

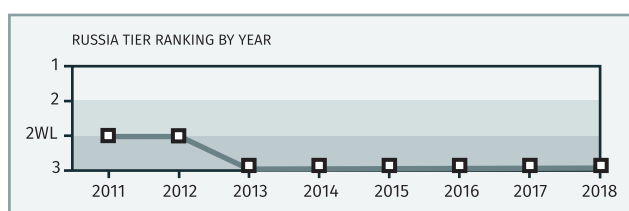
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children were subjected to trafficking while in the care of the state, particularly in small towns. Romania is a destination country for a limited number of foreign trafficking victims, including trafficking victims from Pakistan and the Philippines. Romanians living in privately run institutions for the mentally disabled are vulnerable to forced labor.

RUSSIA: TIER 3

The Government of Russia does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making significant efforts to do so; therefore Russia remained on Tier 3. Despite the lack of significant efforts, there were reports some authorities took steps to address trafficking, including by identifying some victims, though the number of victims identified by the government remained negligible. However, authorities routinely detained and deported potential forced labor victims without screening for signs of exploitation, and prosecuted victims forced into prostitution for prostitution offenses. Throughout 2017, the government maintained bilateral contracts with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) under which the DPRK operated labor camps in Russia and subjected thousands of North Korean workers to forced labor, though near the end of the reporting period, Russia announced its intention to discontinue future contracts to comply with UN Security Council Resolution 2397. The government offered no funding or programs for trafficking victims' rehabilitation, while several privately run shelters remained closed due to lack of funding and the government's crackdown on civil society. Authorities did not report assisting any victims and lacked a process for the identification of victims and their referral to care. The government did not consistently provide comprehensive information on prosecution efforts, but the limited available data and media reports suggest prosecutions remained low compared with the scope of Russia's trafficking problem. As in previous years, the government did not draft a national strategy or assign roles and responsibilities to government agencies.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RUSSIA

Investigate allegations and prevent the use of forced labor in construction projects and North Korean-operated labor camps; screen for trafficking indicators before deporting or repatriating migrants, including from the DPRK; allocate funding to state bodies and anti-trafficking NGOs to provide specialized assistance and rehabilitative care to trafficking victims; develop formal national procedures to guide law enforcement, labor inspectors, and other government officials in identifying and referring victims to service providers, particularly among labor migrants and individuals involved in prostitution; increase efforts to investigate and prosecute trafficking offenses and convict traffickers including complicit officials, respecting due process; create a national anti-trafficking action plan and establish a central coordinator for government efforts;

implement a formal policy to ensure identified trafficking victims are not punished, detained, or deported for acts committed as a direct result of being subjected to trafficking; provide victims access to legal alternatives to deportation to countries where they face hardship or retribution; create a central repository for publicly available information on investigation, prosecution, conviction, and sentencing data for trafficking cases; and increase efforts to raise public awareness of both sex and labor trafficking.

PROSECUTION

The government maintained minimal law enforcement efforts. It did not report comprehensive data on trafficking criminal cases, making it difficult to assess the adequacy or effectiveness of law enforcement efforts. Media reports and publicly available data revealed some details on trafficking cases investigated and prosecuted during the reporting period, although the limited number of cases reported did not constitute an adequate law enforcement response compared to the scale of trafficking in Russia. From the limited available information, authorities prosecuted trafficking suspects through Articles 127.1 and 127.2 of the criminal code, which criminalized "trade in people" and "use of slave labor." These articles prescribed punishments of up to five years of forced labor or up to six years of imprisonment for "trade in people" and up to five years imprisonment for "use of slave labor." These penalties were sufficiently stringent and, with respect to sex trafficking, commensurate with punishments prescribed for other serious crimes, such as rape. However, inconsistent with the definition of trafficking under international law, these articles established the use of force, fraud, or coercion as aggravating factors, rather than essential elements of the crime.

In 2017, Russia's federal-level investigative committee publicly reported 19 investigations, 16 under article 127.1 and three under 127.2, an increase from seven investigations reported in 2016. The government did not report the number of prosecutions initiated. The Supreme Court did not release conviction statistics before the close of the reporting period. Media reports about these investigations and prosecutions revealed several cases involving baby-selling, a crime that falls outside the international definition of trafficking. There were indications that some trafficking cases were reclassified as kidnapping or battery in order to secure a conviction; the government provided no public information on whether any of these cases involved force, fraud, or coercion.

Law enforcement training centers provided lectures and courses on trafficking for investigators and prosecutors. Due to insufficient funding, NGOs did not conduct trafficking training for officials. Russian authorities cooperated in some international investigations involving Russian nationals subjected to trafficking abroad. The DPRK government continued to send workers to Russia under bilateral contracts with Russia and other foreign governments. Despite credible reports of slave-like conditions of North Koreans working in Russia, the Russian government did not report any investigations into those conditions. Corruption and official complicity remained significant concerns, inhibiting law enforcement action during the year. Despite media reports that alleged the use of forced labor in the construction of the new Russian embassy in Panama in 2017, the government did not report any investigations, prosecutions, or convictions of government employees or contractors complicit in human trafficking offenses.

PROTECTION

The government generally did not undertake efforts to protect victims and did not publicly report assisting victims. The government did not provide funding or programs for protective services dedicated to trafficking victims. Without specific legislation differentiating trafficking victims from victims of other crimes, government agencies claimed they had neither the means nor authority to provide assistance programs specifically for trafficking victims. Three dedicated trafficking shelters remained closed due to lack of funding; however, some victims continued to be accommodated in homeless shelters. A government-funded homeless shelter accepted Russian and foreign trafficking victims, provided medical and psychiatric aid, and referred victims to international NGOs and other homeless shelters located in many of Russia's regions. A homeless shelter run by the Russian Orthodox Church continued to accept victims and offered them food and housing, although not medical or psychological care; the government did not provide financial support for the shelter. The Russian Red Cross continued to operate a hotline, which primarily served labor migrants and did not identify any victims of trafficking among its callers. Similar to the previous reporting period, the government took steps to limit or ban the activities of other civil society groups, including some dedicated to anti-trafficking activities. Further, the government's efforts to exert pressure on NGOs through the implementation of restrictive laws also targeted those providing protective services for trafficking victims; the government criminally charged and investigated one NGO working on trafficking issues, although charges were eventually dropped. In 2016, two locally registered NGOs working on trafficking issues were designated as "foreign agents." The "Yarovaya" package of anti-terror laws made it a crime for individuals or organizations to provide material assistance to people considered to be in Russia illegally. There were limited examples of government cooperation with civil society. In January 2018, local authorities worked with NGOs to free victims from a factory, obtain travel documents and raise funds to help repatriate Uzbek victims. Authorities reportedly covered repatriation costs on a case-by-case basis.

The government identified 20 trafficking victims in 2017. According to law enforcement statistics, all identified victims were Russian; four victims were females subjected to sex trafficking, six were men subjected to forced labor, and 10 were children, although many of these were baby-selling cases. An NGO assisted approximately 125 victims in 2017. An international organization identified more than 2,400 trafficking cases in Russia from 2015 to 2017. Police regularly avoided registering victims in criminal cases that were unlikely to be solved in order not to risk lower conviction rates. The government did not develop or employ a formal system to guide officials in proactive identification of victims or their referral to available services. NGOs reported a significant number of cases go unreported due to the lack of a formal referral mechanism, victims' fears, and the lack of government assistance to victims. Despite the lack of formal procedures, observers reported some working-level officials referred potential victims for assistance on an ad hoc basis. However, observers also noted other authorities often did not distinguish between foreign victims and individuals unlawfully present in Russia, which resulted in the penalization of foreign victims rather than their referral to care. Frequently, authorities criminally charged victims with prostitution or unlawful presence in country. Authorities punished child victims of forced criminality along with their exploiters. Authorities routinely detained and deported possible foreign victims with no effort to screen them as victims or refer them to care providers. However, in limited

instances, Moscow city police informally provided "permit letters" valid for one year to individuals the police determined were trafficking victims. While the letters offered no official status to the migrants, they allowed victims to remain in the Moscow region without risk of deportation or prosecution while police investigated their trafficking case. Authorities reportedly prosecuted Russian citizens returning from Syria and Iraq, where some were subjected to trafficking, under anti-terror laws without being screened for indicators of trafficking. A February 2016 agreement between Russia and DPRK enabled Russian authorities to deport North Koreans residing "illegally" in Russia, possibly even for those with refugee status; this may increase the risk of labor trafficking for North Koreans working under the state-to-state agreement. Moreover, DPRK authorities reportedly arrested, imprisoned, subjected to forced labor, tortured, and sometimes executed repatriated trafficking victims. In February 2018, government officials announced that in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions 2375 and 2397, Russia would cease issuing new work permits to North Korean laborers, and repatriate those workers whose contracts had expired. Media reports indicated Russia had begun to repatriate the first wave of laborers whose permits had expired. Although government representatives publicly stated workers were asked to leave voluntarily, it was not clear that workers were being screened for trafficking indicators or offered options to legally remain in the country. Authorities did not screen other vulnerable populations, such as migrant workers or foreign women entering Russia on student visas despite evidence of their intention to work or other vulnerabilities to trafficking.

PREVENTION

The government maintained limited efforts to prevent trafficking. The government operated regional migration centers where migrants could obtain work permits directly from the government; however, the permits contained large upfront fees and sometimes required multiple time-consuming trips to the center to obtain. In 2017, Russia entered into bilateral agreements with Uzbekistan to regulate, control, and provide training to migrant laborers in each country. Authorities conducted scheduled and unannounced audits of firms employing foreign laborers to check for violations of immigration and labor laws—with penalties in the form of revoking foreign worker permits. While these raids took place with some regularity, the use of undocumented or forced labor remained widespread due to complacency and corruption. There were widespread reports of abuse of World Cup stadium construction workers, many of whom were migrants from Central Asia, ranging from non-payment of wages to the death of 17 laborers in 2017. Russia did not have a national action plan, nor was there a designated lead agency to coordinate anti-trafficking measures; legislation that would implement such a framework continued to languish at the highest levels within the presidential administration. The government did not have a body to monitor its anti-trafficking activities or make periodic assessments measuring its performance. The government made no efforts to develop public awareness of forced labor or sex trafficking, although high-level officials, including the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Internal Affairs, occasionally urged cooperation in countering human trafficking. In July 2017, Russia provided in-kind support for an OSCE conference focusing on the role of public-private partnerships in the fight against human trafficking; however, the event focused on the global scope of the problem rather than the challenges in Russia. The government did not make efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts or forced labor.

TRAFFICKING PROFILE

As reported over the past five years, Russia is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. Although labor trafficking remains the predominant human trafficking problem within Russia, sex trafficking is increasing. Workers from Russia and other countries in Europe, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia—including Vietnam and DPRK—are subjected to forced labor in Russia. Instances of labor trafficking have been reported in the construction, manufacturing, logging, agricultural, brick factories, textile, grocery store, maritime, and domestic service industries, as well as in forced begging, waste sorting, and street sweeping. Official and unofficial statistics estimate there are between 5 and 12 million foreign workers in Russia, of which the government estimates 1.5 million are irregular migrants. According to press reports, 2.3 million Ukrainians resided in Russia, including more than 1 million who went east to escape Russian aggression in Ukraine. International organizations estimate up to 40 percent of these migrants were working unofficially and vulnerable to both forced labor and sex trafficking. Foreign laborers work primarily in construction, housing, and utilities, and as public transport drivers, seasonal agricultural workers, tailors and garment workers in underground garment factories, and vendors at marketplaces and shops. Many of these migrant workers experience exploitative labor conditions characteristic of trafficking cases, such as withholding of identity documents, non-payment for services rendered, physical abuse, lack of safety measures, or extremely poor living conditions. Subcontracting practices in Russia's construction industry result in cases of non-payment or slow payment of wages, which leave workers at risk of labor trafficking. Corruption among some government officials and within some state agencies creates an environment enabling trafficking crimes. There are reports of Russian citizens facing forced labor abroad. There are also reports of increased vulnerability of minors from state and municipal orphanages being lured to forced begging, forced criminality, child pornography, and sexual exploitation, and use by armed groups in the Middle East.

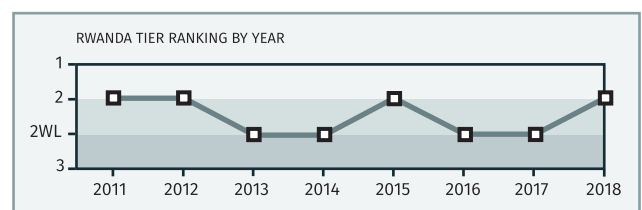
Women and children from Europe (predominantly Ukraine and Moldova), Southeast Asia (primarily Vietnam), Africa (particularly Nigeria), and Central Asia are victims of sex trafficking in Russia. NGOs reported an increase in the number sex trafficking victims from Africa in 2017 and predicted the number of Africans subjected to trafficking in Russia could increase during soccer tournaments and as the Libyan route to Europe becomes more treacherous. Forced prostitution occurs in brothels, hotels, and saunas, among other locations. Homeless children are exploited in sex trafficking. Teenagers are targeted for "pick-up trainings," sexual education classes in which they are pressured into performing recorded sexual acts on course organizers; the compromising videos are subsequently used to coerce the victims into further sexual exploitation. Russian women and children are reportedly victims of sex trafficking in Russia and abroad, including in Northeast Asia, Europe, Central Asia, Africa, the United States, and the Middle East. Women from Russia's North Caucasus region as well as women from Central Asia residing in Russia were recruited to join ISIS through online romantic relationships and subjected to exploitation once they arrived. Wives and children of foreign fighters were sold after their spouse or father was killed in action.

In recent years, criminal cases have involved Russian officials suspected of allegedly facilitating trafficking in Russia by facilitating victims' entry into Russia, providing protection to traffickers, and returning victims to their exploiters. Employers sometimes bribe Russian officials to avoid enforcement of

penalties for engaging illegal workers. The DPRK sends approximately 20,000 North Korean citizens to Russia annually for work in a variety of sectors, notably including logging in Russia's Far East and construction of the 2018 World Cup Stadiums—with 30,000 to 40,000 North Korean citizens believed to be present in Russia; reportedly many of these North Korean citizens are subjected to conditions of forced labor.

RWANDA: TIER 2

The Government of Rwanda does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated increasing efforts compared to the previous reporting period; therefore Rwanda was upgraded to Tier 2. The government demonstrated increasing efforts by prosecuting and convicting more perpetrators of transnational trafficking crimes, opening more short-term care facilities, and continuing to implement anti-trafficking awareness campaigns and other prevention measures. However, the government did not meet the minimum standards in several key areas. The government did not convict any traffickers for internal trafficking crimes, despite the presence of sex trafficking and forced labor within the country. The government did not systematically or proactively identify and refer trafficking victims among vulnerable populations or operate sufficient long-term care facilities for all trafficking victims. While there were no credible reports of Rwandan government involvement in either the recruitment into armed groups or sexual exploitation of refugees, during the reporting period, refugee whistleblowers from 2015 reported reprisal from the government for reporting trafficking concerns in camps. The government did not adequately screen for trafficking victims at government transit centers that serve vulnerable populations, and observers stated these centers continued to function as de facto detention facilities. The government implemented some improvements after an NGO documented physical and sexual abuse at these facilities in 2015, but observers stated the reforms were insufficient.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RWANDA

Systematically and proactively identify trafficking victims among vulnerable populations, and ensure potential and identified victims are not arrested, detained, or punished for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of being subjected to human trafficking; cooperate and coordinate with NGOs and international organizations to provide all foreign and domestic trafficking victims with appropriate long-term protection services, including shelter and psycho-social care; develop and implement a victim-witness support program and expand training for prosecutors dealing with victim-witnesses; develop a formal mechanism to systematically refer trafficking victims to appropriate care; adopt and implement an updated national anti-trafficking action plan (NAP); continue to investigate, prosecute, and convict perpetrators of forced labor and sex trafficking, including internal trafficking; continue to implement