



Press Release: Nigeria – Sex Trafficking of women

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EASO Country of Origin Information report on Nigeria – Sex Trafficking of women

Today, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) published a new Country of Origin Information (COI) report entitled ‘Nigeria – Sex Trafficking of women’. The report provides information on the modus operandi of trafficking and the situation of victims of trafficking returning to Nigeria. In the report, the role of “madams” within the trafficking networks is highlighted, and the debt system described. Other relevant factors discussed in the report are the role of women’s relatives, and the extent in which “juju” (voodoo or witchcraft) may be used in sex trafficking.

In the last two years, the number of Nigerian applicants in the EU+ countries (EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland) more than tripled, rising from 1000 applicants registered per month in August 2013 to about 3700 in August 2015. Of the total number of applicants, the overwhelming majority is aged between 18 and 34 years, of whom about one-third is female.

A questionnaire sent to EU+ countries in June 2015, identified human trafficking for prostitution (or sex trafficking) of Nigerian women as a major issue on which information was lacking. For this reason, it was decided to produce an EASO COI report on this subject.

The report focuses on the modus operandi of the trafficking of Nigerian women to Europe for the purpose of prostitution and on the situation of the victims of trafficking returning to Nigeria. To some extent, and insofar as it relates to the modus operandi of trafficking, the report looks into the situation of Nigerian trafficked women once they have reached Europe.

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In order to provide as balanced a picture as possible, the report uses information from academic researchers, United Nations (UN) organisations, European Union (EU) agencies, non-governmental organisations and governmental agencies.

At the basis of this EASO report lies a topical report drafted by the Country Information Service of the Finnish Immigration Service as part of the European Refugee Fund (ERF)-funded ‘Suuntaus project’ ⁽¹⁾. This initial report, entitled *Human Trafficking of Nigerian Women to Europe*, was finalised

¹ This project aimed to identify the most significant country information themes and to better anticipate future information needs. The method consisted in systematically reviewing asylum interview protocols from specific caseloads (Nigeria, Iran, Iraq, Russia, stateless persons) by using a form designed for the purpose.

in March 2015. To meet the information needs of a wider number of countries and maximise the added value at EU level, it was decided to include additional and up-to-date sources of information as well as new subsections and a new chapter on travel to Europe. Two rounds of peer review were carried out by COI experts from France, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and by EASO. A social anthropologist specialised in the issue of human trafficking, in particular in the Nigerian context, provided expert opinion.

EASO will continue to produce COI reports on important countries of origin and to update them on a regular basis in order to raise and harmonise COI standards in the EU and use of common COI to further support the practical implementation of the Common European Asylum System.

Any further information may be obtained from the European Asylum Support Office by contacting Mr Jean-Pierre Schembri on the following e-mail address: jean-pierre.schembri@easo.europa.eu