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**Gendered Experiences of Social Harm in Asylum:**

**Exploring State Responses to Persecuted Women in Britain, Denmark and Sweden**

**What is the aim of this research?**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of women seeking asylum in Britain, Denmark and Sweden. It will explore women’s experiences in their country of origin, during migration, and whilst waiting for refugee status. The aim is to consider aspects of asylum systems which are harmful or helpful in responding to women seeking asylum so that harms might be mitigated and policy and practice improved.

**Who is conducting the research and who is it for?**

Dr. Victoria Canningis carrying out this research on behalf of the Open University and the Economic and Social Research Council. Victoria is an experienced researcher in the field of refugee studies, violence against women and social harm. She has worked with multiple organisations and agencies in this area and has experience supporting refugees, survivors of violence and working with interpreters. More information can be found here: <http://www.open.ac.uk/people/vc3587>

**Why am I being invited to participate in this research?**

The main aim of this research is to understand women’s experiences of seeking asylum so that barriers to support might be lifted, and harmful experiences avoided in the future. As a woman seeking asylum, your perspective and experience is a key way of centralising women’s agendas in responding to women who have applied for refugee status.

**If I take part in this research, what will be involved?**

Victoria will be conducting oral history interviews in 2016/2017. These are open ended discussions with women seeking asylum and will cover a range of topics, some of which are outlined below. Your interview will take approximately 2 hours and we will meet on multiple occasions. It will be conducted at an organisation office or your home at a date and time that is convenient to you. You will be reimbursed for any travel costs incurred.

**What will the interview be like?**

The interview will be an informal meeting with Victoria who will introduce the project, and ask you some open ended questions relating to your experience of life in your home country, during migration and whilst seeking asylum. You are able to direct the content of the interview(s), but some sensitive topics may be discussed, including migration, life at camps or borders, experiences of violence, and family life. As this project is particularly interested in understanding gendered harm, issues relate to violence against women may also be discussed. It is important to note that you can speak for as short or as long a time as you wish and you do not have to disclose or discuss any issues or experiences that you do not wish to.

**Is it confidential?**

Your participation will be treated in **strict confidence** in accordance with the Data Protection Act. No personal information will be passed to anyone. A report of the findings from this study will be produced, but no individual will be identifiable in published results of the research. Research articles and other publications will also be produced however your personal information will be anonymised and you will not be identifiable.

**What happens now?**

Over the next few weeks, Victoria may contact you by telephone/email to ask if you would like to take part and, if so, ask you a few questions about yourself. Oral history interviews will be carried out once you have agreed a time and place to participate that is convenient for you.

What if I have other questions?

If you have any other questions about the study, you are welcome to contact Victoria by telephone or email on the information provided at the top of this sheet.

In case any further queries may arrive, please feel free to contact either of the project mentors below:

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