

## COMMON BASIC STANDARDS

Thirty Common Basic Standards were identified throughout the implementation of the project, to be ideally applied by professionals in order to guarantee adequate assistance and protection to survivors of torture and/ or serious violence among asylum-seekers and beneficiaries of international protection.

They are meant to be an operational tool to support the work of such professionals in order to respond to the special needs of beneficiaries and to ensure proper protection in different contexts and work conditions.

Key Common Basic Standards for Malta:

**Legal and social services, as well as competent authorities must refer survivors of torture and/or serious violence to health units experienced in providing certification of consequences of torture and serious violence.**

**When beneficiaries have experienced persecution and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity, they must be referred to qualified and legal advisors experienced in LGBTI issues.**

**The beneficiary must benefit from multidisciplinary approach and coordinated specialised services inside and outside the reception centres.**

**Medical assistance must always be offered to survivors of torture and/or serious violence by a medical service able to provide continuous and appropriate treatment for the time needed.**

**Psychological assessment and treatment must be offered to survivors of torture and/or serious violence.**



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The report is available at:  
<http://aditus.org.mt/Publications/timeforneedsreport.pdf>

# TIME FOR NEEDS



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Listening, Healing,  
Protecting. A Joint Action for  
an Appropriate Assessment  
of Special Needs of Victims  
of Torture and Violence





**TIME FOR NEEDS:  
LISTENING, HEALING,  
PROTECTING. A JOINT  
ACTION FOR AN  
APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT  
OF SPECIAL NEEDS OF  
VICTIMS OF TORTURE AND  
VIOLENCE (HOME/2014/  
AMIF/AG/ASYL/7836) IS A  
PROJECT THAT ADDRESSES  
THE ISSUE OF THE SPECIAL  
NEEDS OF ASYLUM SEEKERS  
AND REFUGEES WHO WERE  
SUBJECTED TO TORTURE  
AND/OR SERIOUS VIOLENCE.**

The project provides a picture of the legal frameworks and practices in the partner EU Member States, while serving to highlight the gaps between EU legislation, its transposition into national laws and its application in practice.

Funded by the European Union and based on in-depth desk and field research in Italy, France, Germany, Greece, Malta and Portugal, the project aims to harmonise protection standards and practices across the European Union for this vulnerable target group.

A Tool-Kit and Common Basic Standards were elaborated with the aim to inform and guide determining authorities, stakeholders, police, and professionals involved in the protection and reception of survivors of torture and/or serious violence.

**THE NECESSITY TO ASSESS  
THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF TORTURE  
AND SERIOUS VIOLENCE SURVIVORS**

Today we see a growing number of asylum-seekers and refugees who are victims of torture experiencing trouble in accessing services that would constitute fair and humane treatment during the asylum procedure.

It is essential to assess the special needs of these persons since studies have shown that traumatic experiences and consequent post-traumatic syndromes can directly influence the determination of international protection needs. Such conditions can severely impact an applicant's memory, thereby prejudicing the consistency of their account and throwing the credibility of such an account into question.

Victims of torture are likely to suffer post-traumatic disorders, including but not limited to PTSD, which may also represent a barrier to disclosure of one's story.

It is therefore paramount that victims of torture are able to access the relevant services to enable them to seek assistance from medical, legal and other experts.

**In this context, the project aims to:**

- contribute to the identification of the special needs of survivors of torture and/or serious violence in relation to the asylum procedure, as well as reception conditions;
- develop harmonised protection standards and practices across the European Union for this vulnerable target group;
- facilitate the improvement of the effectiveness and the fairness of both the asylum system and the standard of protection for survivors of torture and/or serious violence, making the procedural guarantees and tailored services for this target group more accessible and effective.



**THE IDENTIFICATION  
OF VICTIMS OF TORTURE  
AND SERIOUS VIOLENCE  
IN MALTA**

- The only identification process for vulnerable applicants of international protection does not automatically capture all applicants, potentially missing several vulnerable persons;
- However, there are no specialised services to identify victims of torture or serious violence;
- Recognised vulnerable applicants are not subject to detention;
- Recognised vulnerable applicants (e.g. minors and single women) are accommodated in specialised reception centres;
- Insufficient structures, support provision and expertise within public services;
- Poor living conditions in detention and reception centres;
- Lack of cultural mediators and interpreters;
- Limited service or referral coordination within the asylum system.