

2018-2019 REPORT

**MUNICIPAL UNIT AGAINST
HUMAN TRAFFICKING
(UTEH)**

Barcelona City Council



Contents

01 Introduction	3
02 Presentation of the UTEH service	5
2.1. Mission, vision and values	6
2.1.1. Mission	6
2.1.2. Vision	6
2.1.3. Values	6
2.2. Objectives	6
2.3. Who is it for?	7
2.4. Structure	7
2.4.1. Professionals and disciplines	7
2.4.2. Operation	7
2.4.3. Levels of intervention	8
03 Detection of VHT in BARCELONA	10
3.1. General detection	11
3.2. Specialised detection	13
3.2.1. Common detection indicators	14
04 Evolution of the phenomenon	16
4.1. Identification of VHT	17
4.2. Observations on HT	19
4.3. Profile data of the people supported	20
05 Support and recovery	28
5.1. Family units supported	29
5.2. Interventions	30
5.3. Professional actions	31
5.4. Emergency support	33
5.5. Legal advice and representation service - SJUTEH	34
5.5.1. Free legal representation	36
5.6. Specialised psychological counselling and treatment service	38
5.7. Municipal gender violence shelter system	39
5.7.1. Specialised shelter resource for female VHT	41
5.8. Recovery, empowerment and social and labour market integration of female VHT-PSE	42
06 Quality standards	43
6.1. Interdisciplinary standards	44
6.2. Other items to highlight	46
07 Conclusions	47
7.1. Prevention	48
7.2. Detection	48
7.3. Support	49
7.4. Identification	49
7.5. Recovery	50
08 Challenges for the future	51

01

Introduction

Barcelona City Council has been dealing with human trafficking (HT) for the purpose of sexual exploitation since 2006, when the Agency for a Comprehensive Approach to Sex Work (*Agència per l'Abordatge Integral del Treball Sexual*, ABITS) and the Socio-Educational Support Service (*Servei d'Atenció Socioeducativa*, SAS) were created.

Since 2015, Barcelona City Council has been committed to stepping up the fight against human trafficking in the city. The creation of the **Inter-Institutional Panel against Human Trafficking** (*Taula Interinstitucional contra el Tràfic d'Éssers Humans*) aims to promote more intense and effective inter-institutional coordination between the various social and law enforcement actors involved in the fight against HT. The objective is to analyse and expand the coverage of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, but also other types of trafficking: labour exploitation, servitude, slavery, commission of crimes, forced marriages, organ trafficking, etc.

Due to the work done within the framework of this panel, the Barcelona Circuit against Human Trafficking for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation (*Circuit Barcelona contra el Tràfic d'Éssers Humans amb Fins d'Explotació Sexual*) was developed, leading to the need to set up a specialised unit to deploy the circuit and link it to other circuits such as the circuit against gender violence, to become the leading space in Barcelona for both professionals and the general public.

This initial project led to the founding of the Municipal Unit against Human Trafficking (*Unitat Municipal contra el Tràfic d'Éssers Humans*, UTEH) in October 2016. This pilot project began its journey in tackling human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation (HT-PSE) and took on all the previous work carried out by ABITS in order to clearly differentiate it from sex work and to work on trafficking under the framework of the Barcelona Circuit against HT-PSE.

It is currently a consolidated unit that aims to work in combating trafficking for all purposes. Under organic law, UTEH is located within the Gender Violence Support and Shelter Department of the Directorate for Feminism and LGBTI Affairs and works in coordination with various services and departments of the city council, especially with the Socio-Educational Support Service - Agency for a Comprehensive Approach to Sex Work (SAS- ABITS), the Guàrdia Urbana of Barcelona (GUB), the Barcelona Social Emergencies Centre (*Centre d'Urgències i Emergències Socials de Barcelona*, CUESB), basic social services, health services, the Support, Recovery and Shelter Service (*Servei d'Atenció, Recuperació i Acol·lida*, SARA), the Women's Support and Information Point (*Punt d'Informació i Atenció a les Dones*, PIAD), Child and Adolescent Care Teams (*Equips d'Atenció a la Infància i l'Adolescència*, EAIA), the Support Service for Immigrants, Emigrants and Refugees (*Servei d'Atenció a Immigrants, Emigrants i Refugiats*, SAIER), the Social Insertion Service (*Servei d'Inserció Social*, SIS), and so on.

The Municipal Unit against Human Trafficking (UTEH) continues working on human trafficking from different angles in 2018 and 2019. The main line of action aims to restore the fundamental rights of the survivors of this crime which have been violated, offering comprehensive and specialised support on social, legal and psychological matters, as well as spaces for protection and shelter.

The UTEH provides training and raises awareness on human trafficking (HT), in order to increase the detection of this type of victim by professionals. It continues to coordinate with the rest of the services, administrations and institutions specialised in HT while considerably increasing the resources available for supporting victims in the city.

The main challenges of the past two years have focused on:

- 1. The active restitution of the violated rights of HT victims detected in Barcelona.**
- 2. Further development of training and specialisation of the service.**
- 3. The presentation and promotion of the Municipal Unit to the rest of the network of actors and services.**
- 4. The drafting and publication of Decree S1/D/2019-506 of 27 February from the Mayor's office approving the Protocol of measures for coordination between the different municipal services when faced with situations of human trafficking.**
- 5. The extension of the municipal shelter and protection system, especially in cases of emergency and to provide coverage to male victims of HT.**

02

Presentation of the UTEH service

2.1. Mission, vision and values

2.1.1. Mission

To provide comprehensive biopsychosocial, legal and tailored support to victims or potential victims of the crime of HT in Barcelona, so they can take charge of their own lives.

2.1.2. Vision

To be a specialised, benchmark service in the city of Barcelona, in coordination with other professionals and services that address the fight against HT and support victims in the city.

2.1.3. Values

The main values are:

- > **Respect for dignity**, as an inherent value of people. We work to respect this absolute value, to provide people with the tools that enable them to take charge of their own lives.
- > **Promoting autonomy**. We offer viable and realistic alternatives, in a welcoming and respectful atmosphere, that allows HT survivors to plan their future, by rebuilding their self-esteem, self-confidence and self-respect.
- > **Establishing a bond of trust**. We establish a professional relationship so the people affected can ask for help whenever they need it, without judgement or discrimination, with work on self-empowerment in a supportive environment.

We are committed to providing personalised and interdisciplinary support, which tries to avoid double victimisation, allocating due proportionality according to the reality and needs of the HT survivors.

2.2. Objectives

- A** Guarantee the rights of potential victims of human trafficking, promoting comprehensive support and damage repair.
- B** Coordinate with other specialised actors in the fight against HT.
- C** Promote specialised training and advice for professionals on both general and specific aspects of HT.
- D** Promote public awareness of HT.
- E** Serve as a reference point and observatory of HT in Barcelona.

2.3. Who is it for?

Any potential victim of HT, detected (by markers or indications) or formally identified, as a victim of HT or simply of exploitation, who at some time and for any reason is in Barcelona or who has lived there, or was linked to the city during the process of exploitation.

When the victim is under age, or there are suspicions that she is, whether or not she can prove she is under age, but there are clear indications that she may be, action is taken taking into account the best interests of the child and the provisions of current legislation and in coordination with the competent bodies: the General Directorate of Child Care (*Direcció General d'Atenció a la Infància*, DGAIA), the Juvenile and Immigration Prosecution Service (*Fiscalia de Menors i d'Estrangeria*), and the police forces.

The Unit also provides support for people in the immediate environment of HT victims, mainly dependent children, who are recognised as victims by international and state regulations.

Anyone who presents signs of or is detected or identified as a victim of HT is given support:

- > Whether or not their administrative status is regulated.
- > Whether or not they are linked to the exploitation network (and disengagement is sought).
- > Whether or not they continue to engage in prostitution, begging, or other forms of exploitation.

No police identification or complaint is required to activate the specific resources made available to them by the Directorate for Feminism and LGBTI Affairs.

2.4. Structure

2.4.1. Professionals and disciplines

In 2018 and 2019, various changes were made to the structure of the UTEH that have affected the regularity with which professionals are present at the service. At the end of 2019, the UTEH has 3 professionals from the municipal staff team who are responsible for coordinating and socio-educational support for victims of human trafficking (hereinafter, VHT). It also offers free specialised psychological support and legal advice and representation services, via the organisation SURT.

2.4.2. Operation

The opening hours of the service during this period were as follows:

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9 am - 2 pm	9 am - 3 pm	9 am - 3 pm	9 am - 3 pm	9 am - 2 pm
	4 pm - 6 pm	4 pm - 6 pm	4 pm - 6 pm	

The UTEH offered telephone assistance to survivors and professionals, on the number 677 445 190, during the opening hours of the service.

Outside these hours, the coordination and action protocol has continued to be developed with the **Barcelona Social Emergencies Centre (CUESB)**. Outside the UTEH opening hours, this centre takes on the emergency care of potential victims who may need immediate accommodation, until the UTEH opens the next working day.

2.4.3. Levels of intervention

The UTEH is a second-level service that acts by referral from other professionals or services that make a general or specialized detection of HT. The work methodology of the UTEH focuses on different phases of intervention:

A Indirect intervention

This is carried out by the UTEH and focuses on support and guidance for other network professionals. It is a way of increasing the detection of potential VHT and improving the activation of the municipal protection circuit specialised in VHT. It consists of the following procedures:

- > **Advice.** UTEH works by offering advisory services to the various professionals who carry out the detection of potential VHT. The detected cases are analysed and the theoretical framework of HT is applied to increase the effectiveness of the interventions and to encourage professionals to access updated information.
- > **Additional actions.** When the case requires it, the UTEH conducts interviews or actions in addition to those carried out by the institution or service referring the person, in order to explore the possible situation of HT, to clarify the indicators compatible with a situation of HT and to provide the potential VHT with access to rights. These actions help to establish a link and facilitate supported referrals to the UTEH.
- > **Coordination.** Networking is one of the fundamental pillars of UTEH's work. It coordinates with the various municipal services and with other institutions and services in the network, to avoid secondary victimisation and to facilitate the access of VHTs to the most appropriate services, depending on their situation.

B Direct intervention

The comprehensive support offered by the UTEH is one to one and conducted in person with potential VHTs, when there are sufficient indications of a possible situation of HT.

B.1 UTEH support procedures:

1. Reception at the service: social and legal assessment to approximate the indicators compatible with a situation of HT, assess the situation of risk and activate the urgent resources necessary to protect VHTs effectively (comprehensive health, accommodation, coverage of basic needs, etc.).

2. Investigation: once the protection of the victim is guaranteed, there is a period of investigation to gain more knowledge of the situation of the VHT, to provide the VHT with information on access to rights and to establish an effective link to the service. In this phase, disengagement from the exploitation network is addressed, if necessary, and more about the psychosocial and legal circumstances of the VHT is ascertained.

3. Treatment: once the case has been investigated, an interdisciplinary diagnosis is formulated as a starting point to set up a joint work plan with the VHT, in order to initiate a recovery process.

The comprehensive support offered by the UTEH includes:

- A Social care
- B Legal advice
- C Psychological support and treatment
- D Free legal support and representation
- E Coverage of basic needs
- F Specialised residential shelter
- G Comprehensive health care
- H Social and labour market integration
- I Coordination and referral to other public and private services and resources

The UTEH acts urgently in the following circumstances:

- A** The sudden detection of a victim of HT by one of the actors that are directly involved in HT contexts, which clearly requires the coordination of emergency care, protection or shelter.
- B** The involvement of different police forces (PFs), qualified to detect or identify victims of HT in Barcelona, in the course of investigations directly or indirectly related to HT. The UTEH participates and collaborates in ensuing police operations, offering information and support to the detected or identified VHTs, or providing support at the police headquarters.

03

Detection of VHT in BCN

Detection is understood to be the mechanisms that show a person, of legal or under age, to be a **possible victim** of human trafficking for the purpose of exploitation by means of indicators of suspicion, regardless of whether the person wants to be formally identified or file a complaint.

3.1. General detection

Any professional or citizen can detect an instance of HT. The number of services and institutions that have applied to the UTEH for advice or case management increased in 2018 and 2019. These services work in environments that are not necessarily related to HT:

SERVICE/INSTITUTION THAT REFERS THE CASE TO THE UTEH			
	2017	2018	2019
ABS	0	0	1
Casal dels Infants del Raval	4	0	0
CEPAIM	0	2	1
Red Cross	0	3	5
CSS	0	1	2
EAIA	1	0	1
SURT Foundation	0	1	0
PIAD	0	1	1
SAIER	1	2	5
SARA	2	2	2
SATMI	0	1	0
Mediation service in the public space of Nou Barris	1	0	0
Requested / Not performed	1	1	0
User	0	2	1

It is essential to invest in synergies so that non-specialised services and institutions have a general knowledge of human trafficking and the reality of victims. The UTEH focuses on deconstructing myths and stereotypes about the conditions in which VHTs find themselves. Anyone can be a VHT and can access general services, making requests that are not directly related to the instance of HT. Therefore, any service must have up-to-date information on HT in order to be able to detect potential VHTs who come to the service, and to know about the municipal VHT support and protection circuit so it can be activated as soon as possible.

Effective work was carried out to promote coordination between municipal services in 2018 and 2019, with the publication of Decree S1/D/2019-506 of 27 February from the Mayor's office approving the **Protocol of measures for coordination between the different municipal services when faced with situations of human trafficking**.

The work done with the services of the Directorate of Feminism and LGBTBI Affairs should be noted. They have continued to detect cases and set up a channel of cross-consultation and personalised advice (SARA, PIAD).

The importance of working together with the services and institutions that care for migrants in an international context (Red Cross, SAIER, etc.) should also be noted, as HT is usually related to migration, in the course of which the person may find her/himself under the coercion of human trafficking networks. Finally, a very positive aspect worth noting is the work carried out by the city's basic and specialised social services in detecting HT.

The UTEH has carried out personalised training adapted to each service on HT and detection strategies with many of the actors shown in this list, which has directly translated into an improvement in effective detections.

Lastly, it should be noted that requests have also been received from the victims themselves, who, despite the difficulties they face escaping the pressures of the exploitation network, have found ways to seek advice and support directly from the service, therefore gaining access to it.

3.2. Specialised detection

Various services, institutions and entities have a long tradition of tackling HT, and make specialised detections. Requests for the involvement of the UTEH came from the following services and institutions in 2018 and 2019:

REFERRING SERVICE OR INSTITUTION	2017	2018	2019
APIP-ACAM	1	5	2
APRAM	1	0	1
Betania Burgos	1	0	0
National Police Force	28	7	4
Red Cross (local project)	3	8	5
CUESB	0	8	10
Guàrdia Urbana	10	2	41
ICD	0	1	1
Mossos d'Esquadra	3	1	2
Progetto NAVE - (Network Antitratta per il Veneto)	0	0	1
SAS	48	17	16
SICAR	4	10	8

The SAS (Socio-Educational Support Service) continues to be one of the main detectors and referrers of cases to the UTEH. The volume of cases dealt with by SAS concerning women who present with possible indicators of a situation of HT for the purpose of sexual exploitation (PSE) is very high. The UTEH has not been able to deal with the flow of referrals needed to encourage early detection and support, due to the lack of stability of the UTEH, the small number of staff at our service and because priority has been given to referrals from unspecialised services that do not have much experience in the detection of VHT. This requires the SAS to be very highly specialised, monitoring the processes of potential VHTs who are in situations of great vulnerability. However, in 2018 and 2019, fixed counselling spaces were set up, where knowledge about potential cases of VHT can be shared. A VHT-PSE risk assessment tool has also been set up, facilitating the immediate referral of cases that require immediate protection.

From the data collected, there was a significant decrease in referrals from police forces (PF), especially the National Police Force. One of the causes may be the change in the HT contact persons in the police organisation, which has made it difficult to maintain the coordination and work mechanisms already established. The lack of officers and the difficulties investigating this type of crime by police forces could also cause a fluctuation in the detection and identification of VHTs. It is also important to point out the difficulties

in finding unified identification criteria for VHT, as well as to avoid focusing exclusively on the prosecution of the crime, which occasionally involves the revictimisation of VHTs detected by the UTEH or other specialised services. A meeting was held, led by the Barcelona Immigration Prosecution Service in 2019, aiming to reaffirm the need to restore trust and collaboration between police forces and specialised VHT protection services and institutions in Barcelona, which are an example of good practice. In fact, such services have been replicated in other areas of Catalonia, such as Tarragona and Terres de l'Ebre.

There has been a significant increase in the referrals of potential VHTs by the Guàrdia Urbana of Barcelona. This is due to the application of and compliance with Decree SI/D/2019-506 of 27 February from the Mayor's office, **Protocol of measures for coordination between the different municipal services when faced with situations of human trafficking**, which states: *"In the various police interventions (actions in public spaces, in private spaces, when a complaint is collected, etc.), in the course of duties or upon request, the Guàrdia Urbana must work to detect possible instances of HT. The Human Trafficking and Exploitation Group (Grup de Tràfic i Explotació de Persones, GTEP) must take on the management of the situation as a specialised team and assess whether there is a possible instance of HT or not. The GTEP is the Guàrdia Urbana unit that must be activated by the UTEH"*.

The UTEH has collaborated with the Guàrdia Urbana in police operations and there has been a suspicion of the existence of VHT, especially in the Chinese community. In the course of these operations, the UTEH has provided information on the rights and services available to VHTs in Catalonia. Unfortunately, the people contacted in these interventions, despite presenting evidence compatible with an instance of HT, have not connected to the UTEH and it has not been possible to provide effective protection to VHTs during such interventions.

Of particular note is the collaboration with specialised institutions with a long tradition in the protection of VHTs in Catalonia (Sicar.Cat and APIP-ACAM), with which joint actions have been carried out, resulting in a significant number of referrals. The implemented work plans are well suited to the task at hand, always from the perspective of the victim and avoiding the duplication of actions.

The work carried out by the CUESB is very relevant and is set out in the protocol drawn up jointly by both services. The UTEH gave a training session on HT and the indicators for detecting VHTs to professionals from the service, which has once again resulted in an increase of the detection of potential VHTs and greater numbers accessing our service. This has been possible thanks to working closely, collaborating and supporting each other, thanks to the specialised and professional outlook of each and every worker at the CUESB.

Finally, it should be highlighted that we collaborate with institutions outside the Autonomous Community of Catalonia and even Europe, thanks to the participation of the UTEH in various training and awareness-raising activities in Europe, which have made it possible to set up channels of contact and international aid. The phenomenon of HT is global, even though it has a local impact, and it is essential to build on and expand the ways in which we collaborate with other services and institutions where VHTs have more mobility. This would greatly facilitate VHTs having more effective access to protection services. Therefore, the professionals in the field need to coordinate effectively.

3.2.1. Common detection indicators

Detection indicators are a key tool for the objective detection of HT. They are included in various protocols and the literature on HT, and Barcelona City Council has been using them since the Socio-Educational Support Service (SAS) of the Agency for a Comprehensive Approach to Sex Work (ABITS) tailored the indicators of the World Health Organization¹ into its usual practice. The City Council has been working to tailor this tool since 2013, so it can be used by any professional, regardless of their work environment, to improve their knowledge and detection of HT, specifically for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

¹ World Health Organization, "Ethical and safety recommendations for interviewing trafficked women".

Continuing with the work started in 2017, various working groups were set up in 2018 to discuss and draw up a definitive definition of a list of indicators and measures for the detection of VHT-PSE. Directed by the Avedis Donabedian Institute, the defined tool was validated technically in 2019, resulting in the adaptation of the design of the tool so it could be released and put into use.

04

Evolution of the phenomenon

4.1. Identification of VHT

Identification is understood to be the procedure used by police forces with expertise in HT to recognise victims so they can access their rights as set out in legislation, especially regarding the recovery and reflection period² and the possible regularisation of their administrative situation (in the case of non-EU victims), without this necessarily implying involvement in a police or legal investigation, or filing a complaint.

The process of formally identifying a HT victim is exclusively the competence of the state [security forces and bodies]. However, the identification process is complex and not all victims can or want to go through a formal identification process.

IDENTIFICATIONS OF VHT				
	2017	2018	2019	% 2017-2019*
With HT indicators	43	65	100	132.56%
Formally identified by police forces as victims of HT	35	10	10	-71.43%

* Calculated on the increase in family units supported between 2017 and 2019.

There was a very significant decrease in the number of people supported by the UTEH who were finally identified by one of the competent police forces in 2018 and 2019. Out of 75 new cases attended to by the UTEH in 2018, only 13.33% were formally identified by police, this figure dropping to only 9.10% out of 110 new cases in 2019.

On the one hand, this maybe due to the increase in cases referred to the UTEH, which shows an overall improvement in the detection of potential VHTs by non-police services, and these people are probably not yet in a position to decide if they want to start a formal identification process.

However, it should be noted that the level of evidence required by the police to identify a person as a victim of trafficking hinders access to the protection system. As the ombudsman and GRETA point out in their respective reports, the level required by the Spanish authorities is too high, as it requires “objective evidence”. The regulations state that “reasonable indications” are enough to assume that the person has been trafficked, to be then granted the recovery and reflection period.³

A human rights-based approach requires that a period of recovery and reflection be provided immediately when signs of trafficking are detected, so that the victim can recover and make informed decisions, including whether or not to cooperate with the courts. Therefore, the granting of this period should not depend on her cooperation with the research authorities.

This objective decline is very worrying, when identification, especially for non-EU victims, is the only way to access their rights as set out by law. There is a disparity of criteria in the application of Article 59a of Organic Law 4/2000 of 11 January on the rights and freedoms of foreign nationals in Spain and their social integration [LOEX]. This means that, in some cases, the victim has to be interviewed several times by the police forces and ends up

2 Art. 59a of *Organic Law 4/2000 of 11 January on the rights and freedoms of foreign nationals in Spain and their social integration* [LOEX].

3 Ombudsman report. pp. 161-164. GRETA Report 2013.

being conditioned to finally file a complaint as a way of identification, clearly causing revictimisation.

The identification process is also difficult, especially when:

- > The victim acknowledges being a victim (self-identification), but the following situations occur:
 - > she does not want to be labelled a “victim”,
 - > she does not understand what it means to go through a formal identification,
 - > she is unaware of her rights and, if so,
 - > is afraid of retaliation against herself or her family (here or at home),
 - > she is determined not to go through the identification process and wants to look for other ways to be regularised in the host country,
 - > she does not want to run the risk of disconnecting from the exploitation network because of the risks this could pose,
 - > she distrusts the security forces and the protection system,
 - > she is in a personally and emotionally vulnerable situation that means that she cannot face an identification procedure which could lead to revictimisation,
 - > police forces and bodies are not able to corroborate the facts that would provide objective evidence of HT,
 - > there is a lack of training on the phenomenon of HT for professionals responsible for identifying victims, and especially the profile of VHTs,
 - > she does not want to file a complaint.
 - > Other reasons.
- > The team of professionals objectively determines to offer comprehensive support for a series of indicators showing the existence of a victim situation, but the victim herself is not in a position to immediately self-recognise.

An extreme example of how these can affect and condition the development of the process of a VHT is the **death** of one of the users of the UTEH in 2019. The woman presented many indicators of VHT and she had been observed by both technical teams and police forces. Despite requesting her to be formally identified due to these reasonable indications, the fact that she herself did not expressly state she was a victim made it impossible for her to access her rights. It was also not possible to intervene from a socio-educational perspective in a sufficiently effective way to avoid the serious deterioration of her situation.

Therefore, we consider that the protection and identification system, as it is currently designed, **cannot respond to exceptional or serious cases**, where the coercion and violence to which victims are subjected prevent them from explicitly seeking help.

4.2. HT observatory

The UTEH continues to observe the phenomenon through the cases attended to by the service. VHTs of Nigerian origin continue to be the most prevalent in municipal services. This indicates the existence of Nigerian mafias in our territory who sexually exploit their victims as their main purpose. In 2018, 65 Nigerian women were attended to by the UTEH, and in 2019 there were 69 women. They account for 42.5% and 32.85% of the total cases opened at the UTEH, respectively.

As prominent elements of the HT phenomenon, it has been observed how people exploitation networks have begun to diversify their reasons for exploitation, especially with women, so in addition to sexual exploitation, they include:

- > Begging.
- > Committing crimes.
- > Requesting an asylum application to obtain a temporary residence and work permit and start to work in the formal labour market, but giving the money obtained to the exploitation network in payment of a “debt”.

Therefore, we consider that the main purpose of HT is the economic exploitation of persons, regardless of the purpose of the exploitation.

There has been a significant increase in the number of files on Chinese nationals. There were 6 people in 2017, 10 in 2018 and 40 in 2019, which represents an increase of 300%. In these cases, sufficient evidence has been observed which is compatible with a situation of VHT, mostly in contexts of forced prostitution. However, as indicated above, it has been very difficult to set up a link with our service, firstly due to the cultural and language barrier, and secondly the fear, pressures and debts incurred by VHTs, causing them not to engage with the service, despite it having specialised means of mediation and interpretation.

As we have seen over the past two years, the most extensive *modus operandi* of mafias that exploit people from Eastern countries is the so-called “lover boy” method, where the victim is captured by a man through the fantasy of romantic love. This type of exploitation bears many similarities to the processes of partner violence and implies, for the victim, the existence of an emotional bond that makes it even harder to identify the violence experienced and to separate from the exploiter. This becomes even more difficult if there are dependent children, who are used as a method to coerce the VHT.

Finally, we should note that there has been an increase in cis and trans women of Latin American origin who have come to our service, who are fleeing situations of structural violence in their country of origin in most cases, looking for ways to migrate to Spain. They are unfortunately unaware of the conditions of exploitation and human rights violations in which they will find themselves once they arrive in Barcelona.

It is clear, therefore, that there is a significant disparity in the way networks operate. This disparity of networks and *modus operandi* results in an increase in the number of profiles and nationalities supported by the service and requires a high degree of flexibility and adaptation when we intervene. On the other hand, this has promoted the arrival of new profiles of VHT with other purposes of exploitation, not only sexual.

4.3. Profile data of the people supported

Gender

In terms of gender, the impact of HT on women (whether cis or trans) has been confirmed. They continue to account for the majority of people supported both in 2018 and 2019.

However, there has been a change in trend in terms of support given to men from 2017 (4 men) to 2019 (21 men), an increase of 425%.

The number of trans women has remained stable. All of them have been exploited for sexual purposes.

SEX				
	2017	2018	2019	% 2019*
Cis women	89	133	176	83.80%
Trans women	16	10	13	6.19%
Cis men	4	10	21	10%
Total	109	153	210	

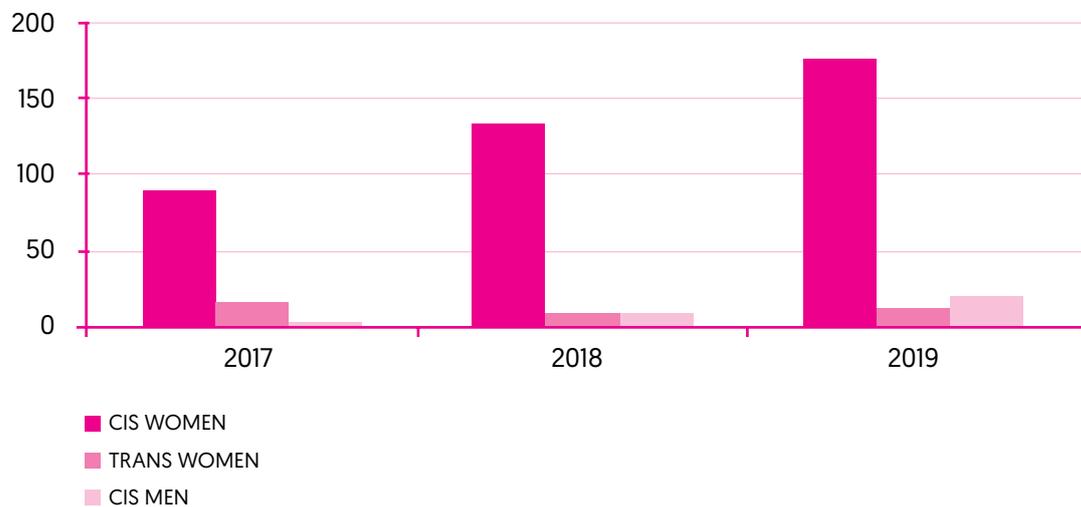
* Calculated from the total number of family units attended to in 2019.

PURPOSE OF EXPLOITATION, MEN AND WOMEN						
	2018			2019		
	women	men	% 2018*	women	men	% 2019*
Sexual	117	4	79.09%	158	3	76.66%
Labour	11	4	9.80%	8	7	7.16%
Begging	1	2	1.96%	0	4	1.90%
Commission of crimes	0	0	0	1	2	1.43%
Organ extraction	0	0	0	2	1	1.43%
Domestic service	3	0	1.96%	2	1	1.43%
Practices similar to slavery	1	0	0.65%	1	0	0.48%
Forced marriage	2	0	1.30%	6	0	2.85%
Others ⁴	8	0	5.24%	11	3	6.66%
Total	143	10	100%	189	21	100%

* Calculated from the total number of family units attended to in 2018 (153).

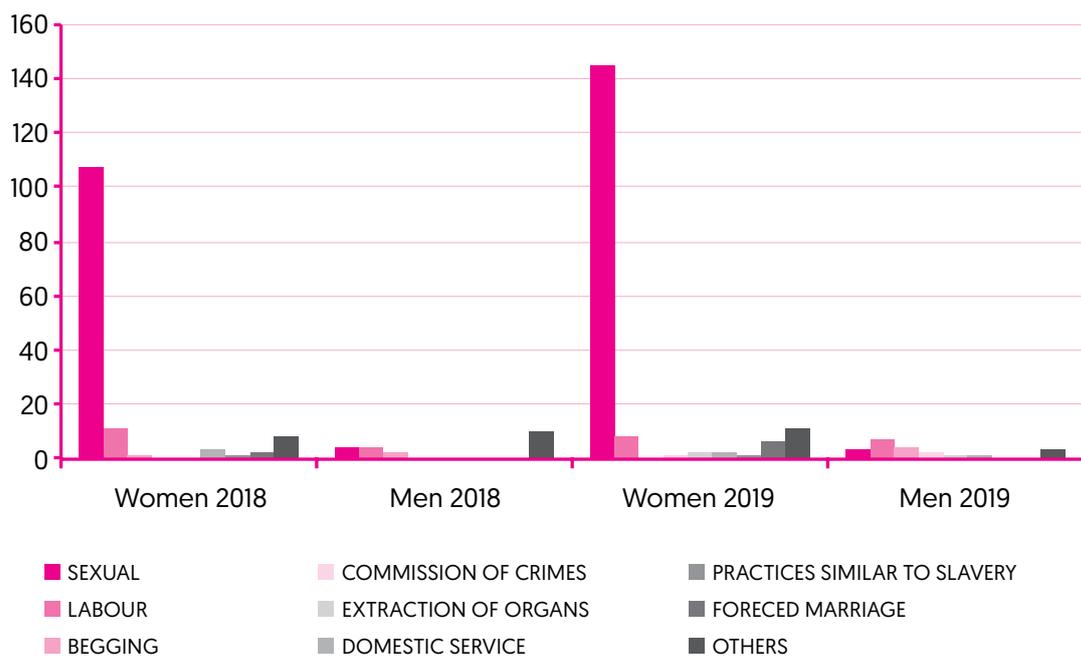
** Calculated from the total number of family units attended to in 2019 (210).

⁴ Includes unfulfilled exploitation purposes.



Type of exploitation and year of intervention according to gender:

As discussed above, a VHT may have been exploited for a variety of purposes at the same time, such as sexual exploitation and begging, sexual exploitation and the commission of crimes, labour and domestic exploitation or sexual servitude and forced marriage. The predominant purpose is sexual exploitation for women and labour and begging for men, although sexual exploitation also occurs. People exploited for the purpose of organ extraction have also been supported in 2019.



Age⁵

AGE	2017	2018	2019	% 2019*
Under 18	1	4	2	0.96%
18 to 24	34	40	41	19.62%
25 to 39	54	84	103	49.28%
40 to 49	7	15	32	15.31%
50 to 64	2	2	9	4.31%
65 and over	0	1	1	0.48%
Unknown	11	7	22	10.53%
Total	109	153	210	

* Calculated from the family units attended to in 2019 [210].

The most prevalent age group among users is still those aged 18 to 39 years, with those in the 25 to 39 age group continuing to predominate. Support for people over the age of 40 has increased and a person over 65 was even given support.

Nationality

In relation to the nationality of the people given support, the most common is Nigerian, with Nigerian nationals accounting for 43% of the total number of people in 2018 and 33.01% in 2019.

Secondly, the increase in the number of people supported from Asia is noteworthy (China and Vietnam accounted for 22.37% of the total number of nationalities given support in 2019).

On the whole, there is also an increase in people supported who come from both Latin America (Colombia and Venezuela make up 13.81% of the total) and eastern European countries (Romania alone accounts for 8.10%).

However, the UTEH has responded to people of 38 different nationalities (13 new nationalities were added to the list in 2018 and 5 in 2019). As a result, almost half of the nationalities supported have joined in the last two years.

This multitude of profiles confirms, once again, the global dimension of HT and the need to adapt, receive ongoing training on new forms of HT and be highly flexible to adapt to the transcultural needs of the service.

⁵ It should be noted that this data is based on the age declared by the victims and that knowledge of their actual age is difficult to ascertain, as most of them do not have their identity documents. Sometimes these documents do not even exist and other times they do not even know their age or date of birth, especially in relation to victims from rural areas with few or no identity registration systems.

NATIONALITY				
	2017	2018	2019	% 2019*
Albania	4	1	2	0.96%
Argentina	0	1	1	0.48%
Bangladesh	0	0	1	0.48%
Brazil	6	1	2	0.96%
Bulgaria	1	3	1	0.48%
Canada	0	0	1	0.48%
Colombia	3	4	9	4.31%
Korea	0	1	1	0.48%
Ivory Coast	0	2	5	2.39%
Cuba	0	3	1	0.48%
Eritrea	0	1	0	0.00%
Spain	0	1	2	0.96%
Ethiopia	0	2	0	0.00%
Philippines	1	1	1	0.48%
Georgia	1	1	1	0.48%
Ghana	0	0	1	0.48%
Guinea Conakri	0	0	1	0.48%
Equatorial Guinea	1	0	1	0.48%
Honduras	1	3	5	2.39%
Mali	1	1	1	0.48%
Morocco	2	3	0	0.00%
Mexico	0	0	1	0.48%
Moldavia	1	1	1	0.48%
Nigeria	51	65	69	33.01%
Pakistan	0	1	6	2.87%
Paraguay	5	3	1	0.48%
Peru	0	2	1	0.48%

* Calculated from the family units attended to in 2019 [210].

NATIONALITY				
	2017	2018	2019	% 2019*
Dominican Republic	1	1	1	0.48%
Romania	5	11	17	8.13%
Serbian	0	1	2	0.96%
South-Africa	0	1	0	0.00%
Sweden	0	1	1	0.48%
Ukraine	2	0	4	1.91%
Uganda	1	1	1	0.48%
Uruguay	1	1	1	0.48%
Venezuela	15	21	20	9.57%
Vietnam	0	4	7	3.35%
China	6	10	40	19.14%
Total	109	153	210	100%

* Calculated from the family units attended to in 2019 (210).

The UTEH has continued to have cultural mediation and interpretation services, without which it would be impossible to carry out its tasks.

Dependent children

Most of the family units attended to do not have dependent children in Barcelona (83.8% in 2019). However, when there are family responsibilities, approaching the VHT is more complicated. The provision of care must always take into account the best interests of the child.

DEPENDENT CHILDREN				
	2017	2018	2019	% 2019*
No children	55	127	176	83.80%
One child	17	22	28	13.40%
2 children	0	3	5	2.39%
3 children	1	0	0	0.00%
Pregnant	3	0	1	0.48%
DGAIA	3	0	0	0.00%
No response/Do not know	30	1	0	0.00%
Total	109	153	210	

* Calculated from the family units attended to in 2019 (210).

Children in the country of origin

In many cases, the people given support have family responsibilities in the country of origin. This is often the driving force behind the migration process, which eventually leads to human trafficking. Women bear the brunt of maintaining the family in their country of origin and the greatest threats from the exploitation networks are often made to their families.

The fact that the children of women victims are in the countries of origin, in the care of relatives or members of the trafficking network, creates different difficulties in protecting both the victim and her children, and is therefore a factor that severely hinders recovery.

It should be added that the UTEH has already dealt with cases of children of VHTs at the service being trafficked. This is common in areas such as Nigeria or eastern European countries, where there is still a lack of internal means to reduce victimisation, especially of women, and where second and third generations of the same family are doomed to be similarly captured and trafficked by human trafficking networks.

CHILDREN IN THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN				
	2017	2018	2019	% 2019*
No children	45	145	198	94.74%
One child	10	6	8	3.83%
2 children	4	1	3	1.44%
3 children	2	0	0	0.00%
4 children	2	0	0	0.00%
5 children	1	1	1	0.48%
No response/Do not know	45	0	0	0.00%
Total	109	153	210	

* Calculated from the family units attended to in 2019 (210).

Administrative and legal situation

In relation to the different legal situations of victims of trafficking, it is possible to differentiate between people with a regular or irregular administrative legal situation; there is still the trend that most VHTs do not have documentation of residence or legal right to remain in Spain (66.66%).

A high percentage of these people also have pending deportation proceedings due to unauthorised residence.

ADMINISTRATIVE SITUATION				
	2017	2018	2019	% 2019*
Spanish	0	1	2	0.96%
Irregular	84	97	140	66.66%
Regular	15	52	67	31.90%
Tourist visa	3	3	1	0.48%
No response/Do not know	7	0	0	0%
Total	109	153	210	

* Calculated from the family units attended to in 2019 (210).

05

Support and recovery

The data relating to the support and recovery process are specified in the series of actions carried out by the various professionals at the UTEH. It should be noted that the record of activities has been affected over the years due to the instability of the professionals assigned to the service.

5.1. Family units supported

153 family units⁶ were given support in 2018, and **210 in 2019**. Trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation remains widespread. However, in some cases, the presence of several forms of exploitation at the same time (sexual exploitation and begging, for example) has been detected, which further places VHTs in a situation of social exclusion and risk.

FAMILY UNITS		2017	2018	2019	% 2019*
Files	Total family units given support throughout the year	109	153	210	
	Registrations during the period	109	76	114	54.28 %
	Discharges during the period	31	55	19	9.04 %

* Calculated from the family units attended to in 2019 (210).

Despite the difficulties in managing the service, there has been an **upward trend** in the number of case files opened at the UTEH. This is due to the fact that more professionals in Barcelona are aware of the existence of the UTEH, the personalised training that has been carried out and the coordination and joint work tasks that the UTEH carries out with other professionals. There has been an increase in consultations on specific cases, where the UTEH intervenes indirectly (advice) and, where appropriate, sets up the methods to provide the potential VHT with appropriate comprehensive support.

Regarding the exploitation purposes, the UTEH has given support to VHTs facing all the kinds of exploitation set out in current legislation. Of note is the increase in VHTs who have suffered labour exploitation (15 in 2018 and 16 in 2019), as well as victims exploited for begging. In recent months, this has been observed as a new form of exploitation in the case of women from sub-Saharan Africa (4 family units supported in 2018 and 6 in 2019).

As of 31 December 2019, the cases that had been definitively discharged from the service had not been updated. The data will be updated during the course of 2020.

⁶ "Family units" are counted to unify the data with other management services. The UTEH usually gives support to single people, although more and more holistic interventions are being carried out with the victim's family.

5.2. Interventions

INTERVENTIONS				
	2017	2018	2019	% 2019*
Family units with direct intervention	61	72	115	54.76%
Family units with indirect intervention	48	81	95	45.23%
Total family units	109	153	210	100%

* Calculated from the family units attended to in 2019 [210].

It is important to note that not all case files opened at the service result in a direct intervention by the UTEH. One of the reasons may be the lack of sufficient reasonable evidence to consider the person as a potential VHT when the case is being assessed. At other times, the case is at an early phase, and the professionals need guidance to improve their knowledge about HT and VHTs to make more approximate, realistic interventions in instances of potential VHT and increase their detection capacity. Sometimes, despite detecting sufficient evidence to consider the existence of an instance of HT, it is not the right time for the potential VHT to engage with a specialised service and work on her recovery.

Thus, 47.05% of the UTEH's intervention was **indirect care** with professionals in 2018 and 54.76% in 2019, without having contact with the VHT. The main aim of this is to improve general and specialised detection and to promote links and the confidence of the potential VHT in our service over time.

On the other hand, there has also been an increase in the percentage of direct interventions (in contact with the potential VHT), as it is often necessary to carry out complementary actions with the VHT in addition to those already made by the referring professionals, to promote confidence and provide specialised information to the person about their rights.

5.3. Professional actions

ACTIONS				
	2017	2018	2019	% 2019*
Initial interviews	34	93	68	3.67%
Follow-up interviews	91	214	317	17.11%
Going to appointments	80	128	104	5.61%
Procedures	691	262	335	10.10%
Reports	35	40	20	1.08%
Referrals	88	17	22	1.19%
External coordination	987	601	688	37.14%
Internal coordination	-	277	298	16.01%
Total	2,006	1,632	1,852	100%

* Calculated from the total number of actions in 2019.

In 2018 and 2019 there has been an increase [173.53% and 100% respectively compared to 2017] **of initial interviews** at the service. The initial interview always takes place under appropriate social and legal contexts and, when necessary, a first psychological examination is also carried out to assess the psychological impact of HT on the potential VHT. The initial interview enables the work carried out at the UTEH to be presented, the VHT to be incorporated into the service and any action to be taken when immediate support is required.

The fact that the UTEH has now been operating for a longer period of time has made it easier to **monitor** the cases dealt with at the service since it opened. The number of *follow-up* interviews increased by 135.16% in 2018 compared to 2017 and 48.13% in 2019 compared to 2018. The application of the methodology that is gradually being developed within the framework of the service shows that the recovery processes are highly complex. The number of follow-up interviews highlights the great work required to monitor the situations of VHTs in social, legal and psychological fields, as well as the high-quality and long-term activities that must be offered to ensure support in VHT recovery processes.

The service must also attend a large number of **appointments with VHTs**. The people given support do not know the language of the host country in many cases, they have not had access to full autonomy, their protection must be guaranteed at all times and they require support in order to access the information and support of the city's resource network.

Going to such appointments makes it easier for the people given support to access the essential and specific services and gain the trust of the different professionals in the formal support network. The aim is to promote autonomy and prevent situations of secondary victimisation by carrying out high-quality work. The UTEH increased this kind of support by 60% in 2018, and in 2019 the number remained the same.

The service continued to invest more than 50% of its activity in **coordination** in 2018 and 2019, both in terms of interdisciplinary work and with other services or resources in the network, to activate the Barcelona Circuit against HT-PSE. The service also carries out a large number of **procedures** (processing of financial aid, document management, etc.).

Likewise, the UTEH has continued to make **referrals** to comprehensive services for the shelter and protection of VHT-PSE and specialised shelter services in situations of gender violence in the city of Barcelona, the reason why the UTEH has ended its intervention in this field (17 in 2018 and 22 in 2019).

The UTEH issued 40 **reports** in 2018 and 20 in 2019, most of them related to criminal proceedings initiated in the fight against HT. The reports, greatly detailed and precise, are used as a source of **expertise** and **proof**, contributing to the police or judicial proceedings, in order to define the objective indicators compatible with a situation of HT and the consequences of human trafficking in the lives of VHTs.

In order to guarantee the recovery processes, **one-off financial aid** is still processed to provide support for the most basic needs of VHTs in direct interventions.

ACTIONS					
	2017	% increase	2018	% increase	2019
Amounts	€3,853	370.59%	€18,131.57	2.97%	€18,669.87

The difference with the aid given in 2017 is exponential and responds to the increase in the follow-up of cases in direct interventions, more in-depth knowledge of the cases and the administration's obligation, in accordance with Articles 11 and 12 of the 2011 Directive of the Warsaw Convention, to comprehensively cover the needs of VHTs. It is essential for VHTs to be able to consider or start a process of personal recovery, to have their most basic needs covered, especially if they cannot access the basic rights of residence and work in our country due to their administrative situation. A total of €18,131.57 were given in 2018 to cover basic needs (food, clothing, hygiene), mainly for transport and documentation procedures, which implies an increase of 370.59% compared to 2017, a figure that did not change in 2019. Other types of aid include: subsidies for professional training, expert evidence, complex medical treatments and medication, and rent payments.

It is important to highlight the **housing insecurity** many of the VHTs supported at our service experience and the difficulty of not having an adequate, safe environment to promote the security and stability of recovery processes if they want to do this independently. The lack of available housing and the difficulty of renting rooms are evident.

Assessments of financial aid are made individually, adjusted to needs and are evaluated on an ongoing basis.

5.4. Emergency support

EMERGENCY SUPPORT				
		2018	2019	% 2018-2019*
Police operations	First semester	1	2	100.00%
	Second semester	1	2	100.00%

* Calculated from the increase between both years.

The UTEH participated in person in a total of 6 police operations in Barcelona in 2018 and 2019. The reference police force was the Guàrdia Urbana for all operations in 2019, responding to the specialised work that the Human Trafficking and Exploitation Group (*Grup de Tràfic i Explotació de Persones*, GTEP) does to detect and collaborate in investigations of HT networks with other police forces operating in the city in the context of sexual exploitation.

In addition, the UTEH dedicates an average of **5%** of its usual working day (10 hours per week) to emergencies, to respond to police enquiries when a VHT is at a police station or in emergency situations involving supported VHTs or those detected by other services.

5.5. Legal advice and representation service - SJUTEH

PERIOD OF RECOVERY AND REFLECTION, AND ADMINISTRATIVE SITUATION					
		2017	2018	2019	%2019*
Access to period of recovery and reflection ⁷	requested	14	15	11	5.24%
	granted	12	10	10	4.76%
	denied	0	5	1	0.48%
VHT residence permit due to personal situation	requested	2	6	4	1.90%
	granted	0	1	9	4.28%
	pending	2	1	0	0%
VHT residence permit due to working with security forces and bodies	granted	1	7	5	2.38%
	pending	1	2	1	0.48%
Other methods of regularisation	requested	10	2	1 ⁸	0.48%
	granted	5	2	1	0.48%
	pending	5	2	0	0%
Renewals or modifications of residence permit	requested	2	8	13	6.19%
	granted	2	8	13	6.19%
International protection (asylum)	requested	3	5	7	3.33%
	admitted for processing/ red card	3	0	4	1.90%
Regularisation procedures for dependent children ⁹	in process	5	1	1	**%
	granted	1	0	5	**%

* Calculated from the total number of family units attended to in 2019.

⁷ Application of Organic Law 4/2000 of 11 January, on the rights and freedoms of foreign nationals in Spain.

⁸ Requested through the first and fourth additional provisions of Organic Law 4/2000 of 11 January, on the rights and freedoms of foreign nationals in Spain, in 2018 and 2019.

⁹ regardless of the mother's route to regularisation.

The Legal Service of the UTEH has worked for the restitution of violated rights for VHTs.

One of the main rights it has attempted to guarantee is the administrative regularisation in the host country when the VHT wants to initiate or continue a process of residence in Spain. Without this condition, it is almost impossible to have access to other rights, such as the right to work. Therefore, the SJUTEH invests a large part of its work in researching, drawing up and processing any routes that might favour achievement of this right.

Especially relevant is the work that must be carried out to encourage identification processes as a victim, in accordance with the provisions of Organic Law 4/2000 of 11 January, on the rights and freedoms of foreign nationals in Spain [Art. 59a], which states that the competent authorities must adopt the measures required to identify victims of HT in accordance with the provisions of Art. 10 of the European Convention against Trafficking in Human Beings of 16 May 2005.

The formal identification processes set out in this report, both in 2018 and 2019, have been initiated at the request of the UTEH, which has provided information and advice to the victim and has initiated the administrative procedure with the competent police force. These are highly complex work processes, not only due to advising the victim when clarifying their story and in identifying episodes of exploitation, but also due to the importance of coordinating with the competent police force and monitoring the application of existing protocols.

Once the VHT has been identified, the UTEH has supported a total of 10 personal situation residence permits in 2018 and 2019, all successfully granted thanks to the informed and legally documented applications. A total of 12 residence permits have also been granted in collaboration with the security forces and bodies.

All of these permits must be renewed every year initially, which also means that it is necessary to actively monitor each procedure (8 renewals in 2018 and 13 in 2019).

The UTEH has supported 12 international protection application procedures in this two-year period. This indicates the interconnection between human trafficking and the migratory processes caused by forced displacement, which has made it necessary to work in coordination with specialised asylum institutions [a protocol with SAIER PI - ACCEM and a collaboration agreement with the Catalan Refugee Aid Commission, **Comissió Catalana d'Ajuda a Refugiats** [CCAR] have been set up]. We need to correctly identify victims of trafficking who cannot return to their countries of origin safely, and refer them to international protection procedures. This is the reason why we need to analyse the circumstances of the victim of human trafficking, to determine whether they will receive international protection on their return.

It has also been necessary to support certificate registration procedures, when it is infeasible for the VHT to access a passport (1 in 2018 and 3 in 2019) and passport processing procedures (2 in 2019).

Another major concern when supporting family units with dependent children is to also obtain the documentation for minors. There have been two new cases of this procedure at the UTEH (1 in 2018 and 1 in 2019) and procedures initiated in 2017 received a response in 2019 (5 renewals for children). The anxiety caused by such uncertainty for VHTs until they manage to regularise their children's status is another stress factor in their lives.

It should be noted that there are no facilities to promote the regrouping of VHTs with their children who have also been trafficked.

On the other hand, the service has provided support in other legal areas, such as:

- > Granting access to free justice, when there are other procedures related to the right to housing, civil and family law, etc. (1 person in 2018 and 9 in 2019).

- > Gender violence (4 in 2018 and 3 in 2019).
- > Immigration [generic] (1 in 2018 and 1 in 2019).

Another important area of action of the SJUTEH is intervening in deportation proceedings initiated against VHTs and contrary to the provisions of current regulations. This has led to intervention in 4 proceedings in 2018 and 6 in 2019. And also in requests for the revocation of possible criminal records the VHT may have accumulated, due to the situation of exploitation (6 cases in 2018 and 6 cases in 2019).

5.5.1. Free legal representation

The City Council has guaranteed free legal representation to victims of HT since 2011. VHTs are people in a situation of social and economic helplessness that makes them unable to bear the expense of hiring a specialised person who can advise them in the legal field and, where appropriate, who can represent them with sufficient expertise in the entire judicial procedure involved in denouncing the networks that control them. This action is taken in accordance with Article 25 of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000), and Article 6.2.b) of its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, which state that State Parties should take appropriate measures within their means to provide assistance and protection to victims of crimes covered by the Convention, in particular in cases of threat, retaliation or intimidation, for their views and concerns to be presented and examined at all appropriate stages of criminal proceedings against the trafficker. This action is also taken in accordance with Article 56 of the Istanbul Convention of 2011, of the Council of Europe, which entered into force in 2014, on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

The following support has been given to advise or represent VHTs as a private prosecution:

LEGAL REPRESENTATION				
Data from the free legal support and representation service	2017	2018	2019	%
Total number of people advised by the legal representation service	19	22	32	68.42% [2017-2019 increase]
Different family units given support	**	21	29	
Total number of different people represented in private prosecutions brought by the UTEH legal service	11	12	14	43.75% [of total number of people advised in 2019 - 32]
women	**	9	11	78.57% [of total number of people represented in 2019 - 14]
men	**	2	2	14.28% [of total number of different people represented in 2019 - 14]
trans women	**	1	1	7.14% [of total number of different people represented in 2019 - 14]
Total open criminal proceedings	12	13	19	68.42% [2017 - 2019 increase]
new proceedings in current year	4	3	8	100% [2017 - 2019 increase]
proceedings from previous years	8	10	11	57.89% [of total number of open criminal proceedings in 2019 - 19]
proceedings completed in the current year	1	2	2	10.52% [of total number of open criminal proceedings in 2019 - 19]
Total protected witnesses ¹⁰		14 Yes	21 Yes	65.62% [of total number of people advised in 2019 - 32]
		8 No	11 No	34.37% [of total number of people advised in 2019 - 32]
Public prosecution by the City Council		0	1	

The number of people advised by the UTEH's legal representation service increased during 2018 and 2019, in correlation with the increase in cases supported by the UTEH.

Not all people advised by the service finally decide to make the decision to appear in criminal proceedings as a private prosecution. Legal proceedings place VHTs as the main source of evidence to convict the exploiters, which implies a revictimisation of the VHT and the assumption of a very high risk for them and their family, both in Spain and in their country of origin.

¹⁰ Not all protected witnesses have decided to appear as private prosecutors in the criminal proceedings.

A private prosecution allows the VHT to be informed from the beginning of the proceedings, and also allows for any other burden of proof to be requested and provided to assist in the judicial investigation. A private prosecution, as offered by the UTEH to the victims, encourages active participation in the judicial process, from the perspectives of gender, interculturality and always respecting the will of the survivor.

The condition of protected testimony can be revoked at any time in the process, a circumstance that violates fundamental rights and that can put the VHT at risk because it makes it easier for them to be located (she and her family members) and once again face threats or aggression. Consequently, it generates great distrust on the part of the VHT towards the system that is there to protect her.

5.6. Specialised psychological counselling and treatment service

HT has a huge impact on the health of the people who have been subjected to it. The situations of violence, coercion and exploitation they have experienced lead to disorders and damage to physical and mental health. Psychological and psychiatric disorders are the main co-morbidity in the VHT group.

The UTEH has offered information, psychological guidance and support, and specialised psychological treatment to the people concerned. This treatment is centred on working on their violent experiences and overcoming complex trauma using diverse psychological techniques.

It should be noted that the recovery process of VHTs is a long journey. The numbers reflect an increase in both the number of cases in terms of psychological support and referrals to specialised psychiatric services. This is due to the increase in the number of cases, but also the pronounced number of symptoms associated with the complex trauma generated by HT in VHTs, especially during the first few weeks that the person is in an exploitative situation, requiring special containment and support.

The number of cases receiving psychological treatment have increased as the UTEH has gained more experience [22.22% increase between 2017 and 2019], as has access to specialised services in cross-cultural psychiatry [88.89%].

SPECIALISED PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTION				
	2017	2018	2019	% 2019*
Total number of people in psychological treatment	17	27	33	15.71%
Referrals to the Cross-cultural Psychiatric Service of Vall d'Hebron	7	9	17	8.09%

* Calculated from the total number of family units attended to in 2019.

5.7. Municipal gender violence shelter system

Barcelona City Council's gender violence shelter system increased its resources during 2019 to provide a full range of services to the victims of HT, in order to respond to the diversity of profiles at the UTEH (not only women, but also men and family units), which require very high security measures and urgent and effective protection measures at the start.

In many cases, shelter is necessary and urgent in the first phase of support, just when the person first agrees to disengage from the exploitation network, as the first step to offer stability and a place to rest, allowing the situation to be examined.

Consequently, the following were created with a municipal budget in 2019:

- > A new specialised facility (emergency flat), together with the Consortium of Social Services (*Consorti de Serveis Socials*, CSSB), for the urgent support of this type of case.
- > Three new facilities that come in addition to the three already in place, consisting of the flats to promote the autonomy¹¹ of VHTs, established jointly with the CSSB.

One of these three facilities for promoting autonomy is intended primarily for sheltering male VHTs, another new feature incorporated in 2019, resulting in an improvement in the support of male VHTs in Barcelona. There are no other specific resources in Catalonia for men, neither public nor private. The other two facilities are focused on sheltering family units or people in a state of “mid autonomy” (because they have dependent children or because they have a specific personal situation), resulting in more intensive educational support in an environment designed to facilitate more individualised recovery processes.

¹¹ Autonomy level: the level of the person in the final stage of the recovery process, prior to the definitive achievement of full independence.

SHELTER					
		2017	2018	2019	% 2017-2019
Total number of people staying in boarding houses and hotels	Total number of family units housed	18	26	25	38.89%
	Total number of different people housed	23	28	28	21.74%
	Total number of different women housed	14	21	14	0%
	Total number of different trans women housed	1	1	0	-25%
	Total number of different men housed	3	4	9	200%
	Total number of children/teenagers housed	4	2	5	25%
	Total number of other relatives of the VHT housed	1	0	0	-25%
Stays in boarding houses and hotels	Total days of stay in boarding houses/hotels		1320	1288	-2.42%
	Average days in boarding house/hotel resource per person		47.14%	46.0%	
Total number of people sheltered at a specialised resource - Emergency flat¹	Total number of family units sheltered		**	***	8
	Total number of different people sheltered		**	***	10
	Total number of different women sheltered		**	***	5
	Total number of different men sheltered		**	***	4
	Total number of children sheltered		**	***	1
Stays in a specialised shelter facility - Emergency flat	Total days of stay at a shelter resource		**	***	246
	Average days at a shelter resource per person		**	***	24.6

¹ Emergency flat opened in May 2019.

		2018	% 2018-2019	2019
Total number of people sheltered at a specialised resource - Independent living flat²	Total number of family units sheltered	4	125.00%	9
	Total number of different people sheltered	6	166.67%	16
	Total number of different women sheltered	4	100.00%	8
	Total number of different men sheltered	0		2
	Total number of children sheltered	2	200.00%	6
Stays in a specialised shelter facility - Independent living flat	Total days of stay at a shelter resource	2,082	103.46%	4,236
	Average days at a shelter resource per person	347	-23.70%	264.8

² New flats were opened in 2019 (6 in total).

The management of the 4 facilities is delegated to SICAR.cat, which belongs to the congregation of Adoratrices Esclavas del Santísimo Sacramento y de la Caridad from the province of Aragon.

5.7.1. Specialised shelter resource for female VHTS

The City Council rents 3 emergency accommodation spaces from SICAR.cat, which belongs to the congregation of Adoratrices Esclavas del Santísimo Sacramento y de la Caridad from the province of Aragon. It is a high-demand shelter for female victims of HT that provides care 24 hours a day, 365 days a year (366 on leap years) thanks to a multidisciplinary team consisting of various specialised professionals. This facility ensures it has sufficient resources to enable the VHTs to start a recovery process with their basic and safety needs guaranteed.

The project hosted a total of 22 women and maintained an average occupancy of 81.92% in 2019. 13 women and 1 family unit were supported at the gender violence shelter facility before accessing a specialised resource.

31% of the women housed there come from the Americas (Colombia, Venezuela, Paraguay and Argentina). The rest come from both sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, at 26% respectively. 39% of the women supported were in an irregular situation. Most referrals have come from public services (police forces and the UTEH), as well as from the institution itself. Voluntary return was requested for 3 of the women and 7 of them continued their personal process in the residence stage of the programme. Two women were referred to another specialised resource for security reasons.

SPECIALISED SHELTER RESOURCE		2017	2018	2019	% 2017-2019
Total number of people sheltered at a specialised emergency resource for women and children of VHTs	Total number of different women sheltered	20	26	22	10%
	Total number of different people sheltered		27	23	
	Total number of children sheltered		1	1	
Stays at specialised shelter resources for women and children of VHTs	Total number of days at the shelter resource	598	1011	1081	80.77%
	Average days at a shelter resource per person	35.18%	40.04%	43.96%	24.96%

5.8. Recovery, empowerment and social and labour market integration of female VHT-PSE

A new edition of the **Projecte RAI — Intervention project for the recovery, empowerment and social and labour market integration of women victims of HT-PSE**— which is carried out jointly by SURT (private women’s foundation) and SICAR.cat, was held in 2018-2019.

The RAI project aims to work on a range of skills and abilities that enable female VHT-PSE to recover, become more familiar with their surroundings, find a profession and integrate into the job market. This is the fifth time this twice-yearly project, which began in January 2018 has taken place.

The project provides time and space for participants to begin a process of recovery that will surely, and in many cases, last for the rest of their lives. Participation in RAI provides women with tools to be able to recover from traumatic experiences, to get to know the host country from a different perspective than the one they know (exploitation) and to be able to settle into this new stage of their lives freely and safely.

A total of 27 women participated in the selection for the programme, 7 of whom came from Nigeria and the rest from other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and eastern European countries. 100% of the people given support have been able to obtain a residence and work permit over the course of the programme, which means that they can create an action plan to achieve their goal of securing a job.

The goals of the programme have been met, 89% of women have started a therapeutic process and have had access to various training programmes.

It should be noted that 11 women have been able to enter the formal labour market, but that the conditions in which they do so remain extremely precarious (temporary employment in precarious and feminised sectors). Another factor that has aggravated the difficulties of being able to carry out recovery processes has been the lack of access to independent housing.

06

Quality standards

6.1. Interdisciplinary standards

Within the framework of the Inter-Institutional Panel against Human Trafficking, we would like to highlight:

> Subcommittee on Minors

2017. Within the framework of the Inter-Institutional Panel against HT, it was agreed to create a subcommittee to address the situation of the youngest victims of HT in the city, the most invisible victims. The first meeting of the Subcommittee took place in March 2017 and a diagnostic report on the situation was drawn up thanks to the evidence of the various agents specialising in the subject.

2018. The diagnostic report on the situation of under-age VHTs in Barcelona was presented in May 2018. This report includes several proposals for action that were brought together within the framework of the subcommittee: to have an observatory that collects data on the situation of HT in the city; to identify other experiences of HT in minors; to increase awareness and training, and to work from case studies to set up intervention protocols and a methodology.

> Consensus report to define a tool for detecting VHT-PSE indicators

2017. Three meetings were held in July, September and October 2017, with the participation of many agents specialising directly in the detection, identification and support of VHT-PSE. As part of this consensus report, a tool has been designed that will enable professionals to detect HT-PSE situations easier.

2018. A proposed tool was drawn up in 2018, now definitive, which includes 30 detection indicators, together with elements for establishing scales for stipulating relevance so as to establish indicators that enable us to be reasonably sure we are dealing with a situation of oHT.

2019. The tool was piloted with a sample group of different professionals and services in 2019. Once this test had been carried out, different statistical tests and techniques were conducted to check the suitability of the tool: contrast test, reliability with an inter-evaluator concordance test and criticality review based on discriminant capacity analysis. This statistical analysis will make it possible to determine the feasibility and practicality of the tool set up within the framework of the Inter-Institutional Panel to detect Victims of Human Trafficking.

Specialised HT training

2017. The UTEH organised various training sessions over the course of 2017. They were attended by a total of 104 professionals from the various entities, services and institutions specialised in the detection and assessment of HT:

- A** Psychological impact on VHT-PSE
- B** Traditional African beliefs and human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation
- C** Chinese community, gender and prostitution
- D** Geopolitics of Nigerian prostitution

The UTEH has also held three detection-training workshops for professionals in the municipal services: SAIER (Support Service for Immigrants, Emigrants and Refugees), CUESB and SARA.

2018. The UTEH offered a total of eight specialised training workshops in 2018 to police forces, third-sector institutions and municipal services on the work of the UTEH and victim detection and support elements.

2019. The UTEH offered a total of 4 specialised training workshops in 2019 to police forces, third-sector institutions, municipal services and professionals of the General Directorate of Child and Adolescent Care on the work of the UTEH and victim detection and support elements.

Participation in conferences

2017. The UTEH participated as a HT specialist at:

- > “Prevention in human trafficking” Red Cross.
- > *Round Table Danube Cities Against Human Trafficking: “Preventing & Combating Human Trafficking and Exploitation at the Local Level”. EU Strategy for the Danube Region EUSDR, Priority Area 10: “Institutional Capacity Building and Cooperation”.*
- > “Security, democracy and cities. Co-producing urban security policies”. “Cities and organized crime” (EFUS).
- > International Conference “Human Trafficking: The Psychological Impact

on Survivors”. *PHIT - Psychological Health Impact of Trafficking in Human Beings for Sexual Exploitation on Female Victims, University of Barcelona.*

2018. The UTEH participated in several national and international conferences. Of particular note is the participation in the *Live-imulation Training Course* organised by the OSCE (*Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe*) in Italy, and at the round table organised by the *Danube Cities against Human Trafficking*, entitled “*Strengthening the role of municipalities and cities in preventing & combating human trafficking & exploitation*” in Slovenia. In addition, it was part of the European PHIT Project “*Psychological Health Impact of Trafficking in Human Beings*”, to draw up a study on the psychological impact on VHT-PSE via working groups, facilitating access to VHT and involvement in presenting the results of the workshop.

Of particular note was the specialist HT workshop. The UTEH organised the internal workshop “**Criminal proceedings against the crime of human trafficking**” on 3 October 2018, in which 14 speakers and 94 specialists in tackling HT participated. The main conclusions focused on the need to improve training, coordination between agents and to prevent the victim from being placed at the centre of criminal proceedings as the only evidence when prosecuting this crime.

2019. Participation in various national and international conferences. Of particular note is the participation for the second consecutive year in the *Live-Simulation Training Course* organised by the OSCE (*Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe*) in Italy, a workshop developed for 60 Andorran professionals on HT, which provided tools and strategies on the phenomenon HT and its detection, and the participation in the conclusions of the Justice & Last project thanks to SICAR.cat.

Designing and drawing up coordination protocols

2017. Coordination protocol with the Barcelona Social Emergencies Centre and (CUESB). Work has been carried out on drawing up a new protocol that includes coordination between the CUESB and the UTEH in 2017, on the emergency detection and support of victims of HT, of whatever purpose.

2018. Design and drafting of a decree from the Mayor's office for the future approval of coordination measures between different municipal services when faced with situations of human trafficking and the implementation protocols thereof.

2019. Approval of Decree S1/D/2019-506 of 27 February from the Mayor's office approving the Protocol of measures for coordination between the different municipal services when faced with situations of human trafficking.

6.2. Other items to highlight

Every year the UTEH collaborates in drawing up **the U.S. Department of State's Trafficking in Persons Report**, which reflects the state of the issue on a global scale. The service has been referenced as an example of good practice from a public administration for tackling HT.

The Directorate for Feminism and LGBTI Affairs, together with the Consortium of Social Services, as mentioned above, **increased the specialised shelter facilities** for victims of HT in Barcelona in 2019. These facilities are intended to respond to situations of extreme urgency that occur in the city in relation to the detection of a VHT or potential VHT, as well as to cover the autonomy processes (either low, medium or high autonomy) of VHTs that have been able to initiate a recovery process. Currently the municipal system has a total of 8 facilities.

07

Conclusions

We can conclude that during these two years we have consolidated support for victims of HT in Barcelona by expanding shelter services, encouraging specialised training in the field of HT among the professionals involved, and the measures of coordination between the different municipal services when faced with instances of human trafficking have been strengthened thanks to Decree 1/D/2019-506 of 27 February from the Mayor's office.

7.1. Prevention

- > It is essential that specialised professionals constantly adapt to the phenomenon and its volatility, due to the constant changes that networks make to how they capture and exploit victims, to prevent new situations of HT. Human exploitation networks have begun to diversify the purposes of exploitation, especially with women, adding other purposes to sexual exploitation such as begging or committing crimes.
- > There is a high incidence of the phenomenon in countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and eastern European countries, due to the structural inequalities found in these countries, the lack of awareness of human rights and the lack of effective measures to eradicate HT as a practice that promises the possibility of migrating and obtaining other livelihoods.
- > Barcelona is mostly a city of transit and destination for networks and VHTs.

7.2. Detection

- > Specific HT training provides professionals with knowledge of HT and has a direct impact on a better detection of VHTs in our city.
- > The reinforcement and maintenance of indirect interventions carried out by the UTEH with the services and professionals of Barcelona (advice and additional actions), guarantee the transfer of tools for the early intervention in cases of potential VHT, resulting in better access of VHTs to the support and protection circuit of our city.
- > The creation of coordination protocols (such as Decree S1/D/2019-506 of 27 February from the Mayor's office approving the Protocol of measures for coordination between the different municipal services when faced with situations of human trafficking) formalises the structuring of the HT intervention and support processes.
- > The increase in the detection of Chinese nationals who show signs of HT has not resulted in engagement with our service. This is first of all due to the cultural and language barrier, and secondly due to the fear, pressures and debts incurred by VHTs, which have prevented them from engaging with the service, despite it having specialised means of mediation and interpretation.

7.3. Support

- > The increase in the percentage of direct support interventions with VHTs performed by the UTEH is due to:
 - > The solidity of the professional comprehensive support team, which has guaranteed complete care that meets the needs of VHTs, despite the changes and structural dysfunctions faced in this period.
 - > The increase in the detection of potential VHTs by professionals who are part of general services.
 - > Coordination between different services and institutions, the only valid alternative to maintain fluid communication and the continuum of care and protection for VHTs.
 - > The process of designing a specialised intervention methodology in VHT support, which aims to ensure specialised, high-quality care.
- > The gender impact of HT on women and girls is once again confirmed, as they represent 89.99% of the people provided with support by the service.
- > The UTEH has supported VHTs of all types of exploitation and of all age groups, of more than 30 different nationalities.
- > The service focuses on direct support at initial and follow-up interviews with VHTs, as well as in-person assistance.
- > The maintenance and expansion of the network of contacts for international services and resources can help guarantee continuity in the detection and care of VHTs despite their movement through different national or international territories. The effort to maintain the protection of VHTs lies, to a large extent, in the ability of professionals to coordinate effectively.
- > The application of human rights, gender, intersectional and cross-cultural perspectives from any professional sphere and from all the services involved provides responses to the needs of VHTs and helps to maintain a holistic perspective on each case.

7.4. Identification

- > There has been a significant decline in the number of people supported by the UTEH who have been formally identified by police forces. Identification procedures were initiated at the request of the UTEH in 2018 and 2019, providing information and advice to the victim and encouraging the filing of an administrative procedure with the competent police force.
- > The UTEH guarantees social and legal assistance for the VHT from their initial appearance at any police station, leading to better emotional support during the processes undertaken. At the same time, this results in more positive results in terms of filing complaints and building police and judicial investigations.
- > The reports issued by the UTEH provide expertise and evidence that contribute to the police and/or judicial procedures, in order to define the objective indicators compatible with a situation of HT and the consequences of human trafficking in the lives of VHTs, preventing the secondary victimisation of VHTs in the process.

- > The legal representation service has consolidated its role as an innovative and essential service that works to guarantee rights. The free, specialised private prosecutions for VHTs have an impact on the adherence of VHTs to judicial processes, which also results in an increased number of convictions.
- > Formal identification must give access to the legitimate rights of VHTs, to aid the processes of recovery and self-identification of violence.
- > Intervention from a victim-centred perspective translates directly into a better prosecution of the crime, as well as better-supported and complete recovery processes.
- > The identification and protection system must be flexible and adaptable to the exceptional cases of VHTs that are in serious situations of exploitation. Human rights must be prioritised, and inventive, original ways must be guaranteed to promote access to rights as soon as possible. The priority objective is to avoid irrevocable events, as happened with the death of a user in 2019. The City Council has appeared in this case as a public prosecutor in the criminal proceedings initiated.

7.5. Recovery

- > The complexity of VHT recovery processes requires the UTEH to operate while guaranteeing high specialisation, devoting its time and resources to promoting the protection and comprehensive recovery of VHTs. It has been shown that this comprehensive support cannot detract from purely quantitative criteria (numbers and ratios): personalised, intensive and high-quality care must be prioritised.
- > There is a direct interconnection between human trafficking and migratory processes caused by forced displacement, requiring the maintenance of complementary VHT support and international protection.
- > The insecurity of housing in our city has a direct, negative impact on the recovery and autonomy processes of the VHTs.
- > Barcelona City Council's gender violence shelter system has increased its provision to respond to the diversity of profiles the UTEH has. It is essential to improve support resources for male VHTs to facilitate their recovery processes.
- > Overcoming the situation of exploitation forms part of a continuous process, in which insecurity and social exclusion continue to accompany VHTs, even though they have been able to get out of the exploitative situation.
- > The conditions in which VHTs enter the formal labour market continue to be extremely precarious (temporary contracts in precarious and feminized sectors).
- > Therapeutic support for VHTs has been increasing as the service has become more consolidated. It is an essential service for favouring recovery processes.
- > Good coordination with the rest of the agents that are involved and fight against HT encourages the recovery process of the VHTs and prevents processes of revictimisation.
- > Promoting family reunification for children of VHTs who have been trafficked is necessary for the recovery process, both for the VHT and her family.

08

Challenges for the future

- A** To consolidate the human and material resources of the UTEH to guarantee comprehensive support for VHTs detected or identified in Barcelona.
- B** To move to new premises so as to have enough physical space, without which it will not be possible to continue the interventions and direct support for VHTs at the UTEH, providing confidentiality and high-quality support.
- C** To finish designing the specific internal intervention methodology for the service.
- D** To continue increasing training and awareness-raising measures on HT, both for professionals and civil agents within our society, to increase awareness of the phenomenon and improve professional interventions.
- E** To publish the VHT-PSE potential risk detection tool and to set up the training and application plan, to guarantee up-to-date knowledge among all public and private professionals, as well as to continue improving the specialised detection of potential VHTs.
- F** To find cooperation formulas to promote tools in the countries of origin of the victims, to prevent and avoid human trafficking, especially the trafficking of new generations [children of victims who are sent to Barcelona who are resident in the country of origin].
- G** To continue promoting trust, coordination and co-responsibility between local administrations and police, to establish a victim-centred perspective where the victim is always at the centre of any process, encouraging the prosecution of the crime and two-way communication.
- H** To re-launch inter-institutional coordination spaces.
- I** To promote the need to plan and design a specific procedure to address HT for sexual exploitation for victims in the Chinese community, responding to their unique characteristics.
- J** To work for the unification of criteria in the police identification procedures for VHTs when there is reasonable evidence.
- K** To encourage good practices in the application of Article 59a for non-EU VHTs and guarantees on the recovery and reflection period set out in current law.
- L** To highlight how the psychological impact of HT on VHTs has a fundamental impact on the whole intervention and recovery process of VHTs and to establish effective mechanisms to ensure this is taken into account throughout social, police and judicial procedures.
- M** To work on the responsibility and due diligence of all administrations to support and protect VHTs from secondary victimisation, especially in the institutional field.
- N** To continue to expand and improve resources and specialised interventions with all VHTs.