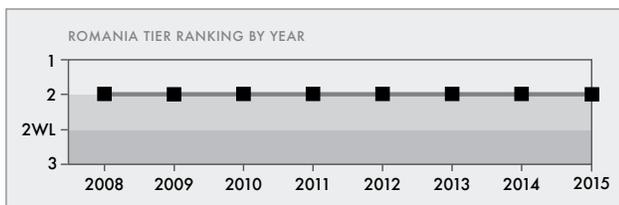


ROMANIA: Tier 2

Romania is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to labor trafficking and women and children subjected to sex trafficking. Romanians represent a significant source of sex and labor trafficking victims in Western Europe (particularly the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, and France) and Central and Southern Europe (particularly the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Greece). Romanian men, women, and children are subjected to labor trafficking in agriculture, construction, domestic service, hotels, and manufacturing, as well as forced begging and theft in Romania and other European countries. Romanian women and children are victims of sex trafficking in Romania and other European countries. Romanian victims of forced begging and forced criminal activities are often Romani children. Romania is a destination country for a limited number of foreign trafficking victims, including sex trafficking victims from Moldova and Poland and labor trafficking victims from Bangladesh and Serbia. Government officials have been convicted of human trafficking crimes, and there have been reported instances of local officials obstructing trafficking investigations.

The Government of Romania does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated strong law enforcement efforts, but issued weak or suspended sentences that did not deter traffickers or keep victims safe when traffickers were released. The government identified a large number of victims, but public and private institutions assisted only half of them. The government did not provide funding to NGOs offering victim assistance, and victims had difficulty obtaining medical services, psychological counseling, and restitution from traffickers. Some victims who had been returned to their homes by the government, instead of being placed in shelters, were subjected to trafficking again by family members.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ROMANIA:

Allocate public funding for NGOs providing services to victims and provide funding to staff the new government shelter for trafficking victims; improve victim access to medical assistance and increase quality of psychological counseling; investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers, including complicit officials, and seek and obtain sentences that are sufficiently stringent and commensurate with the severity of the crime; assess safety of home environments before releasing victims to prevent re-trafficking; withhold from publication names of trafficking victims who testify in trials; consistently inform victims of their right to apply for compensation; increase efforts to proactively identify potential victims among vulnerable populations, such as undocumented migrants, foreign workers, Roma, and children involved in begging; operate the anti-trafficking hotline on evenings and weekends; and do not prosecute victims for crimes committed as a direct result of their being subjected to human trafficking.

PROSECUTION

The government made strong law enforcement efforts but obtained weak or suspended sentences that neither deterred traffickers nor kept victims safe when traffickers were released. Romania prohibits all forms of trafficking through Article 210, which prescribes penalties of three to 10 years' imprisonment. These penalties are sufficiently stringent and commensurate with penalties prescribed for other serious crimes, such as rape. Romanian authorities investigated 875 trafficking cases in 2014, an increase from 714 in 2013. The government prosecuted 534 defendants in 2014, similar to the 552 in 2013. Romanian courts convicted 269 traffickers in 2014, slightly more than 252 in 2013. The government did not disaggregate law enforcement statistics to demonstrate action against both sex and labor trafficking. Sixty-seven percent of convicted traffickers were sentenced to time in prison, ranging from one to 15 years' imprisonment; this marked an increase from 2013, when 59 percent of convicted traffickers were sentenced to time in prison. However, in 2014, courts suspended 73 prison sentences and instead levied fines against 15 traffickers. The government provided training on human trafficking laws to 200 future judges and prosecutors and trained over 3,000 professionals on human trafficking, including teachers, social workers, local government officials, priests, police, border guards, and military personnel. Nonetheless, police and judges at the local level lacked specialized training and sensitivity to human trafficking issues. The government conducted a large-scale law enforcement operation with the UK from 2012-2014 that resulted in multi-year prison sentences for several traffickers in 2014. Three government officials were convicted of labor trafficking in 2014.

PROTECTION

The government demonstrated weak efforts to protect trafficking victims, as the number of victims identified far exceeded services available to assist them. The government relied on NGOs to identify and assist victims, but did not provide any financial support due to a legal preclusion of direct funding for NGOs. Public officials and NGOs identified 757 victims in 2014, a decrease from 896 in 2013. Seventy-four percent of victims were female and 38 percent of victims were children. Sixty-three percent of victims (475) were subjected to trafficking for sexual exploitation and 25 percent (188) for labor exploitation in agriculture and construction. Police used the government's national victim identification and referral mechanism, though observers noted they relied too heavily on NGOs to take the lead in identifying victims. Approximately half of the registered victims (380) benefited from rehabilitative assistance provided by public institutions and NGOs. The government referred victims to government-run domestic violence or homeless shelters when NGO-run trafficking shelters were full. Local governments financed and operated emergency assistance and transit centers for repatriated victims. Local officials in a county near Bucharest renovated a building to serve as a government-run shelter devoted solely to assisting trafficking victims, but the shelter did not open during the reporting period due to lack of staffing funds. Child trafficking victims received non-specialized care in facilities run by the Romanian child protection service or facilities for children with disabilities. Observers reported some victims returned to their homes by the government were subjected to trafficking again by family members. Romanian law entitled victims to medical and psychological care, legal aid, and reintegration support, though quality varied greatly across facilities, particularly counseling services. Victims previously not part of the formal labor market had difficulty qualifying for medical coverage

and relied on NGOs to pay medical service fees up front. The government continued to operate a hotline for trafficking victims, though it was not staffed during evenings and weekends.

Romanian law permits foreign victims a 90-day reflection period, though experts reported this was not always respected in practice. Victims who cooperate with authorities to identify traffickers could receive a temporary residence permit for up to 12 months but are not allowed to work in Romania. Of the total trafficking victims identified in 2014, 69 percent (525) participated in criminal prosecutions against their traffickers. Some victims reportedly chose not to testify because the justice ministry published the names of all trial witnesses, including children, on its public website. Romanian law entitles victims to restitution from their traffickers; however, the majority of victims could not afford the fees necessary to pursue court-ordered restitution. Prosecutors typically dropped charges and fines against victims for crimes committed as a result of being subjected to human trafficking, but some victims were still charged with crimes, such as theft.

PREVENTION

The government sustained prevention efforts. The National Agency against Trafficking in Persons coordinated implementation of the 2012-2016 counter-trafficking strategy developed in consultation with NGOs and drafted an updated 2015-2016 action plan. The agency regularly published reports and statistics on trafficking. The national agency assisted in the implementation of six NGO-led national awareness campaigns and 53 local campaigns that reportedly reached an audience of over two million people. The government partnered with NGOs, a multinational bank, private companies, and a foreign embassy to raise awareness of trafficking in Romanian schools. The government has never reported punishing a recruitment company for trafficking-related acts, despite a 2006 amendment to the criminal code that prohibits Romania-based recruitment companies from facilitating the exploitation of citizens abroad. The national anti-trafficking agency launched an online messaging campaign against the solicitation of prostitution, but the government did not take steps to reduce demand for forced labor. The government provided anti-trafficking training or guidance for its diplomatic personnel.

RUSSIA: Tier 3

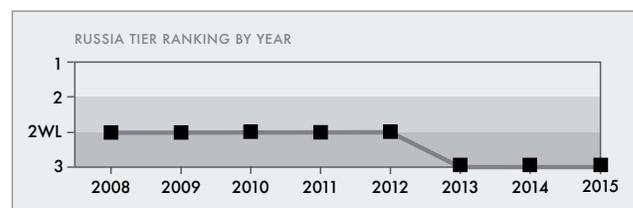
Russia is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. Labor trafficking remains the predominant human trafficking problem within Russia, escalating in the context of Russia's significant increase in labor migration. Official and unofficial statistics estimate there are between five and 12 million foreign workers in Russia. 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 experienced exploitative labor conditions characteristic of trafficking cases, such as withholding of identity documents, nonpayment for services rendered, physical abuse, or extremely poor living conditions. During the year, workers from Russia and other countries in Europe, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia—including Vietnam and North Korea—were subjected to forced labor in Russia. Instances of labor trafficking have been reported

in the construction, manufacturing, agricultural, textile, grocery store, maritime, and domestic service industries, as well as in forced begging, waste sorting, and street sweeping. Organized crime syndicates from Russia sometimes play a role in exploiting labor migrants. There were reports of Russian citizens facing forced labor abroad.

There were also reports of children and women from Europe (predominantly Ukraine and Moldova), Southeast Asia (primarily Vietnam), Africa, and Central Asia being subjected to sex trafficking in Russia. Law enforcement cases from the reporting year indicate forced prostitution occurs in brothels, hotels, and saunas, among other locations; certain traffickers advertised the sexual services of some minors over the internet. In 2014, Russian women and children were reportedly victims of sex trafficking in Russia and abroad, including in Northeast Asia, Europe, Central Asia, Africa, the United States, and the Middle East.

According to official sources, in previous years, there were criminal cases involving Russian officials suspected of allegedly facilitating trafficking in Russia, for instance 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. According to the Federal Migration Service, under a state-to-state agreement, the North Korean government sends approximately 20,000 North Korean citizens to Russia annually for work in a variety of sectors, including logging in Russia's Far East; reportedly many of these North Korean citizens are subjected to conditions of forced labor.

The Government of Russia does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making significant efforts to do so. During the reporting period, the government referred 73 trafficking victims to an international organization where they received care; however, the government lacked a national action plan to combat trafficking, a coordinating authority for anti-trafficking efforts, and funding in the federal and local budgets for trafficking prevention and victim protection. The government took no steps to fulfill commitments to implement a Program of Cooperation between Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Member States against Trafficking in Persons or to create an interagency committee to address trafficking. The government lacked a systematic process for the identification of victims or their referral to care, though reports indicated the government identified and assisted a limited number of victims on an *ad hoc* basis. Prosecutions remained low compared with the scope of Russia's trafficking problem.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RUSSIA:

Develop formal national procedures to guide law enforcement and other government officials, including labor inspectors and health officials, in identifying and referring victims to service providers; allocate funding to state bodies and anti-trafficking NGOs to