the same time and in the same room, in the ways that are far from even being described as animalistic.”

K, M, A, explained that in one night 8 people assaulted her violently, and they were calling this violence ‘marriage’, as she was being married to each man waiting in the queue to continue with the violence and a savage rape. She kept living like this for 2 months, until she was found by her neighbor who had joined IS, and he managed to get her out of captivity by paying a large amount of money; four million in gold and in addition two and a half million Iraqi dinar. That was the price for her freedom. She said she could not forget her past: “I cannot forget, IS took my daughter from me and hit her very strongly as well as in front of me”.

H.N, told me how sad she was about the loss of her children, seven members of her family were killed by IS and 12 members are in captivity:

“If my children were with me we would be happy. They (stakeholders) help us a lot. But my three daughters are still in Iraq. You’re talking about how the German language is difficult. I have no idea why you keep on talking about the language and Germans. Home
is more comfortable than this camp, a person is happy with a mom and a dad. Women lost their properties, and the biggest of their problems is losing their families.”

Women and children are more likely to be displaced by armed conflicts; women bear the burden of maintaining their families in situations of insecurity. The situation of Christian women is quite better than the one of the Ezidis, as their education in Iraq helps them in the integration process. More often Christians are abused and hurt less than the Ezidi because, according to IS ideology, they could pay Jazi (a ransom) and get their freedom.

On the other hand, the situation of Shia (Shabak, Turkman) women is much more difficult, only few of them could come to Germany, and those who have arrived, feel lonely and isolated as they associate only with fellow Shias, and they do not mix with Christians or Ezidis. Later, as it was explained by Christian women, they do not have a problem with each other and they socialize, but they do not have any contact with Muslims.

5.3. Psychological disorders

A study by Roe (1992: 1-8) disclosed that women who experienced trauma suffer from psychological irregularity with stress disorder. Women are petrified by their participation in a war as victims and this makes them susceptible to PTSD. The traumatic experiences which are stressful include rape, forced conversion to Islam, forced marriage, being trafficked and enslaved and also inflict injuries, which cause considerable scarring throughout their lifetime. Many people suffer from insomnia; they still carry with them the fear from their captivity and their relive sleepless nights due to various reasons and individual traumas.

Because of their exposure to the high-war zone, most women inhabit traumatic stress. Many women obtain coaching in various skills during displacement in order to be able to come back to their lives. The major difficulty for women in diaspora is a psychological problem and trauma, grief and depression. They feel lost; they are unable to relax because their mind dwells in the past. M.A told me that her daughter and two of her sons were still in captivity. She had a heart attack when she was in captivity, and she has suffered from very bad headaches ever since, and this is what she told me:

“I have been to Germany for a year. Every week a psychologist comes. We also have a handicraft course. Two weeks ago, I saw my son who was slaughtered by IS, and I cried and screamed for help. I opened my eyes and saw I was in mental hospital.”

According to a psychologist, she has been here for a year and her mental health has got worse. This happens because she has more free time to think about the past, and she keeps on reliving what happened to her. They always relive stories from the time of their captivity, and they cannot learn German as they are too traumatized to learn. They remember for how many days they did not see the sun, ate dry bread, they lost properties and families.

Some refugee camps provide them with different courses such as swimming or handicraft. However, the situation of Ezidi women is different from that of other refugees. Because of their culture, they do not like having fun or taking part in any entertainment, and they prefer
taking part in other activities they consider to be useful e.g. weaving. They are provided with a handicraft therapy that helps them to focus on something else and forget the past, at least for a little while. Their therapy is based only on talking and not taking a medicine, but they do not recognize and accept a talking therapy without taking some medication. However, after approximately a year of their arrival to a safe place, they realize that they do indeed need to talk through their issues with a psychologist and they seek help.

5.4. **Never-ending fear**

Traumatic events are dangerous, overwhelming and sudden. They are characterized by their excessive or abrupt force; this is a representative reason of fear, anxiety, withdrawal and avoidance.

Ezidi women still have fear of IS and they take this fear with them into the new society. They prefer staying in a camp or a shelter because they are afraid that when they go out they may be killed by IS. Fear of Muslims and especially fear of the faces of IS soldiers, is always with them. It is in their dreams and in their everyday life. They cannot forget; as M.N told me, one of her daughters does not go school because IS captured her on the way to school in Iraq, and now she is in Germany but she is still afraid and does not want to go to school.

She said:

“*We are afraid of what is happening in Germany because of IS. At the beginning we were happy in Germany, but now IS is also here. We are not happy. IS combatants have come here and they live in the same country and the same city. I live with people from the same Muslim region from Raqqah in Syria and I saw how they hurt us. Muslims in Raqqah had connections with IS. People who raped us are in the same building. We were in Syria, and they sold us for little money. We cannot trust Arab people in Germany and I am really afraid of IS in Germany. Germany is good, but the place is also full of Arab people.*”

The expectations of the host community and those of the new arrivals play a major role in their adaptation process to the environment. Unattainable and unrealistic expectations result in frustration. It is important to be aware and have realistic expectations of what a person might envisage in a new community, the host community may also have unrealistic anticipation of the arrival, which impacts on their survival (Brydon 1989: 125ff.). Another woman mentioned she was in grief without her family; in fact she has been wearing a dark scarf around her head which signifies grieving for the loss of someone close.

She said:

“*We want all of our people to come back from IS to us. I don’t want to open any book, I always remember the past, and I am not interested in any activity because my mind is with my sister who is in captivity. I know what they do with her. I like Germany. When I see Arab Muslim people I am afraid. Because I remember IS. I do not go to any course; I am so tired of attending the courses.*”
Goldstein describes the factors of PTSD as follows:

“Following exposure to an extreme traumatic stress or involving direct personal experience of actual threatened death or serious injury, or other threat to one’s physical integrity, the common denominator of traumatic experiences is a feeling of intense fear, helplessness, and loss of control and threat of total destruction. Experiences in which a survivor actively participated in killing or committing atrocities are especially traumatic when such participation has no value or meaning” (Goldstein 2001: 260).

Another woman mentioned:

We are afraid and we remember IS. When an IS attack happened in Germany it scared us. We cannot trust Arab people in Germany, we lived together in Sinjar for many years, and they killed us. They were cruel and they hurt us very much. We do not trust Muslim people anymore.

5.5. Obstacles for integration

The results indicate that although support services have growing awareness of the specific issues which are faced by immigrated crime victims and are developing more appropriate responses to these needs, there are still areas that need to be addressed such as language barriers and issues arising from cultural differences. Coming back or staying in Germany is one of the important topics after one year in Germany. Some women like to go back after two years to Iraq but they stay because of their children, but how they can stay if they do not understand German language, and their husband is in Iraq now and children are in IS hands as one of them said:

“Germany is good, but all our relatives are not here. Some of them are imprisoned by IS. We don’t have anything here because some of us are here and the others are in Iraq. When we are in Iraq with our family and husbands and our relatives our lives would better than it is now. We don’t like to go to European countries. We are all one family and we lived with each other in one place or house in Iraq before. If our family and relatives were here we would be happy. We don’t have any work here we just do housework and when our children go to school we do what they need to help them. We don’t do anything.”

6. Recommendation to shelters and government

One of the most important difficulties faced by women inside the shelters is witnessing the situation of other women living next to them in the next room; when one of them is crying, it is heard by everyone down the corridor or within the camp, and this greatly impacts on everyone in the vicinity. Women are fed up with being told what to do, while being in IS captivity they were also told what to do, now in the shelters, the security people and social workers are telling them what to do and instruct them on the rules how to follow pertinent to the new country. They would like to have their own apartments, their own privacy and
freedom within their own home. They complain about their living arrangements, they wish to have more privacy especially younger women, they would like to live independently and separately from older women, who they think put cultural pressure on them or treat them badly, they are afraid of them. As one young girl mentioned she would like to have a boyfriend or a husband, but she feels she cannot because of pressure and fear of her community. Older women tend to judge the younger; they even judge the way they dress or for looking pretty.

Women should learn to take care of their children and to bring them up by themselves if necessary without relying on fathers, they must reclaim their power and develop their own strength. Women who were raped should not wait to be married in order to get their power, or to honor their family, especially in case of the Ezidis, who feel isolated inside the camps, and some women said: “We are afraid to go outside, here it is not safe”.

Stakeholders should provide more activities that would prompt them and encourage them to go outside of the camp. It is necessary to organize sessions in which they are taught and encouraged to interact and face Muslims, and make them understand that not all Muslims are part of IS and that many Arab women have experienced and have been subjected to the same cruelty that the Ezidis have experienced.

Most of the Ezidis and Muslim do not like each other. This is due to their history of genocide done by Muslims and is raised by violence caused by IS, as genocide and rape inflicted on them was carried out by Muslims. However, it is important to teach them that the concept of religion in Germany and Austria is different from what they know, and that Islam and other religions can exist side by side peacefully without worrying about Islam. Social workers have reported the importance of religion for the women in the shelters, in fact one of the first questions that refugee women ask other refugee women is whether they are Muslims or not, and whether they are Shia or Sunni. A workshop is needed to socialize them with Muslims and other Religious groups.

Children need to attend regular kindergartens or schools; in this way, the mothers can find time for them and become involved in activities and have moments to rest. They face several cultural differences, such as not knowing how to behave and discipline their children. This is traditionally done by their husbands, as men of the family have the power to discipline and influence the behavior of their children. To address such issues, more workshops and training is required, to help educate women on how to care for their children, how to behave and what kind of discipline is acceptable. Alongside this, more workshops which could both empower women and help them build self-confidence and self-esteem are

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4 Ezidis were persecuted in his home country because his beliefs were considered heretical by the Muslim majority. This resulted in a process of defining Ezidis by Western scholars and administrators. It is clear that the perception in the Islamic Sharia of the Ezidis as heretics or devil Worshippers has had an important influence in shaping corporate memory. After missionary activities seeking to convert them forcibly to Islam, the Yeizidis have become a closed society with the sole aim of protecting their own culture. (AMED GO KC, EN (2010): 418, Asatryan andArakelova (2014): 26, Ackerman (2014): 165, Kreybroek (1995): 83-89, spat (2009): 74
needed. An empowerment process should include teaching issues revolving around the issue of human rights, women’s rights, civil rights and civil liberties, and what is most important is that it should be taught how to prevent violence towards women and children through the knowledge of fundamental rights and gender related rights. This can be achieved by working on training, changing attitudes, values and making decisions. You work under this concept to break established preconceptions of what it means to be a victim, how this is perceived, the treatment given and produced effect.

It is worth mentioning that this research is difficult because it not only deals with trafficked women, but also with women who have been raped, and physically abused, women who have lost their families or whose families are still in captivity like one of my subjects that has three daughters in captivity. Therefore, it is difficult to discuss a rehabilitation process without considering underlying persistent issues, relating to families and impact of being sexual slaves.

Having said this, it is useful to think about the future, and to create tools such as vocational trainings, that would lead to employment primarily and not just an end in itself.

Services for vocational training include orientation of public and private training schemes basics on job training and work experience placements, and support in finding employment. Vocational training schemes can build confidence and provide women with the opportunity to learn about the working environment in the host country. Vocational trainings are generally certified courses that help women gain qualifications in a given field. The advantage of vocational training schemes is that they can help trainees meet potential employers. Child care facilities are provided. The courses are generally very flexible and include specific services for women who have family responsibilities. These schemes offer different models of support for women with children, the cost of which is deducted from the person’s income. Services provided for the care of children, orientation to public or private nurseries and supervision of children during holidays. Psychologists are hesitating to give a therapy due to language barriers. In these cases, it may be useful to provide them space for praying and spiritual guidance, and meditation course as some women, especially Ezidis, said they attend church services.

Some of the shelters do not have adequate psychological support as psychologists are available only for one hour, and this is not enough in a place with up to 30 women affected by high intensity trauma. This was the case in one specific shelter where they had an incident of suicide despite the availability of a psychotherapy service. Unfortunately, the woman was highly traumatized. Besides the violence she endured, she still had her children in captivity, she was unable to focus on her life and she was dwelling mainly on the past. Good translators are also needed during psychotherapy sessions.

After visiting the shelters three times I observed that some women were able to cope and manage their situation much better than others. In fact, there is a difference when it comes to a capability of coping among women of different ages; younger women and children are able to learn the language which is very helpful, but they struggle emotionally. Older women
cope with emotional issues much better, but are unable to learn the German language. I noticed that they struggle with adapting or coping. They are depressed and this can be noticed in their faces and their attitudes. Threats of suicide or fainting are quite frequent.

Another important issue amongst younger women is, that although they managed to learn the language and can adapt much faster than older generation, they are also prone to become sexually active without much knowledge on safe sex. Therefore, workshops on sexual health and safe sexual behavior could help them, especially to prevent unwanted pregnancy and other complications. Especially for Ezidi women, not only they are not used to a city life and all its complications, but they come from very close-knit communities, where pregnancy outside a marriage and intermarrying with non-Ezidis is highly unacceptable. Women struggle to learn the German language and it creates further worries in them, as there is an expectation that after some period of time, they should join the workforce and find employment. Finding a job would allow them to look after their family, especially for those who do not have their husbands with them - as they are in the majority. They hope to be reunified with their husbands as soon as possible, but they are left disappointed when after a year after their arrival their husbands from Iraq still cannot join them. This indicates that women arrive and have high expectations of Germany, especially from the social workers in the shelter. They believe that the system will provide them with everything they require and desire, but soon enough they realize this is not the case, and they start having difficulties with the social workers as they start refusing to follow instructions or requests.

Christian and Syrian women are more likely to adopt more quickly to the new society, as they can recognize some similarities, at least as far as the religion is concerned, to their own religion. They are also either more educated or at least they have a good literacy level when compared to their fellow Muslim or Ezidi refugees. These women have also lost their families, their country and experienced traumatic experiences. On my third visit to the shelter I learnt that some of the women had started working outside the shelter, and that it helped them to feel much better. They are occupied with work and they think much less about their problems, they feel their life is being normalized as they have started living among normal people in a normal society; they start earning their own money and they learn German much quicker. In another shelter, some women started selling their handcrafts on Christmas markets; others started cooking their traditional food.

Despite all the challenges they face, they try their best, and they repeat the same sentiment: “It is better for our children to grow up here, but this is not our home, my relatives are all in Iraq.” For some of them, it is premature to talk about integration, as they are still in the grieving stage for family members they have lost, while they continuously worry about these that are in captivity.

For Christians and Syrian women, the level of difficulty they face, as explained above, is reduced when compared to the Ezidis, since the level of violence they have endured is much less than that one of the Ezidis. They are more likely to have their family with them, they are
more likely to be joined by their husbands who arrive to Germany either legally or illegally. Having a family structure or support from someone coming from their immediate family is in most of cases a positive thing for them. It provides them with a sense of mental tranquility which would allow them to focus on learning the language, seeking employment and generally be more active. Although at times having their husbands with them or being reunited with them may create more difficulties for them; women quickly learn to enjoy a certain level of freedom and confidence which may be restricted by their men. The issue of a family planning is one the ones social workers are struggling to teach women, as this is not coherent with their traditional and cultural beliefs. There is a great shortage of child day care centers, as there are many children within the shelters, and the responsibility of looking after the children restricts women from attending activities, learning languages and in general finding time for themselves.

Having a legal status and the possibility to remain in Germany and Austria is a great factor when psychological strength of the women is taken into consideration. If the situation is unsafe and they are afraid of going back to their countries, the mental health remains fragile and irrespective of the support provided by the shelters. Consequently, psychological assistance tends to focus on support of the women during and immediately after the legal process is finalized. Self-esteem and empowerment is not so much a concrete program. It has to do with the way service providers work and with activities developed with the active participation of women that have been victims of trafficking. Work should be carried out with organizations which are service providers during the process of reintegration and with the officials to prevent re-victimization be it through the organizations or the authorities.

During the process of empowerment, survivors become participants to the process and search for solutions which leads them to take charge of and changes in their lives. It is about work in progress, changing attitudes, values and making decisions. In this concept work is about breaking down established preconceptions of what it means to be a victim and how this is perceived. The biggest challenge is facing the possibility that someone who has survived slavery and forced migration may decide, upon returning home, that there are no prospects at home. This is where the empowerment training and women's rights training conducted by the centers play a key role. The same applies to promoting in different activities the recognition of women's rights as citizens, human rights, how to claim and demand these rights and how to defend and respect those rights in their relationship with others. Most organizations do not specifically work on reintegration. It requires detailed knowledge of the countries of origin to be able to work on reintegration. In addition, most survivors indicate that they do not want to go back to their countries. For further project, like the project in Baden-Württemberg, it is crucial to have regularly supervision for social workers as well as providing them with background information on religious minorities and their culture. A good translator especially in talking therapy sessions is also necessary. Social workers and employees need to be experienced not only in working with refugees but on how to deal with victims of human trafficking.
Finally, one of the biggest difficulties is family separation; the government should think about the future of the families who were separated.

The necessity of having regular psychological treatment to prevent committing suicide as women came to Germany to get better treatment and a safe place to stay. It is important to provide job possibilities to prevent thinking about the past. It is obligatory for women to have workshops to inform them about their rights in Germany as this workshop helps them to prevent early marriage. Education is important for women, especially young girls. Family protection helps them to recover instead of treatment that looks at them as victim. Shelters should provide women workshops and facility to find a job. This would help them in two aspects; one, they would not find free time to think about past, second they would earn money and feel useful. As they were hurt in captivity and were sexually abused, a possibility to work would give them power. Refugees, especially women, should be placed in separate apartments with few people. Some of women complaining of using one shower for eight persons or sharing kitchen for four families are a lot.

Finally, this study makes recommendations on how services can become more accessible and appropriate for immigrant victims of crime and slavery and the findings are used to inform academic recommendations for future research.
List of interviews

Interview with sub-branch of religious Endowment organization in Erbil
Interview with Hammorabi, Human right organization, www.hhro
Ministry of Baden-Württemberg
LEFÖ-IBF-Intervention Centre for trafficked women- victim protection facility
Caritas der Erzdiözese Wien,*peppa Mädchenzentrum
Peregrina - self organized women Migrant counseling, Pregrina institute in Wien are active with legal law for refugee
Fremde werde Freunde-Non-profit Organisation in Vienna
Hemayat - care center for torture and war survivors- www.hemayat.org
Visiting camp in Leipzig, Köln, and Vienna, Linz, Innsbruck
Informations und Beratung fürmigrantinnen und Flüchtlingsfrauen –agisra e.V. Köln
info@agisra.org
VisitShelters in Baden-Württemberg
Stadt Ulm - Fachbereich Bildung und Soziales, Gemeinschaftsunterkunft für Flüchtlinge http://www.ulm.de
Team Management Flüchtlingshilfe Special Quota & Bad Cannstatt Caritas Stuttgart eV
refugee assistance,Https://www.zusammen-fuer-fluechtlinge.de/projects/40256
Vorsitzender Eziden Weltweit e. V. www.ezidis.org
Stadt Freiburg-Amt für Migration und Integration, Abteilung III Sozialer Dienst für Flüchtlinge, Freiburg
Stadt Villingen-Leitung Migrationsdienste-Kreisverband Villingen-Schwenningen-www.drk- vs.de
Psychologin-Vinzenz von Paul Hospital-Rottweil
Stadt Stuttgart- Core Team for Youth and Migration-Stuttgart-Vaihingen-http://www.paritaet-bw.de
Stadt Pforzheim-The familycenteris Au-Yezidiwomen in Pforzheim
Stadt Rottweil-Circle asylum Rottweil eV- www.freundeskreis-asyl-rottweil.de
Stadt Schwäbisch-Landratsamt Schwäbisch Hall-Amt für Migration-http://www.LRASHA.de
Stadt Baden-Baden- Sachgebietsleitung / Asyl- und Obdachlosenwesen-Baden-Baden-
www.baden-baden.de
Stadt Heilbronn-Gemeinschaftsunterkunft für Flüchtlinge-www.heilbronn.de
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