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Authorities in countries with high numbers of simultaneous arrivals often faced difficulties in appropriately identifying and assessing special needs. For example, Slovenian authorities noted that many applicants quickly left reception centres before staff could address their special needs. To support staff with the process, a tailored, fast screening tool for the identification of vulnerabilities and special needs was piloted in the reception facility in Logatec.

The European Commission's pilot project in Romania was assessed to be particularly successful in improving the identification of vulnerable applicants through the establishment of standard operating procedures for vulnerability screening, starting already at the preliminary interview stage. The evaluation of the pilot found that the referral system for unaccompanied children and the appointment of guardians have also improved.993 The civil society organisation Romanian CNRR confirmed these findings but suggested improving staff training on identifying vulnerabilities that may be harder to detect.994

The Spanish State Secretariat for Migration issued a new instruction to improve the identification of applicants with special reception needs by establishing indicators on vulnerabilities.995

Changes to the German legislation on counselling in the asylum procedure had an impact on the identification of vulnerabilities. Providers of the counselling sessions are allowed to transmit the personal data of an applicant to the authorities if it arises during the discussion that the person is in need of special procedural guarantees or has special needs in reception, provided the applicant consents to this transfer of information.996 Civil society organisations argued that increased funding would be necessary to ensure that the legal changes are implemented adequately in a harmonised manner across all federal states.997

The Italian Ministry of the Interior issued guidance on the identification, referral and support of applicants with special needs in an effort to harmonise territorial practices,998as suggested by Save the Children and UNHCR.999The Norwegian UDI is developing guidelines on identifying victims of torture. In addition, several authorities across the EU+ observed an increase in the number of people with special needs due to a rise in health issues.

The Lithuanian Red Cross Society conducted a study on the challenges faced by applicants who chose to live outside of reception facilities. Gaps included access to a vulnerability assessment procedure when not staying in the reception facility.1000

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