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### Timeline

2022-2024

### Study Status

Complete

### Study Type

Randomized Evaluation

### Sample Size

3,000 migrants

### Research Implemented by IPA

No

## Empowerment on the move? An experiment on supporting forcibly displaced people in Greece \*

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### Abstract:

Legal empowerment could help forcibly displaced people who face high levels of violence and exploitation and few incentives to report. What is the demand for legal empowerment amongst forcibly displaced people? Does legal information lead to changes in well-being? We study legal empowerment through a randomized field experiment with 1,202 refugees and asylum seekers in Greece. We use an encouragement design to understand both variation in information-seeking behavior and the impact of information. At baseline, nearly half of the study participants were unaware of how to seek help after experiencing violence. Comparing generic (website-based) and personalized (WhatsApp chat with a caseworker) legal information against a control, we find more demand for generic than personalized legal information. Both treatments improved participants' knowledge of exploitation under Greek law (by 0.23–0.2 SD) and increased confidence in responding to violence (by 0.26–0.37 SD) three months after treatment, but complier average treatment effects are larger for personalized than for generic treatments. Impacts on other outcomes were limited. We identify a trade-off between the higher uptake of generic information and the more effective personalized conversations, advancing our understanding of the demand for legal empowerment and suggesting actionable strategies for supporting forcibly displaced people.

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### Academic Paper

# Protecting Against Exploitation for Asylum Seekers and Refugees: The Impact of Information Provision in Greece



An aerial view of Athens. © 2003 Marine Casalis

**Funded by IPA's Human Trafficking Research Initiative (HTRI) and in collaboration with UNHCR, researchers conducted a randomized evaluation to assess the impact of information in reducing the risk of trafficking among forced migrants residing in Greece.**

People who flee their place of habitual residence are at high risk of human trafficking and abuse, particularly while they seek legal status in their country of asylum (ICMPD 2018). There are currently 95,000 refugees and asylum seekers in Greece, where traffickers conduct transit and in-country operations (A21 2020). How does raising awareness about access to services and information reduce refugees' and asylum seekers' vulnerability to exploitation? What factors shape whether improving access to information can reduce vulnerability?

Funded by HTRI and in collaboration with UNHCR, researchers conducted a randomized evaluation to assess the impact of information in reducing risk of trafficking among forced migrants residing in Greece. The program enables participants to ask questions and receive guidance from partners of International Rescue Committee (IRC) Hellas via social media and mobile messaging apps. A total of 3,000 migrants were randomly assigned to either receive

personalized information counseling, generic information via a website link, or serve as a comparison group. Results will inform optimal and cost-efficient mechanisms in providing information to support and protect vulnerable and mobile populations.

Results are forthcoming.

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## Partners



**University College London**



**ETH Zurich - Immigration Policy Lab (IPL)**



**International Rescue Committee (IRC) Hellas/Greece**



**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency

**United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Greece**