



# SENSA

**SENSIBILISIERUNG** zu  
besonderen **SCHUTZBEDARFEN**  
von **ASYLSUCHENDEN** Menschen  
in Sachsen-Anhalt und Thüringen



## FACTSHEET: SPECIAL PROTECTION NEEDS IN ASYLUM PROCEEDINGS



# GENDER-SPECIFIC PERSECUTION

Under European law, certain groups of people are entitled to special protection and needs-based support to compensate for disadvantages in asylum proceedings and in the provision of care.

Below, we provide an overview of individual protection needs.

This information cannot and should not replace personal counselling and/or legal advice.

**Violence and persecution experienced by women can constitute gender-specific persecution, which is a serious violation of human rights and a recognized grounds for asylum.**

The term 'gender-specific persecution' covers a wide range of experiences. These include sexual violence, female genital mutilation (FGM/C), human trafficking, forced prostitution, so-called 'honour crimes', forced marriage and forced sterilisation. But it also includes violence by a spouse at home (domestic violence) and the exclusion of women from education, the enforcement of strict dress codes, and persecution based on gender or sexual orientation.

Persecution does not necessarily have to be committed by the state, such as the government, police, or other state actors; it can also be perpetrated by private individuals, including spouses, family members, neighbours, or a group of people.

In the case of non-state persecution by private individuals, it must be established that the country from which the person has fled is unable or unwilling to offer protection.

This means that in cases of persecution by private individuals, it must be determined whether protection is available in the country of origin—particularly whether effective state protection exists and is available to the person concerned.

### Information on the asylum procedure

In most cases, it is not possible to tell whether a person has been persecuted, and the vast majority of those affected by gender-specific persecution find it very difficult to talk about it out of shame and fear. If this is the case, these reasons cannot be considered.



**It is crucial to come forward as early as possible in the process!**

The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) and the courts often question the credibility of claims involving gender-based violence if they are raised only at a late stage in the proceedings.

The decision of the BAMF and, later of the court, is made based on the applicant's statements, their credibility and coherence, and whether these indicate a risk of concrete and serious human rights violations in the country of origin. This can be especially difficult to prove when the violence or persecution occurred in a private setting and there is no conventional evidence.

Therefore, it is especially important in asylum proceedings for the individual to recount their experiences in a detailed and specific manner. An asylum claim can still be successful even without supporting evidence!

Nevertheless, all evidence that could help convince the BAMF should be gathered—for example, threatening messages, medical records, psychological or psychiatric evaluations, photographs, and affidavits from individuals who witnessed aspects of the case.



## Support

During the asylum procedure and in accommodation, you may be entitled to special support services.

For the hearing at the BAMF—the so-called interview—you can request that it be conducted by a specially trained BAMF officer, known as a special representative for gender-based persecution. You may also request that a female interpreter be appointed, if preferred.

It is also possible to ensure that accompanying spouses, children, or parents are not informed about the content of the hearing, and that placement in special accommodation can be arranged.



Illustration: Ernestine Donnerberg



HI!

HELLO

BONJOUR!

SALUT

سلام

This fact sheet is available in German, English, French, Arabic, Persian and Russian, as well as other fact sheets on other protection needs.

[www.fluechtlingsrat-lsa.de/sensa-fs/](http://www.fluechtlingsrat-lsa.de/sensa-fs/)

## Further information and points of contact

### for SAXONY-ANHALT

Topic page: **Special protection needs and**

Digital guide 

[www.fluechtlingsrat-lsa.de/besondere-schutzbedarfe](http://www.fluechtlingsrat-lsa.de/besondere-schutzbedarfe)



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### for THURINGIA

Topic page: **Besondere Schutzbedarfe and**

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[www.fluechtlingsrat-thr.de/themen/besonders-schutzbeduerftige](http://www.fluechtlingsrat-thr.de/themen/besonders-schutzbeduerftige)



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Identifying the special protection needs of asylum seekers is essential to safeguarding their rights during the asylum procedure.

The SENSA project raises awareness, provides training, and fosters collaboration among all professionals involved in the asylum process in Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia. In doing so, it contributes to fair and legally sound asylum procedures.

Examples of special protection needs:

- Accompanied and unaccompanied minors
- Women\* and gender-specific persecution
- LGBTIQ+
- Trauma and people with severe physical and mental illnesses
- People with disabilities
- Victims of human trafficking