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'Honour' violence victims fear Brexit deportations

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Women and children who fled from "honour" violence in Europe fear they may be at risk again after Brexit.

The Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation (IKWRO), which helps Middle Eastern women and girls living in the UK, believes some are at risk in the country where they hold EU citizenship. This is because they are not permanent UK residents – a status gained after five years – and may have to return to abuse.

"Honour" violence is carried out to defend a family or community in the belief that a person has caused shame. IKWRO wants a guarantee that women who are at risk will be allowed to

stay in the UK. It works with 800 complex cases a year, and 3% of those may be forced to return.

One client, "Zara", sought refuge in Scandinavia in the 1990s after her political activities put her life at risk. Once there, Zara and her children were subjected to violence from her husband, who threatened to kill her.

She left him, taking their children with her. He was always able to find her, however, until she and her children were given new identities in the UK. Now they fear being returned to danger.

"The whole situation of Brexit is very saddening," Zara said, adding that her daughter would prefer to kill herself than go back to a life of violence.

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