

2008 TIP Report:

Estonia (TIER 2)

Estonia is a source, and to a lesser extent, transit, destination country for men, women, and children from Russia trafficked for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor. Estonian women and girls are trafficked to Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Spain, Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

The Government of Estonia does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. During the reporting period, Estonia demonstrated improved law enforcement efforts by increasing the number of traffickers convicted and the length of time each trafficker served in prison. The government also significantly increased its anti-trafficking budget from \$96,000 to \$181,000, concentrating 75 percent of funding on victim assistance.

Recommendations for Estonia: Improve coordination efforts with regional counterparts on victim identification and repatriation; consider drafting a trafficking-specific statute that incorporates a definition of trafficking in persons in conformity with the 2000 UN TIP Protocol; and continue efforts to train police to identify potential victims and refer them for assistance.

Prosecution

Estonian law does not prohibit all forms of trafficking, although the criminal code does prohibit enslavement, abduction, pimping, and a number of other trafficking-related crimes. The penalties for such acts range from five to 15 years, imprisonment, which are sufficiently stringent and commensurate with other grave crimes such as sexual assault. In 2007, police conducted two trafficking investigations, compared to three investigations in 2006. Authorities prosecuted three trafficking cases and convicted three traffickers in 2007, compared to one confirmed trafficking prosecution and one trafficker convicted in 2006. One of the three traffickers convicted in 2007 was sentenced to three years, imprisonment; the other two traffickers were each sentenced to one year in prison. In 2007, Estonia spent \$15,000 on 15 trafficking identification and prosecution seminars for government officials. Law enforcement officials regularly exchanged information with counterparts from Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Germany, Finland, the United Kingdom, and Belgium.

Protection

Estonia improved its victim assistance efforts during the reporting period. The government allocated approximately \$135,750 for victim assistance programs. Three trafficking shelters established by the Nordic-Baltic Anti-Trafficking Task Force opened in various cities around the country; the Ministry of Finance contributed some funding for this project. Six Estonian victims were repatriated and assisted by these shelters;

none was exploited or identified in Estonia. The government provided \$4,000 for IOM-produced brochures for social workers and other professionals to help with practical assistance to victims. Estonian authorities did not penalize victims for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of their being trafficked. Estonia encourages trafficking victims to participate in trafficking investigations and prosecutions; foreign victims are eligible to apply for temporary residency for the duration of criminal investigations and legal proceedings. Estonian authorities lack formal procedures for identifying victims among vulnerable populations, such as women arrested for prostitution violations.

Prevention

The government continued to increase its trafficking prevention efforts during the reporting period. The government conducted a media campaign on the dangers of prostitution and conducted prostitution prevention programs in school. The government allocated approximately \$42,000 for trafficking awareness and prevention, including \$18,000 given to an NGO for the continued operation of the country's only anti-trafficking hotline.