

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	275
Land:	Armenien
Kilde:	US Department of State
Titel:	Trafficking in Persons Report 2018 - Armenia
Udgivet:	28. juni 2018
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	16. august 2018



2018 Trafficking in Persons Report - Armenia

Publisher [United States Department of State](#)

Publication Date 28 June 2018

Cite as United States Department of State, *2018 Trafficking in Persons Report - Armenia*, 28 June 2018, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5b3e0bb7a.html> [accessed 16 August 2018]

Disclaimer This is not a UNHCR publication. UNHCR is not responsible for, nor does it necessarily endorse, its content. Any views expressed are solely those of the author or publisher and do not necessarily reflect those of UNHCR, the United Nations or its Member States.

ARMENIA: TIER 2

The Government of Armenia does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. The government made significant efforts to meet the minimum standards during the reporting period by providing robust training for law enforcement, initiating slightly more prosecutions, and organizing various awareness campaigns. However, these efforts were not serious and sustained compared to the efforts during the previous reporting period. The government did not proactively identify victims or conduct proactive investigations and relied on victims to self-identify; the number of victims identified decreased compared to the previous reporting period. Authorities dropped most cases categorized as trafficking by local police due to a lack of evidence and first responders did not use uniform indicators to screen vulnerable populations. Investigators repeatedly interrogated victims, including children, and victims always appeared in front of their traffickers in court; risking re-traumatization. International organizations reported cases of child labor and child abuse in state childcare institutions, and noted the institutions lacked measures to prevent the exploitation of children. The government continued to suspend the majority of labor inspectorate functions, hindering regular inspections that had the potential to identify forced labor; no labor inspections were conducted during the reporting period. Therefore Armenia was downgraded to Tier 2.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ARMENIA

Vigorously investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers under Articles 132 and 132-2; establish and implement preventative measures for child labor and potential child trafficking in state child care institutions; increase efforts to proactively identify trafficking victims; develop standard operating procedures for screening trafficking victims and train officials on screening for trafficking among individuals in prostitution, migrants, refugees, and other at-risk populations; proactively investigate all potential trafficking offenses, even those complaints filed by victims that do not specifically mention trafficking; train investigators, prosecutors, and judges on victim-centered approaches to trafficking cases, including for children, and provide advanced training on trafficking investigations and prosecutions; allow labor inspectors to conduct regular inspections and identify victims through unannounced visits; establish formal procedures for repatriating trafficking victims from abroad, including measures to cover logistical costs; license, regulate, and educate local employment agencies and agents so they can help prevent the forced labor of Armenians abroad; work with Russian authorities to identify Armenian forced labor victims and

prosecute labor traffickers; work with NGOs to find ways to identify and assist Armenian victims in Turkey; and approve legislation to establish victim-witness protection measures.

PROSECUTION

The government decreased law enforcement efforts. Articles 132 and 132-2 of the criminal code criminalized sex and labor trafficking and prescribed penalties of five to eight years imprisonment, which were sufficiently stringent, and with respect to sex trafficking, commensurate with those prescribed for other serious crimes, such as rape. The government investigated six cases (16 in 2016). Of these, two cases were sex trafficking and four were forced labor (five cases of sex trafficking, 10 of forced labor, and one case of both sex trafficking and forced labor in 2016). The government prosecuted three defendants (one in 2016); one for sex trafficking, one for forced begging, and one for forced labor. Courts convicted one sex trafficker (three sex traffickers in 2016). The trafficker received 12 years imprisonment.

Observers reported the Investigative Committee (IC) or Prosecutor General's Office dropped most cases categorized as trafficking by local police due to a lack of evidence. Local investigators lacked the skills to properly interview victims, especially children; however, the IC set up child-friendly interview rooms in five regional divisions. Law enforcement investigated only formal criminal complaints filed by victims that specifically alleged trafficking and did not proactively investigate criminal activity that potentially involved trafficking. As a result, law enforcement initiated investigations only when victims self-identified. The government trained 320 prosecutors, 327 investigators from the IC, and 540 employees from penitentiary institutions on trafficking issues. The government trained 119 officials working on juvenile investigations and 21 investigators from the IC on child trafficking issues. The government also trained 174 civil servants on fighting official complicity. The government did not report any investigations, prosecutions, or convictions of government employees complicit in trafficking. Prosecution of forced labor cases involving Russia remained a challenge, where Armenian investigators continued to face difficulties collaborating with law enforcement. Similarly, the absence of diplomatic relations with Turkey continued to hinder law enforcement and victim protection efforts for cases involving Turkey.

PROTECTION

The government decreased protection efforts. The government identified 13 victims (22 in 2016). Of these, eight were subjected to sex trafficking and five to forced labor (three sex trafficking and 19 forced labor in 2016); two were children in both 2016 and 2017; 10 were females and three were males (five females and 17 males in 2016). Experts reported an absence of proactive identification and the government relied on victims to self-identify. First responders did not use uniform indicators to screen vulnerable populations. The government provided temporary shelter, emergency medical aid, and psychological aid to potential trafficking victims during the "pre-identification stage," a stage where the government collected information on the potential victim within a maximum of 10 days. The Victim Identification Commission (VIC), comprised of national and local government bodies, NGOs, and international organizations, officially recognized victims based on information collected during the "pre-identification stage". NGOs reported positive cooperation with the government and that the referral procedures functioned well.

The government allocated 19,068,600 drams (\$39,320) for victim protection efforts, including operational costs for an NGO-run shelter, compared to 18,846,000 drams (\$38,860) in 2016. The government and local NGOs jointly provided victims legal, medical, and psychological assistance; housing; one-time monetary compensation of 250,000 drams (\$515); and access to social, educational, and employment projects. The government also offered free health care but relied on

NGOs to provide legal assistance, including the cost for attorneys. Two victims received health care (one in 2016) and nine victims received legal assistance. The government maintained a cooperation agreement and partially funded one specialized NGO-run shelter to provide services to victims; the NGO-run shelter assisted 19 newly-identified victims (19 in 2016), and 36 victims in total. The NGO-run shelter required adult victims to notify staff when they left shelters unescorted, but victims were free to leave if they no longer wanted assistance. Services were available to female and male victims, but male victims did not have access to a shelter. The NGO-run shelter and childcare institutions accommodated child victims. However, GRETA and OSCE reported cases of child labor and child abuse in state childcare institutions; staff at state childcare institutions considered child labor to be normal. The law designated the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to coordinate repatriation of Armenian victims from abroad, but observers reported difficulties in repatriations due to a lack of established procedures and funds to cover logistical costs; the government repatriated three victims (11 in 2016).

Authorities did not make victim assistance contingent on victim cooperation with law enforcement and afforded foreign victims the same rights and services as Armenian citizens. The government did not penalize trafficking victims for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of being subjected to human trafficking. Observers reported law enforcement officers in remote areas lacked information and training to inform victims of their rights to protection or assistance. Victims hesitated to assist in prosecutions due to a lack of confidentiality in public testimonies, creating a fear of retaliation from traffickers and stigmatization from their family and community. Authorities did not protect victims' rights during court proceedings, including children; investigators repeatedly interrogated victims and victims always appeared in front of their traffickers in court, risking re-traumatization. The government continued to lack a formal victim-witness protection program. The government adopted a decree in 2016 that provided witness protection specifically to trafficking victims. Victims were legally entitled to obtain restitution during criminal proceedings or through a separate civil suit. Victims did not file any civil suits; however, in previous years, judges had not issued damages in civil suits, asserting that victims did not substantiate the financial damages they had suffered. The law allowed investigators to place defendants' property in custody to fund potential civil claims, but this rarely occurred in practice.

PREVENTION

The government maintained prevention efforts. The Anti-trafficking Ministerial Council and the Interagency Working Group against Trafficking in Persons continued to implement the 2016-2018 national action plan (NAP) and published semi-annual and annual reports of its activities. Observers reported the government did not monitor for progress or assess the impact and outcomes of the NAP. There was no mechanism for oversight and regulation of labor recruitment agencies. As a result of a legal change suspending most labor inspectorate functions in July 2015, inspectors were unable to conduct regular inspections and identify indications of forced labor. The Ministry of Health formed the Health Inspection Body (HIB), but their mandate was limited to workplace health and safety inspections and did not have authority to conduct unannounced inspections; HIB was still recruiting inspectors and did not conduct any inspections during the reporting period. The government held awareness-raising discussion at schools and campaigns targeting students and teachers. The Ministry of Diaspora distributed informative materials on the risks of trafficking to individuals crossing the border, as well as Armenians residing in the Middle East and European countries. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs aired a trafficking program on television and government agencies posted trafficking information on their websites, including information on hotlines operated by police and NGOs; the government did not report the number of calls. The government did not make efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts or forced labor.

TRAFFICKING PROFILE

Armenia is a source and, to a lesser extent, destination country for men, women, and children subjected to sex and labor trafficking. Armenians are subjected to labor trafficking in Russia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Turkey; Armenian women and children are subjected to sex trafficking in the UAE and Turkey. Armenian women and children are subjected to sex and labor trafficking and forced begging within the country. Some children work in agriculture, construction, and service provision within the country, where they are vulnerable to labor trafficking. Men in rural areas with little education and children staying in childcare institutions remain highly vulnerable to trafficking.

Search Refworld

by keyword
and / or country 

[Advanced Search](#) | [Search Tips](#)

Countries

- [Armenia](#)

Topics

- [Survivors of trafficking / Persons at risk of trafficking](#)
- [Trafficking in persons](#)