



CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR POLICY STUDIES



OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE

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Prostitution in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

2003/2004

CPS INTERNATIONAL POLICY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM ▲

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Scope of the problem and main findings:

- In all three states historical background of prostitution and general socioeconomic preconditions and demographic characteristics of the women and men, involved in the sex trade and working abroad, are comparatively similar.
- Situation in all three countries regarding status of country of origin, destination or transit of women involved in prostitution varies remarkably. From comparatively big part of SW in Lithuania, who were coming to Lithuania with the aim of work in local sex business and through Lithuania go for sex work abroad (by some researches 20-25% of SW); to Estonian situation where is the country acts mostly like country of origin of SW. At the same time in all three countries was overviewed the process of inside migration of SW from country side and smaller cities to bigger cities and capital.
- In Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania general background work for policy activities implementation, like scientific estimation of the number of risk groups, including sex workers, drug addicts, MSM is on weak level, mostly implemented through the small researches of NGOs with using different and often not comparative methodic. For example in Latvia estimated number of sex workers varies due to statistics of Narcotics Office of the Criminal Police Board of the National Police between 2.500 and 3000 SW, due to GENDERS center specialists estimation- about 10.000-15.000 SW and due to others resources - estimated number of 35.000 SW.
- Regarding structural body of prostitution, organization and involvement of sex work main findings shows that prostitution in all three countries is clearly part of organized crime. All possible kinds of sex work are introduced on field of sexual services in those countries: brothels, clubs prostitution; hidden kinds of prostitution in hotels, striptease clubs and saunas, massage parlors; individual prostitution through Internet; street prostitution (with exception of Estonia, where street prostitution is not exist like phenomena); call girls; escort services; male prostitution.
- Legal situation with prostitution and trafficking of women in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania concerning laws and regulations by the state institutions is different. In Lithuania prostitution is criminalized in the way of punishing women involved in sex business by administrative fees. In Latvia in 2000 the Regulations For Limiting Prostitution were introduced and come into the force accepted by Cabinet of Ministries, those regulations partly legalized prostitution mainly street prostitution. In Latvia by the Ministry of Interior was elaborated a program to limit and control prostitution. In Estonia laws prostitution is introduced in "gray" scale. It is no acts of criminalization, but also no legalization laws in Criminal Code. Only Latvia and Lithuania have the paragraphs concerning trafficking of women. Laws and regulations about pimping, organizing the brothels, mediating prostitution are comparatively same in all three countries.
- In social and medical assistance field the role of NGOs is significant in all three countries. In every country it is only one NGO which works with prostitutes and provide different medical and social assistance. In Lithuania it is Social Ailments Consultation Site "DEMETRA", methodologically and financially strongly supported by the governmental Lithuanian AIDS Center. Support of "DEMETRA", working

mostly with street prostitutes and drug addicts, is part of state AIDS Prevention Program. Even the proper work of the center is developed using coo financing through international donors and funds. In Estonia it is NGO AIDS Information & Support Center, which was implemented different projects for SW from the year 1996 and works still only with the help of international donors and programs. Even the work with risk groups such as SW is part of Estonian AIDS Prevention Program, state AIDS Prevention Center was able to help in implementation of services only by methodological way due the constant underfinancing of AIDS prevention program in last several years. Only on level of Tallinns City Government attempts of creating some services for SW were undertaken. In Latvia it is NGO Latvian Center for Gender Studies "GENDERS" who implemented several projects among SW with general financial support from abroad.

- The attitudes of the society regarding sex work and prostitution where generally changed during 90s. For creation of conditions for the empowerment of SW, reduction of discriminatory attitudes and stigmatization of SW special attention paid and a lot of measures was undertaken mostly by NGOs for working with mass media: newspapers, TV/radio, Internet. The stigmatization of SW, humiliation of their civil rights, dignity, safety and confidentiality lack of services, sometimes ignorance regarding socioeconomic position, health and possibilities for rehabilitation are still widespread in our societies.

Keyholders for the recommendations:

Ministries of Social Affairs, National AIDS committees, National AIDS Prevention Centers, Departments of Health of Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius, local city governments, NGOs working with sex workers, Police departments, Ministries of Internal Affairs, Interpol

Summary of policy recommendations

- To implement common scientific research about estimation of risk groups such as SW in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in 2004 using collaboration of AIDS Prevention Centers of three countries, modern methods of estimation, elaborated by specialists of Family Health International, and like option for consideration - applying funding both from state AIDS Prevention programs and Task Force. In Estonia to take as possible option using the grant, received from Global Fund Against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, this was advised also by WHO comission site visit report in december 2002.
- To introduce and develop an effective and realistic model of multifaceted prevention strategies based on non-discriminatory policies and to promote those prevention policies in co-operation with local governmental and non-governmental health and social services, using experience of other Baltic countries
- To use international networks experience for developing a common quality standards of HIV/STD intervention among SW which could be applied in other countries of the region, providing culturally and linguistically appropriated services for SW, using cultural mediators.

- To NGOs in collaboration with state institutions create conditions for the empowerment of SW (support of shelters in Latvia and Lithuania for trafficked women, in Estonia Drop-in center for SW), applying financing both from AIDS Prevention programs and local City governments;
- Reduction of discriminatory attitudes and stigmatization of SW paying special attention for working with mass media: newspapers, TV/radio, Internet; systematic "watch-dog" approach of NGOs dealing with SW. The aim of these activities is to guarantee strong commitment for promotion of prostitution policies, based on principles of treating the sex workers with respect, dignity and confidentiality and to promote their health, safety and civil rights.
- To continue to gather quantitative and qualitative data concerning phenomenon of sex work, prostitution and trafficking, its different forms, its transformation and its impact on the territory. For this purposes to achieve that in all three countries the web pages concerning sex work and trafficking issues were created on basis of main NGO-s, working on the field. Option for consideration - funding from Family Health International or other international funds.

Some specific policy recommendations:

Estonia

- To take immediate measures to find financial support through the state AIDS Prevention Program for the projects among sex workers - Ministry of Social Affairs, Health Education Center, National AIDS Committee.
- To recommend not to legalize prostitution at the nearest years - Estonian Parliament, Tallinn City government
- To introduce for the Parliament law against trafficking of human beings, to adopt international conventions against trafficking, undersigned by the state among state law system - NGOs, Ministry of Social Affairs, NGOs, Legal Human Rights Center
- To find compromise between the basic right of freedom of expression in mass media, radio, TV, Internet and the moral code and professional ethics of unions journalists, editors of advertising magazines and newspapers, Internet service providers.
- To improve access of NGOs to programs of social assistance for risk groups of Tallinns Department of Health Care, making the process of participation more open and less bureaucratic. - Tallinns Department of Health, Tallinn City Government

Latvia

To force implementing of Program to limit and control prostitution, especially following parts of that:

- making sure that medical institutions engage in preventive care and issue health cards to all SW (option for consideration - to provide services not only for registered SW);
- ensuring social rehabilitation for minor prostitutes;
- reopening special institutions (option for consideration - from AIDS Prevention program or by Riga City Government start financial support for the only existing shelter in Latvia for trafficked women in GENDERS Center);
- updating laws and regulations on social rehabilitation programs;
- improve cooperation among social aid services and NGO's;
- providing shelter and rehabilitation of HIV-infected former SW and those who are suffering from AIDS.

To improve existing regulation on prostitution - Ministry of Welfare, National Police, Cabinet of Ministries, Human Rights organizations. Options for consideration:

- To exclude from Regulations For Limiting Prostitution paragraph Nr 9 "Persons in whose blood antibodies to the HIV virus have been specified or with respect to whom the diagnosis of AIDS has been determined shall thereafter be forbidden to engage in prostitution", which put whole responsibility for spreading of HIV on sex workers (and exclude responsibility of clients) and made questionable the guarantees of confidentiality of implemented services; also makes possible discrimination and stigmatization of SW on the base of their HIV status.
- To exclude from the Program to limit and control prostitution following paragraph - "Informing the national police about every prostitute who has become infected with a disease that is on a list of diseases prepared by the Ministry of Welfare" which has given a wide opportunity to break the rules of anonymity and confidentiality of diagnosis and treatment. –

Lithuania

- To recommend open more special centers providing services for SW (till that moment it is only one in Lithuania) closer to location of their working, to implement more widely the local network of program for SW (at the moment only in capital and Kaunas) - AIDS Prevention Center, National AIDS Prevention Program
- To organize special programs for clients of prostitution (for example truck drivers), mediators (pimps) and agencies which deals with prostitution through their job (police, boarder guards), providing them special information - leaflets, stickers, brochures - Social Ailments Consultation Site "DEMETRA"; AIDS Prevention program
- To recommend not to legalize prostitution at the nearest years - Lithuanian Parliament, Vilnius City government

LITHUANIA

Legal Status of Prostitution

In Lithuania prostitution is illegal. At the moment it is not a criminal but an administrative offence subject to a fine - Article 182 (1) of the Code of Violations of Administrative Law. Pandering is criminalized and punishable by a deprivation of liberty from three to five years or fine - part 3 of Article 239 of the Lithuanian Criminal Code; forcing to engage into prostitution of juveniles, materially dependant persons and persons dependant due to held posts as well as involvement into prostitution by way of blackmail/deceit/use of psychological or physical pressure is punishable by a deprivation of liberty ranging from three to seven years. In recent years there have been less than 20 pandering cases per year (the number of administrative cases for prostitution varies greatly).

Prostitution as an administrative offence could be considered in case a prostitute is older than 16 years and of sound mind. In fact, a lot of underage girls are engaged into sex trade, however, till they are younger as 16, no means of legal persecution are applied.

Direct ban of prostitution imposed by the Code of Violations of Administrative Law of Lithuania is inexpedient because of two reasons:

it prompts the women to look for a job abroad; they usually come back or are deported with improved experience of masking from state control, which they take over from abroad working colleagues, and infected with STD.

Women loose any right for social and other protection from pimps' and clients' aggression, which often occurs in their practices.

Trafficking is also illegal in Lithuania. Already in July 1998 the Criminal Code was amended to cover trafficking, defined as the selling of a person or any other alienation or acquisition of a person with the purpose to abuse him/her sexually, to force to engage in prostitution or to receive any material or personal gain, as well as trafficking in persons from/to Lithuania for the purpose of prostitution (Article 131, part 3).

Under Lithuanian law trafficking is punishable by deprivation of liberty from four up to eight years. If trafficking is committed against a juvenile, as repeated action, in conspiracy or by a recidivist it is subject to a more severe penalty, a deprivation of liberty from six up to twelve years. Also the new Criminal Code of Lithuania, which adopted in September 2000 and which entered into force in 2001, cover trafficking and, significantly, do not limit the crime to sexual exploitation or forcing to engage in prostitution. It provides for a punishment between three months and eight years.

In Lithuania there were three registered cases of trafficking in 1999 and four in 2000 (handled by the police department). To date only one case of trafficking has made it to court and is currently pending.

Lots of women are trafficked annually to the Western countries from Lithuania since it is also a transit country for women from Russia. There is no data on how many Lithuanians are involved into sex trade abroad. In 1999 1928 people came back to Lithuania, in 2000 - almost twice as much - 3498 persons. Trafficking is organised by criminal international groups that are professionals in this field, promptly acting to any market changes.

By report to International Organization of Migration “Trafficking in women in Lithuania: magnitude, mechanism and actors” (Tureikite, Sipaviciene, 2001) in Lithuania the liability of legal persons for trafficking (either criminally or administratively) is not provided for. There are both objective and subjective reasons for that. Cases are tried for very long in a court because the victims usually stay abroad and correspondence with foreign legislative institutions last very long, so does interrogation of witnesses.

Lithuania has concluded several agreements with its neighbours on legal assistance and legal relations in criminal matters; there are also inter-institutional agreements in certain fields. Though, Lithuania has not signed such the agreements with all the countries (e.g., Germany).

In Lithuania liaison officers play an important role in international police cooperation and exchange of information (Lithuania has appointed liaison officer in Belgium and in Belarus and intends to appoint more). Lithuania also has joint activities with Latvian Police officers. In Lithuania there exists a unified computerised data system on e.g. missing persons but no specific database to collect and maintain information relevant to trafficking.

However, it is to admit that, presently, collaboration with Western organisations dealing with human trafficking prevention and rehabilitation is rather poor, no mutual concept on work in this field exists, and there is also a lack of HIV projects targeted at sex workers - especially male.

Lithuanian authorities have recently begun to acknowledge the seriousness of trafficking (although the attitude of blaming the victim still exists). Thus far very limited public recourses have been available for the protection of witnesses and victims. The Lithuanian police prepare crime prevention programmes (focusing on teenage crime prevention) and the Centre for Crime Prevention (public non-profit organisation) is also involved in developing crime prevention in line with legal, social, economic and other reforms. The new Programme for the Prevention and Control of Prostitution (2001-2005) has the goal of preparing a programme on the fight against trafficking in women, which reportedly foresees the implementation of legal, administrative and preventive measures as well as social reintegration programmes (resources for the Programme will come from Lithuania’s national budget and from foreign technical assistance projects).

Prostitution

It is quite complicated to speak about scope and dynamics of trafficking in women and prostitution, due to its largely clandestine character. Therefore only indirect evaluation is possible about the numbers.

Age

Our data shows that there may be about 3000 sex workers in Vilnius aged 14-45.

Young women between ages of 18 and 30 years dominate in the supply of prostitutes, however, different agencies provide differing age ranges. It can be supposed, that the age of the sex workers decide a certain specialization of the agencies.

Experts also emphasise the fact that among the prostitutes, the number of local minors is on the increase.

By the data presented by Social Ailments Consultation Site “DEMETRA”, not only young but also much older women engage in prostitution. Women between 14 and 54 years of age were among the 142 interviewed street sex workers - the average age 24,5 years.

By the survey implemented with help of “DEMETRA” through the preparation of “Trafficking in women in Lithuania: magnitude, mechanism and actors” report to IOM, distribution of sex workers and trafficked women by age were follows:

Age	Local prostitutes	Prostitutes immigrants
Under 26 years of age	6	6
26-30 years of age	2	3
31-39 years of age	2	2

Education

The education of both trafficking victims and prostitutes is lower than the average in the country. According the Social Ailments Consultation Site “DEMETRA” data, most of Lithuanian prostitutes, even street prostitutes - lowest category of prostitution -have incomplete secondary education.

So, almost all the interviewed prostitutes attended school. Some of them finished 8-10 classes, some went to school for short time, some of them have a college education. Prostitutes who are trafficked abroad by force have a similar education.

According to data of the Missing Person’s Families Support Centre (Ona Gustiene) the trafficked women had secondary or incomplete secondary education. Data based on questioning about 20 women shows: 10 of the women had incomplete secondary education (one never attended school) and 10 women had secondary education.

However, there are trafficking victims who have a high education too.

Education	Local prostitutes	Prostitutes immigrants
Did not go to school	1	-
Incomplete secondary	7	3
Secondary and college	2	8

Education of the girls looks of the least interest the trafficker, the pimps as well as clients. They often consider that the sex workers with a lower education are even better - they bring fewer problems, it is easier to threaten them.

Nationality

Difference sources showed that most often Lithuanian and Russian (Russian-speaking) prostitutes are engaged in sex business.

“Russians” (usually all Russian speakers are called this way) are in demand since they provide “any kind of services”, “have less requirements”, “more delicate”. On the other hand, in such a business, foreigners are needed just for change.

By “DEMETRA” the distribution of the interviewed prostitutes by nationality and the place of origin was follows:

by nationality

Nationality	Local prostitutes (absolute number)	Prostitutes immigrants (absolute number)
Lithuanians	7	-
Russians	1	7
Poles	2	-
Belorussian	-	2
Moldavians	-	1

by place of origin

Place of birthNationality	Local prostitutes (absolute number)	Prostitutes immigrants (absolute number)
Vilnius	5	-
Other cities in Lithuania	1	-
Country side in Lithuania	4	-
Belarus	-	4
Kaliningrad region (Russia)	-	3
Other part of Russia	-	1
Ukraine	-	1
Estonia	-	1

Local and immigrants prostitution

Women from foreign countries are integral part of sex workers in Lithuania: from Russia - 15,6%, Belarus - 20%, Ukraine - 4% - of all the trafficked. Apart from push

factors in their home country, which force women from Belarus, Ukraine and Russia to seek their fortunes abroad, there are also pull factors in the Lithuania entertainment business.

By report to IOM (Tureikite, Sipaviciene, 2001) most experts indicate that even though the number of foreigners is still significant (expert evaluation vary of about 20-30%), it has decreased. There are several reasons of that. First, the introduced visa regimen with CIS countries and improved border control, as well as strict punishments for smuggling and trafficking in human beings to a certain degree, discourage traffickers. Secondly, locals frequently coming from small province towns or villages push out foreign prostitutes. Whereas others use Lithuania just as a transit country (frequently it is the traffickers' choice) for only a temporary stay and at the first opportunity move further to the West. In general, according to Organized Crime Prevention expert, "a" prostitutes want to move abroad but not all succeed".

Because of their illegal status, the foreign sex workers are the most vulnerable in regard to infection with HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. They do not speak Lithuanian, have no social insurance, are forced to work under slavery conditions, they do not have passport and their moving freedom is rather limited. The migrants stay in the flats rented by the pimps, in most of cases they are blackmailed and pay fees. One hour of sex services cost 15-30 USD; sex workers get half of the total.

However foreigners from the Kaliningrad (Russia) have a quite an easy access to Lithuania, especially the neighbouring Klaipeda region. Even though precise numbers are unavailable, Klaipeda seems to be the town with the highest share of foreigners engaged in sex business, - both prostitutes and trafficking victims. Through a well-established network, pimps go on recruiting women in Kaliningrad, who even after deportation easily reappear in Lithuania

Marital status

According to data of telephone inquiry among escort/call-girl agencies, implemented for report to IOM (Tureikite, Sipaviciene, 2001) the majority of prostitutes are single women, however, married and divorced women engage in prostitution as well. Due to the data of survey of 142 prostitutes conducted by the Social Ailments Consultation Site "DEMETRA", 75% of the prostitutes are single, however as much as, 52% have children. Sometimes, engagement in prostitution is explained (or justified) precisely because of necessity to support children. The situation of those who were trafficked for abroad is a bit different. The data provided by the Missing Person's Families Support Centre shows that the majority of women trafficked to foreign countries are single (84%, about 43 women). Many of such women, 73%, lived in complete wealthy, so named "good" families.

As far as the information gathered permits to conclude, urban population dominates among the women who where engage in prostitution or were trafficked to foreign countries. For example, the data available at the Missing Person's Families Support Centre indicates that urban women constituted the greatest percentage among the trafficked women (as much as 80% or 35 women). However, as is clear from recent media publications and some expert evaluations - the situation is changing: more and more frequently girls from rural areas become trafficking victims.

Religion

When asked about the religion they practised, sex workers sometimes attributed themselves to Catholics or Orthodox believers, however, even in those rare cases they noted that in essence they did not adhere to any religion and were not firm or ardent believers, they simply added it was “customary to say that, like all others people”.

All the interviewed women-immigrants for report to IOM engaged for prostitution business, with the exception of one prostitute, had greater or less experience in their work activity. Prior to becoming prostitutes they worked at different places: in the kitchens of kindergartens, at a sewing factory, as waitresses in bars, one of them had a certificate of a medical school and had worked as a nurse. There are women who engage in prostitution only temporarily, when they have no other employment and no source of any other income

Languages

According to the data of a telephone inquiry among escort/call-girl agencies, implemented for report to IOM (Tureikite, Sipaviciene, 2001) all prostitutes speak Lithuanian. However, in practice (this is confirmed by interviews with the prostitutes immigrants) hardly any foreigners can say more than a few sentences in Lithuanian, they do very well with the Russian language alone. On the other hand, there are prostitutes who can speak several foreign languages and some prostitutes speak English quite well.

As to the girls trafficked to abroad by deception, no requirements concerning languages are set to them. No language requirements are established even to those girls who go to foreign countries being well aware of what kind of activity they are going to engage in. It is possible to suppose that traffickers and pimps may even be interested in recruiting women who do not know a foreign language. This places women into even more vulnerable situations, since, even in case of escaping from “owners”, they will not be able to seek assistance, to address police, NGO, etc.

In general, trafficking in women is closely interrelated with the prostitution business: the local sex industry and trading women abroad are two parts of the one part “normal jobs”. According to some experts, street prostitution forms up to 50% of the sex business, though many others think that its share is much lower.

Street prostitution

Street prostitutes serve at average 2-8 clients a day; their services cost 2.5-10 USD.

Even though street prostitution is considered to be rather “free”, prostitutes cannot choose another region/street since their work places are under the control of criminal elements. In addition there is big competition between prostitutes themselves, which does not allow newcomers to enter this market freely. According to some prostitutes, the supply and demand is currently more or less balanced, all places are distributed and all “decent” prostitutes have enough work.

Street prostitutes include Lithuanian nationals, as well as immigrants from neighbouring countries, mainly CIS.

Among the street prostitutes there are also minors. The number of minors could be even higher if other prostitutes would not fight against them. According to one sex worker:

“Those minors they spoil all of our business. Firstly, they knock down the prices. Secondly, we do not want any trouble with the police. If the police detain us, we usually pay them something and they let us go. But if there is a minor, then all this uproar starts and the police have to take action, etc. and we are normally not able to work for several days. Therefore, if I see a minor, I go to her pimp and tell him to take the child away from the street, otherwise, he himself will have problems”.

The biggest share of the prostitution business is well organised and controlled by agencies. The profit from this business in 1997 was estimated at 12 million USD.

Police experts were trying to make an evaluation of the scope based on agency advertisements. According to them, on average, there are around 30-40 advertisements every day, 6-8 sex workers work in every agency. But the agencies do cooperate among themselves and the prostitutes may be borrowed and sold at any time - it depends on current demand.

Data of Social Ailments Consultation Site “DEMETRA” shows that there are more than 30 agencies and about 100 organisers of the business. According to the information from the Ministry of Interior, in Vilnius alone there are 15-20 well-established firms with more than 1.5 million USD income per year. Unofficial expert opinion indicates that the yearly turnover of the prostitution business in Vilnius alone is no less than 5 million USD. More than a half of all income is the profit of the owners of agencies and pimps. The rest goes to prostitutes, call girls and drivers. Approximately a half of Vilnius prostitutes work in agencies.

Since prostitution in Lithuania is illegal, official advertisements sound like “flowers to your home”, “massage”, “soft Massage”, “escort services”, etc. However, most agencies operate quite openly. In addition to the above mentioned agencies, there are so called “closed” or “private” agencies, which do not advertise in public in any way, and provide sex services only for clients with “recommendations”. That are so-called “elite sex workers”, their services are expensive - 100-500 USD. We are not able to identify even the proximate number of such the firms and prostitutes working there.

On the other hand there are prostitutes who work individually, those who work from time to time. According to police evaluation, numbers of individually working prostitutes, i.e. those who do not pay pimps, is increasing. In addition there is also the so-called “higher category”, those who work in hotels and bars, those who work with few permanent clients, etc. in general, with regard to the scope of prostitution, different sources indicate that numbers have stabilised since the market is saturated. Still there are seasonal fluctuations, since this business responds to changing market requirements. During summer period it increases and shifts from big cities to resort areas.

Male prostitution

It is no appropriate data about male prostitution in sex business.

But it is known that in Vilnius exists the group of man who provide sexual services for the man. It is no data about the number of these men.

Like a female sex business, male sex business act on different levels - organized and not-organized.

Organized is closely connected with the gay scene. These activities are working mostly through the Internet. In most cases there are less educated young boys and man from countryside and other cities. It is no clear border between commercial interests in Internet advertising and “pleasure” announcements. The financial support of younger people by older and wealthy gays is widely known phenomena.

Not organized - young man in age 16-24, who provide sexual services on the streets. Working place for those sex workers is railway station. By “Demetra” center specialist this place exists from the 1991. The price of services is commonly higher then women’s on railway station areas, somewhere 50-100 LT (20-40 USD).

Case:

In Lithuania in summer 2002 one women was arrested, who propose as sexual object (for oral sex) she’s own 6 years old son.

Trafficking in Lithuania

In accordance with a reason of involvement into prostitution, we can attribute sex workers to one of the three following categories:

- “volunteers”, who look for easy living and pleasure,
- women and girls who trade sex because of economic reasons (earn money for living, buy food for and dress their children, for drugs, etc.) and because of personal reasons (complicated family relations, influence of asocial friends, etc.),
- victims of international human trade who are “imprisoned” abroad through taking off their passports.

Trafficking of women from Lithuania to foreign countries is quite a new phenomenon, quite a new problem for society and law enforcement institutions. Therefore, quite little is known about its status and development. Although there is no official statistical data on how many women were trafficked for the purpose of prostitution, according to Lithuanian Interpol information, there is no doubt that trafficking in women conducted by organized criminals is on the increase. Experts from the Police Department and Border Guards are of the same opinion.

If some years ago the main trafficking flows were directed to Israel, Greece, United Arab Emirates and Turkey, then recently prostitution business has turned to Germany, Holland, UK, France, Sweden and Spain. Some of these countries, e.g. Germany, also serve as transit country, where victims from Lithuania are resold to brothel owners from other, mainly southern, countries - Italy, Spain, Turkey, etc.

The information provided by the Police Attaché from the German Embassy in Lithuania indicates that among officially registers trafficking victims all over Germany in 2000; Lithuanians form 14% and according absolute numbers are in the fourth place after Russia, Ukraine and Poland. However, proportionally, i.e. evaluating the number of the country's total population -Lithuania may be considered as an absolute leader.

According to the Vilnius Airport Border Guard service, experts now say every second flight from Germany brings women who are suspected of being engaged in prostitution. In general, most frequently, trafficking victims are returned from Frankfurt, Berlin and Amsterdam. Vienna and Paris flights sometimes also bring trafficking victims, whereas the return of victims from Israel has decreased.

One additional problem - identification, since in the majority of cases, victims are deprived of their own passports and either do not have any documents, or are afforded with false passports. There were many cases, when deported "Lithuanian" appeared to be Russians, Belarussians, Ukrainians, etc. holding false Lithuanian passports.

Lithuanian passports are considered to be good since they open the border to CIS citizens and allow them to legally" stay in the EU. In addition, they are cheap (average cost vary from 100 to 700 USD), and can easily be falsified. Lithuanian passports are not very familiar to local police, therefore until they are detained for some illegal activity, holders of such passports can easily live and travel all over the EU. However, when detained, such foreigners are fixed as "Lithuanians", and official figures increase.

Push and pull factors

By report to IOM (Tureikite, Sipaviciene, 2001) according to experts, the main reasons of migration and prostitution are economic reasons. Firstly - a high unemployment level in Lithuania. 47.6% of jobless people are women; women are paid at average 1.4 times a lower salary than men. There are many single, divorced women who have nobody to help them. Our survey of street sex workers in Vilnius shows that prostitution is the only and the main source of living for 93.4% of the interviewed women not only for them, for their families as well.

Secondly, the absence of any perspectives. Even employed people have hardly enough means for a modest living. Wages are low and a young girl without higher education has very little possibilities to earn money, for example, to buy a flat. Therefore, she loses hope of having a future in her country. Rumours are going around about how much one can earn abroad during a summer, a year.

Another reason of women's migration is searching for happiness. The women leave their native country dreaming of finding a husband and to get married abroad.

Other reasons of engaging in sex business are found in the family. Parents using alcohol, asocial way of life and the surroundings in which loose morals of a growing girl are factors that push the girl into prostitution.

Traumas of sexual violence suffered in early childhood are listed as one of the very important reasons of prostitution. It goes without saying that most often the girls from asocial families who experience them. As has been noted by experts, if her father has raped a girl of 9-13 years of age, more often than not, stepfather or mother's cohabitant, the effect of that horrible

experience on her mental state will remain with her for the rest of her life. Unless she is cured of this trauma, there is only one step to prostitution.

The main reason of trafficking is money. As compared with other countries of Central Europe, Lithuanian women are cheaper and do not know their rights so well, they cannot defend themselves. Therefore, they are in great demand. As mentioned above, practically nobody is punished for trading in women. That is another reason of trafficking flourishing. According to experts' from the Ministry of Interior, evaluation, direct reasons why women are engaged in prostitution are different: 15% are engaged in order "to have a nice and joyful life", 15% - because of curiosity, 13% - ac not to work, 11% - to have additional earnings.

Individual recruitment for work abroad may be done on an accidental basis, or it may be targeted, in both cases women may or may not be informed about the real purpose of the trip, though, officially offer sound like "working as au-pair", as a "house keeper, in the cleaning services", etc.

In some cases recruitment is still organized using advertisements in newspaper, where non-existent firms offer non-existent work abroad. However, this type of recruitment is becoming less and less popular. Nowadays recruitment becomes more delicate and more personalised. Traffickers either search for women in desperate situations or young girls who may be cheated, especially from asocial families. Another way, traffickers try to "become friends" and only then offer a "good job abroad and only for you since they need a reliable person". In both cases the consequences are more or less similar.

Case study

Ingrida, 19 years old.

Once I was going with a minivan. The driver was Russian, he began to talk tome. When he found out that I knew English, he told me hat his mate could offer me a housemaid's job abroad. I gave him my telephone number. The next day some guy called me. We met near a shop, another gut came, too. They explained to me how much I would earn. I was supposed to work for three months and earn 1000 DEM per month. I agreed. After two weeks (during that period of time a second girl was found). They took me from home. Some guys arrived with a small bus with bed on the top. They took us to Warsaw in Poland, one guy explained: "Stupid girl. What housemaids can you be? There are enough local housekeepers. You will have to make love". Then they gave us bus tickers and put us on the Warsaw-Barcelona bus. They reminded us that they had paid 500 USD for each ticket. They also gave 100 USD to each of us.

Why did I not run away when I found out where was going and for what kind of "job" well, I thought that I would trick them somehow and I would earn some money. You won't get any job in Lithuania. But afterwards I ran away because they did not pay me, just like the other girls, they just sold me. "Why do I have to work for them? I can work alone", I thought.

Two Yugoslavians met us in Barcelona. They took us to their flat, which was 500 kilometres away. They bought us some clothes. We lived in the same club where we were working from 5 p.m. to 4 in the morning. There were 30 girls: 16 from Mexico, 8 from Russia and 4 from Lithuania. In January 2 Belarussians arrived. According to their story, they were trafficked to Lithuania first, only then were they sent to Spain.

If the client was not satisfied the girls were beaten severely. Once I was also beaten badly, but the next day had to go to “work” as usual. When a girl did something wrong, she was taken to a special flat for “educating”. One time the pimps took another girls and me. When my friend was locked in the other room, I snatched a few things and jumped through the window. I ran to the police department, which was not far from the flat. I began to cry and told a policeman how I was tricked: I was promised housemaid’s job but I had to work as a prostitute. I can speak English; I have also learned Spanish a little bit so I could explain everything to them. They felt pity for me and drove me to Madrid in their own car. And from Madrid I came back to Lithuania

Health care and social services

So far, the assistance to sex workers including migrants and trafficked women has been very limited and accessible only in Vilnius. It is clearly insufficient.

Firstly, it is assistance by telephone. Several telephone help lines for women operate in Lithuania where women can call should a problem arise. Trafficking victims, as a rule, know little or nothing about such the telephone lines.

Secondly, dissemination of relevant information. Most information is not directly linked to trafficking problems. For example, the Women’s Information Centre collected information about missing women and girls. This information has been forwarded out to consular missions and embassies of different countries and various women organisations in other countries. Unfortunately, there are only very few cases when concrete assistance was provided.

Thirdly, practical assistance for trafficking victims. The Missing People’s Families Support Centre within the framework of its financial resources available, organises practical assistance to the women who managed to escape from being forced to engage in prostitution abroad: a shelter and food. The centre has published several brochures containing warning information (“You might be one of them”) and encouraging to appeal for assistance. However, according to the head of the Centre, the activities are limited by a shortage of funds and humans resources.

Fourthly, assistance in the sphere of health. The Social Ailments Consultation Site at the Lithuanian AIDS Centre www.aids.lt provides all kinds of assistance for trafficking victims and sex workers working mainly on the streets. Currently the programme aimed at reducing the harm done by sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS to risk groups is being carried out: condoms, sterile syringes and needles, as well as consultations are provided.

The most threatening consequence of prostitution is human health. Prostitutes are often infected with different venereal diseases. They pass on these diseases to their customers, and the latter pass them on to their families. According to experts from the Ministry of Interior, up to 60-80% of clients are married men. Nobody knows in what way consequences of prostitution or drug addiction will come into his/her family and who will be affected. Most people think that such things will never affect them. Many people in society fail to realise the

threat this problem poses, they do not think that very soon they might be affected by it themselves.

According to the data provided by the Social Ailments Consultation Site “DEMETRA”

- 20.4% of the 142 sex workers interviewed had syphilis,
- 14.8% were ill with gonorrhoea;
- 14.8% had chlamydia;
- 12.7% had trichomonosis;
- 59.8% had bacterial vaginosis;
- 29.0% - hepatitis C;
- 12.7% - hepatitis B;
- 1.4% had HIV diagnosis.

According to experts, at present at least two HIV infected prostitutes “work” in the area of the railway station. No legal basis exists for prohibiting them to engage in such kind of work. Therefore all customers are subjects to real danger of becoming infected, and consequently, there is also a danger that their innocent family members will become infected too.

Street sex workers do not have in majority of cases social insurance, a place for living, prostitution is illegal in Lithuania, and thus no medical services are available for them.

“DEMETRA” provide free testing on STI, HIV, hepatitis C/B. Treatment is also free of charge. Consultation of gynaecologist, dermatovenerologist, psychologist and social worker is also available. Tests are being performed in the laboratory of the AIDS Centre.

On their first visit sex workers may be tested on HIV, syphilis, hepatitis B/C, herpes simplex virus, urogenital smear and samples to identify *C. trachomatis* and *N. gonorrhoea* are also provided.

The problems the team of the Centre do face mostly are: lack of resources - both financial and human, insufficient experience, and poor relations with pimps. That is the pimp who often prevents the sex workers from applying to the Centre. Services are also not available for sex workers in the escort agencies and brothels since we experience difficulties in getting there and spread our information on availability of confidential services (sex workers do not wish and are afraid to admit that are engaged in sex trade).

Fifthly, publications, educational activity. Since 1999 the NGO “Steps of the past” has taken part in the project devoted to the problems of prostitution. In 1999 the book “Trading in women” was published. A new book summarising studies of prostitution in Lithuania was published in 2001. With an active help of this organisation the film “Girls” has been shot. A campaign to visit all the counties of Lithuanian and hold discussions and show the film at schools is on agenda.

Another form of activity is addressing these problems at scientific conferences. For example, in November 2000, on the initiative of the Women’s Union of Lithuania, with the support of Ebert Fund in Germany, the conference “Threats of prostitution” was organised. In October 2001 Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the International Migration Organisation’s (IOM) representation in Vilnius have organised an international conference devoted mostly to the problems of women’s trafficking.

Sixthly, cooperation between NGOs and a network creation. Thus far cooperation of NGOs has been inactive and the network creation is making its first steps. We trust very much that cooperation with foreign partners will open up wider possibilities. So far, it is the only TAMPEP project and, in the nearest future - the project FENARETE (aimed at peer education), in which Lithuanian AIDS Centre takes and will take part.

Activities in the frame of TAMPEP project

The Social Ailments Consultation Site “Demetra” at the Lithuanian AIDS Centre in collaboration with migrant sex workers, has developed more effective strategies for contacting the target group, as well as new materials. The Site provides all kinds of assistance for trafficking victims as well as female sex workers working mainly on the streets and, in certain cases, in escort agencies. One of the services provided to the target group is facilitation of direct contact between migrant sex workers and institutions active in the social and medical fields, and, in case of a need, of contact with a lawyer.

Street sex workers often do not have permanent place of residence, they do not only work on the street but they also live on the street. They are deprived even of the most elementary conditions - they have no place where they can wash or have a bath. A shower is installed in the Site. There the sex workers are taught the basics of hygiene and safe sex. Their health is also examined. About 92% of the sex workers who have visited “Demetra” for the first time were infected with different sexually transmitted diseases. After they were treated at site incidence within that area decreased by 40%. This fact clearly shows that problems of prostitution, forced prostitution, in particular, and health are closely related and in the future a much greater attention should be paid to health problems.

Currently work at “Demetra” organized in groups. The following groups have been distinguished: drug addicts, sex workers drug users, also, the fact of whether they work with a large number of partners and they often change partners, was taken into consideration. There is also a preparatory group are the Children’s Care Home. Since it is quite often that girls of 12-13 years of age begin to engage in sex trade, dangers of prostitution, its harm to health and personality, etc. are discussed when working in this group.

The Social Ailments Consultation Site “Demetra” at its own expense carries out social studies of its contingent. Filling in a questionnaire containing 43 questions collects basic information. The Site also distributes brochures “Talking about condoms with a partner”, “If a condom slips off or gets torn”, “Hepatitis B”, “Safer work” and others (in the native languages of the target group: Lithuanian and Russian).

Interventions promoting safer sex practices alone are not sufficient. Targeted information for sex workers, instructing them on its proper use, and teaching negotiating skills, has been supplemented by direct fieldwork. Every staff member spends 96 hours per year for outreach work.

The employees of “Demetra” communicate with the sex workers in a humane and sympathetic way. Different events are organized; gifts at Christmas and other occasions are given. Efforts are made to help women rather than moralise them. The sex workers go there

like it's their own home, to find what every human being needs. They trust the Site and are not afraid of being reported to the police.

On the initiative of the staff, AIDA, the NGO Association of HIV/AIDS Affected Women and Their Relatives has been established, whose objective apart from other goals, is to help women feel that they are not completely isolated and left alone with their problems.

The Social Ailments Consultation Site has become a kind of referral organisation for a variety of issues related to sex work and migrant sex workers. The Programme for the Prevention and Control of Prostitution (2001-2005) includes also a lot of information provided by the Site. Representatives of mass media have been frequent visitors of the Site. Those interviews help us to form public opinion on the problem and raise awareness.

The national seminar "Legal aspects of women marginalisation" was held on 20th February 2002. It was organised in Lithuanian Parliament, which proves the changes in attitudes of Lithuanian authorities toward sex trade and women's trafficking. Participants of the seminar includes parliamentarians, members of Government, Municipality, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Social Security and Labour", representatives of NGOs.

Country analysis and evaluation

Currently discussions about legalising prostitution liven up in Lithuania. The supporters are sure that the legalisation of prostitution might solve the problem of the health of sex workers' and reduce incidence of sexually transmitted infections, decrease the number of cases of rape in women, it is said that this would allow to direct the profit of the illegal business of prostitution to the state budget, legalisation would allow to control the business. Opponents: the legalisation of prostitution would not resolve problems or, having resolved some of them, would give rise to others.

NGOs in Lithuania provide some support to women in accordance with the nature of their activity. Certain assistance to women-trafficking victims is provided, consultation and medical aid is offered, few research projects have been carried out, etc. However, it is obvious that their activity is insufficiently coordinated, their economic base is weak, and the possibilities of support are faint.

By report to IOM (Tureikite, Sipaviciene, 2001) Lithuanian society is poorly informed and is not really concerned about either trafficking of women, the spread of prostitution or about the consequences of the existing situation. In many cases these processes seem to be taking place somewhere with somebody, it is not realized that they might affect every family, and very soon can come close to each member of the society. The formation of public opinion, intolerance to the people engaged in trafficking of other individuals is urgently important without any doubts. It should also be mentioned that, when speaking about prostitution, it's other side that is the customer, is usually ignored on the whole.

Experts give a very controversial assessment of the role of the mass media. On one side, it is condemned for the creation of the image of a "longed, pretty, young" sex workers who is sure to meet a customer millionaire who falls in love with her and with whom she has a happy

family life. On the other side, a very important role of the mass media is recognised in providing information to the public about prostitution, trafficking in women and tragic and crippled lives of the women who found themselves at the hands of traffickers. Recently TV programme, radio broadcasts and the press teem with descriptions of concrete cases, however, the analysis of the mass media shows that serious analytical in-depth scientific studies investigating prostitution as a social phenomenon and the problem of trafficking in women in detail are still lacking.

Prostitution in Lithuania is considered as a negative social appearance, which often is related to crime, STI and drug use epidemics, discrimination and exploitation of women. To gain a confidence of this group is rather very difficult because of marginalization of the sex workers.

In Lithuania prostitution or are extradited with excellent experience of hiding from the state control, most of them - return with any sexually transmitted infection. Sex workers are deprived of any right for social security and of protection from violence of pimps and customers.

An alternative might be permissions for a work, which should be issued by institution responsible for prostitution control in cooperation with NGO involved into prevention of prostitution.

As the sex workers in majority of cases are socially vulnerable, the legal protection should be available. They avoid breaking off prostitution and report trafficking because of fear to get assaulted by pimps and traffickers.

Taking into account that prostitution is a social appearance, it is to be addressed with all social means: social programme for sex traders, social support for those who raise children, educational means nor only in schools but also in the general population, etc. Interventions in "bridge" groups, e.g. customers are also of highest importance involving not only governmental but also non-governmental organisations.

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ESTONIA

Historical background of prostitution in Estonia

Since prostitution is a sensitive indicator that develops with changes in the social environment and the state, it is useful to divide the history of this phenomenon from Estonia's first independence according to the different historical stages of the country.

Firstly, the period of Estonian independence 1918-1940, when the prostitution in Estonia was legalized. Secondly, the period of the Soviet occupation when prostitution was criminalized. Thirdly, since Estonian new independence when prostitution is neither criminalized nor legalized (that is, the selling of and buying of a sexual service is not a crime but prostitution is not considered a profession either).

On the first of June 1919, so-called morality guarding, or censoring institution in the bigger cities replaced censoring police. Attitudes to the organization of prostitution derived mainly from health considerations. That was not sufficiently successful and in May 1920, obligatory measures to fight prostitution and STDs were issued. Those regulations linked the activities of the "morality guards" to the activities of police, as it was realized that prostitution and criminality were "closely connected".

On the 16 of December 1927 the Parliament accepted a new law of "Managing Public Health" which handed the fight against prostitution over to the Health and Social Support Department. The police were obliged to give necessary practical help.

Because prostitution was legal in 1918-1940, the data from that period is remarkably precise and allows giving an adequate overview of the phenomenon. The number of prostitutes had been relatively stable throughout that period, showing only a slight increase.

For instance, in 1919 and 1920, there were 1187 and 1141 registered prostitutes in Estonian cities, and the number remained the same until the 1930s.

Prostitution mainly spread in the greater cities, Tallinn and Tartu, but also in Narva and Parnu. The proportion in other cities was very modest. There were 387 permanent prostitutes registered in Tallinn in 1920, and 455 in 1940. In Tartu, the numbers were 53 in 1922 and 156 in 1938.

There were also illegal, unregistered individual prostitutes of whom there is very little and non-systematic data. In the mid-1920s the number of Estonian hidden prostitutes was estimated to be up to 2000-2500. Police measures were predominantly directed to uncovering and registering this contingent, because unlike the registered prostitutes, neither unofficial prostitute nor their clients went through regular medical check-ups.

Prostituting took place mainly in "pleasure flats" where the woman was operating as a "free tenant". Each of these apartments had approximately 4-9 women. In 1940, there were 47 of such apartments registered. The majority (90%) of Tallinn prostitutes in the beginning of the 1920s were Estonians, 8 % were Russian and the rest other nationalities. Thirty % up to 20 years old, but the largest group was 20-25 years old (about 50%) and 26-30 years old were represented at around 15%. About 30% were born in Tallinn, 60% from elsewhere in Estonia and about 10% from abroad.

Along with Estonia's occupation by the Soviet Union, attitudes to prostitution changed drastically. Legalization of prostitution was replaced by total denial and was made criminal. For instance, Tallinn City Moral Censoring Unit and Ambulatory of STDs which had been

controlling the prostitutes and their health, was now liquidated on the 16 of November 1940, only a few months after occupation. Prostitutes who were registered at the police were repressed as “ socially alien beings” and were listed, along with thousands of other people, to be deported from Estonia in 1941.

During the Soviet period, pornography, prostitution and organizing prostitution were criminalized and belonged to the phenomena called parasitic lifestyle. There were three relevant paragraphs in the Criminal Law: Criminal Code of Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic (ESSR) (paragraph 200) - preparing or distributing a pornographic item; paragraph 201 - keeping a brothel; paragraph 201-3 - begging, vagrant or the parasitic lifestyle.

Pimping was not considered in the Criminal Law of ESSR. In reality those paragraphs that were related to prostitution were hardly ever used. The reason was absence of prostitution as a mass phenomenon in Soviet Estonia and indifference to it from that part of the government. In Tallinn, only type of systematically operating prostitutes existed - the so-called “foreign currency prostitutes” who were only serving foreigners. Since the KGB kept a vigilant eye on foreigners, the activities of those prostitutes were only feasible with the knowledge and control of this structure. There are some reasons to suggest that some prostitutes serving foreigners used as informants of KGB.

Certain changes started in the mid-1980s when the first signs of private businesses emerged. That also brought along differentiation of incomes. The increase in the relations with foreigners had a great impact on the following processes. Due to the rise in prostitution, a new administrative liability for the activity was introduced in 1987. In 1998, the militia registered over 268 females whom had been caught performing sexual services for money in hostels and hotels.

General socioeconomic situation of women

The socioeconomic situation of women in Estonia is generally worse than this of men. Important difference maker is the gender segregation on the labor market. Women are mostly in occupations, which have less prestige and smaller average salary, like teachers, health and social workers, shop and market sales workers. They rarely work as high-level managers and top specialists. Men have better salaries and power positions.

Men are more active in starting private businesses. Researches show that women have less self-confidence in their business abilities - 38% of women and 56% of men think they can run their own business, and 3% of women and 8% of men do it.

The most of labor force are working as wage laborers. Average salary of women is about ¼ less, last decade shows the growth of that difference. Percentage of women's hourly salary of men's hourly salary (100%): 1992 - 79.8%; 1995 - 73.3%; 1997 - 72.0%. The biggest is difference in salaries of service and sales workers (¾ are women) - 63.2% (1997) and the smallest in salaries of public officials 90.2% (1997). None of the fields is it equal or in favor of women.

Unemployment rate has grown rapidly in 1990s, at first it was equal rates, since 1995 there has been more unemployed men than women. Age, nationality, region, urban/rural

environment, education make important differences. According the age is unemployment rate highest among youth (15-24 years).

A research on gymnasium student's labor expectations shows that boys tend to choose their future occupation according their interests and economic efficiency, while girls choose according cultural stereotype of feminine, and these fields are the least paid.

Human rights and women's rights - Estonian Parliament has signed international conventions Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1992), the Social Charter of European Commission has caused much discussions (especially paragraphs of equality and equal pay) in Estonian Parliament and has not been accepted yet. Estonian SSR law of trade unions exists from 1989.

Overview of developing prostitution and sexual business in Estonia since 1991

Estimation of the number of sex workers

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, unforeseen opportunities for all sorts of activities opened up for the people. The beginning of the 1990s saw the commencement of the first undertakings offering sexual services in rented apartments. Such undertakings offered services on the premises (as a rule, the conditions were rather meager) or the possibility to order girls by phone to hotel rooms, to private parties etc.

Due to the sudden opportunity to talk openly about sexual life, the phenomenon enjoyed a short-term open acceptance in the early 1990s in the form of erotic dancer's competitions being transmitted on national television, rather liberal views spreading not just in the newly founded soft porn magazines, but even in some newspapers which for instance could contain articles on historical and political matters next to articles recounting sexual stories.

Uncontrolled sex business activities peaked in 1994-1995 and started to decrease from 1996, in relation to the changes in legislation, formation of a more stable market situation and changes in the public opinion towards the more negative. Also, small firms and undertakings ran out of business and prostitutes had to relocate into hotels, saunas, night clubs and other businesses that officially had other purposes.

The phenomenon has mainly disappeared from the public arena and has been linked to the criminal world. Prostitution and the sex business tend to be financed, controlled and regulated by organized criminal structures, with the help of corrupt officials; this makes it difficult to identify the houses that accommodate such undertakings. Prostitutes do not reveal much of the background of their jobs. Which not only further obstructs the control, but also the study as such phenomena. Classical forms of prostitution combine with the other forms of the sex business, to such an extent that it is often impossible to draw clear lines between prostitution and such activities as escort services, strip-tease bars, premises providing different types of erotic massage and erotic and pornographic magazines and films.

Also, changes in the geography of the service occurred. The sex business is now firmly located in Tallinn, other bigger cities (Tartu, Narva) and holiday or summer resorts (Parnu,

Haapsalu) where there are more wealthy clients (tourists, foreigners). Prostitution has crossed the borders of Estonia, with the numbers of girls searching for a better income abroad (Finland, Germany, Holland).

The exact number of brothels and sex service firms and the number of woman employed

are very difficult to estimate because the situation changes daily. Today, there are approximately 50 - 70 brothels in Tallinn and a few in the other major cities (Narva, Pärnu - summer resort, Tartu). Between 5 and 20 women work in each brothel.

In summer time a lot of sex employees move their businesses to summer resort Pärnu, because during summer season it's a thousands of tourists from abroad visit this city.

The migration of

sex business employees (mostly Estonian and Russian origin) from Estonia to Finland, Germany and Sweden as well as to other countries has increased, especially after cancellation of visa requirements to several countries (last example - Schenghen countries).

The customers of sex business in Tallinn and Pärnu are primarily visitors from Finland, Sweden and other Europe countries also local Estonian and Russian men. Finnish sex magazines, for example, carry detailed articles about Estonian brothels, telephone numbers and prices.

Procuring and pimps

are totally common. Prostitution is clearly a part of organized crime and the drug trade in Estonia. The advertisements with invitations for sex work to the Dutch, German, Finnish sex clubs are very common in Estonian (Russian and Estonian language) newspapers.

The main motivation for young women and girls are economical reasons, financial support of parents, families, children, solving individual economic problems, one part of the girls come to the sex business with only one reason - to earn money for buying drugs.

The average pimp has little regard for the sex worker health, and with the large number of young women involved; intervention is still very difficult. There are call girls, sex firms as apartments, saunas, brothels and massage saloons, with advertising of their activities in local newspapers with contact telephone numbers.

Street prostitution

like phenomenon (as it exists in Latvia, Sankt Petersburg or Helsinki) does not exist in Tallinn. But NGO's, working with risk group's reports growing number of cases, when adolescent street children offer sexual services mostly for foreign tourists in area of harbor and big supermarkets.

Male prostitution

in Estonia is quite more hidden and taboo issue in mass media and society. It is no estimation how much young men work in sex business, even work in abroad. In Estonia it is mostly concentrated in capital and can be divided on four main parts:

Brothels sauna's massage parlors prostitution

3-4 years ago usually only in biggest brothels and clubs was possible to "order" the male prostitute, mainly man working for the female clients. Last observations of local advertisement in news paper clearly shows that in Tallinn at the moment work one brothel, where the boys provide sexual services only for men proposing in their adverts massage, escort etc. They constantly put work announcements on gay or date web pages, spread their stickers in gay sauna, bars, and hotels.

Also in Tallinn works from 2 to 4 saunas, massage saloons where sex workers from both genders provide sexual services for clients - men and women, depending from the client wish. In general prices for male sex worker services is 1,5-2 bigger then a female prostitutes.

Internet prostitution

It is comparatively remarkable number of advertisements in Internet - from the unambiguous proposal various kind of sex activities for money to request for dating with wealthy men, who have no problem with financial resources and can "support" them.

Sometimes young boys through the Internet search for older men, who can finance their studies, pay for apartments or cover their debts, proposing to pay, having sex relations (temporary or long time) with them. Also some young guys search for the jobs in travel, model agencies, striptease bars and ask for the roles in pornographic movies.

Quite often were observed proposals for anal and oral sex without condoms for a bigger amount of money.

Very common also advertisements of clients, including foreigners, in Internet with the promises to pay for guide, escort services for young men during weekends.

Weekend prostitution

Because of very small gay scene in Estonia - the only cities, which have some gay clubs and bars, are Tallinn and Tartu - a lot of young men, including students during the weekend come to Tallinn for few days. Sometimes in Internet they suggest to pay for getting them by car to capital having sex with client, sometimes they ask about place to stay for some nights and promise to pay having sexual intercourse with owner of apartment.

Sex work abroad

The part of the sex workers working abroad is not estimated and probably is not very significant, but through the partners of sex workers projects network the specialists from AIDS Information & Support Center receive information about some cases of working in sex business mostly in Scandinavia, but also in Germany, Spain and Denmark.

Case

Last year was overviewed the case when 20 years old men was forced into the “fake” marriage to Denmark, by older wealthy architecture from Arhus and was actually put in conditions of slavery, working in country house without money and possibility to call home. Fortunately after 3 months, the young men return home with the help of his elder brother, who lived in Sweden.

General social and demographic characteristics of women involved in sex business

Changes have also taken place in the structure of prostitution, most noticeably in the age and ethnic background of sex business employees.

Whereas in the beginning of the rise of prostitution there was an equal number of Estonians and Russians involved, the share of non - Estonians at present is considerably larger. This has evidently been caused by integration problems on their part.

As far as the migration of prostitution is concerned, it should be pointed out that sex business employees of Estonian nationality now proceed mostly to Stockholm or Berlin (no visa needed, tough competition on the «Finnish» market between woman from the Baltic states and Russia, Russian sex business employees continue working in Finland).

Then prostitution was at its peak, more than half of the sex workers were under 18, and now their share has dropped to 26-27%. At the same time constantly the cases of only 15 or 16 years aged sex workers have been observed, the youngest girl, who was visited “Seastar-I” project services in Tallinn was 14 years old. Approximately half of the sex business employees based in Tallinn come from other regions with high unemployment rate.

During the “SEASTAR” project period (01.12.1996 to 31.09.1999), nearly 1200 sex workers were counseled and given information on safer sex. A total of 382 sex workers filled in an anonymous questionnaire on their first visit; on the basis of these questionnaires the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The 26,5% of girls who filled the questionnaire was less than 18 years old. Usually they are 18-24 years old - 46,4%, from 24 to 30 years old - 16% and 11,1% older than 30 years.
- 45% of sex workers are from capital, 53% from other places in Estonia and only 2% from other countries.
- Majority of the girls in sex business are Russians - 83%, 11% - Estonians, 6% - other nationalities (including Finnish, White Russian, Ukrainian, Jew, Polish, Armenian, Kazakhian, Gypsy and other nationalities)
- The education level of Estonian sex business employees is relatively high; only 23% of them have not graduated high school; only 4% have uncompleted applied high school education, 47% have completed high school and 23% have completed applied school education, university degree - 1%, uncompleted university degree 2%.
- The marital status: 9% are married, 26% divorced, 65% single and 39% are mothers of one, two or more children; some are the only supporters of their families.
- Sex work is short-term occupation, and sex workers tend not to be involved in it for very long time: 16% of the respondents had been working for less than 1 month, 42% from 1 to 6 months, 23% from 6 months to one year and 19% of them more than one year.
- On the question about their plans for the future girls answered as follows: 45% pointed half of the year, 37% - one year, 10% - two years, 8% - three years and longer to be involved in sex business.
- The interest for working abroad is quite constant. Altogether 54% of the respondents intended to continue their work abroad - 52% in Finland, 40% in Germany; 8% in other countries.
- Knowledge of safer sex is insufficient: 6% of the respondents do not use condoms at all, and 26% in the middle of the project) do not use condoms all the time.
- 30% was sexually abused in childhood (under 16 years old). 40% of sex business employees fall victim to violence and sexual abuse when working.
- Only 9% do not use alcohol at all, 42% use every week, 19% - every month, and 30% answered that not very often. 90% of sex workers smoking.
- On the question about drug use were answered 321 sex workers and the results are very alarming - 28% of the girls use drugs. From those, who use (89 sex workers): smoke - 57%, inject - 45%, use tablets - 45%

Law enforcement in Estonia

Legal regulation and control by the institutions

It is no special law concerning prostitution in Estonia.

It is no national policy of the state (or ministry of justice, ministry of health etc.) and no any state programs or financed by state projects regarding prostitution.

Unexpectedly effective has been paragraph 201 of the Penal Code “Allowing illegal activities in a persons dwelling”, due to which many brothel keepers, especially female ones or former prostitutes gave up their activities. Paragraph 202 of Penal Code “Involvement of minors in criminal activities or prostitution” has also had a positive effect, though it would be bigger if the police had better means of enforcing it. Paragraph 202 of the Criminal Code on banning pimping can be considered a truly progressive step in the development of our legislation. But at the same time we find out that big number of owners just change the “sign” and reopen new brothels under new one - saunas, massage saloons etc.

From 1 of September 2002 was entered into the force new legislation:

Provision of opportunity to engage in unlawful activities, or pimping. (PC Art. 268) - Pimping, or providing premises for the purposes of illegal consumption of narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances, for organizing illegal gambling, or for prostitution, is punishable by a pecuniary punishment or up to 3 year’s of imprisonment. For an offence provided for in this section, the court may impose a fine to the extend of assets as a supplementary punishment pursuant to Art. 53 of this Code

Unfortunately, its looks that police deal with cases only if they have operative information about adolescent girls in brothels or drug use.

It is not enough attention for the trafficking itself and very few investigation regarding pimping or involvement in prostitution.

Although its enforcement is complicated and the number of court cases, which really punish the pimps and owners by years in imprisonment is very little, a mere existence of this law ended the virtually useless discussions on legalizing or banning prostitution, neither of which is a constructive solution. The discussion about legislation in our Parliament roll over and rules only in one way - the range of taxes, which the state wish collect from the sex business employees.

Social and medical assistance

It should be pointed that providing social and medical services for sex workers is still not in agenda of the state. Till beginning of year 2003 it was only one temporary (3 months financing) attempt to organize services for sex workers, financially supported and initiated by Tallinn City Government, which has no remarkable success. Notwithstanding the fact, that working with high-risk groups such as sex workers is one of the aims of National AIDS Prevention Program accepted by Ministry of Social Affaires, for the year 2003 financial resources for implementation of any activities are not allocated in budget. Till this moment

EU programs, international networks, SOROS foundations and other funds and agencies from abroad financially supported all projects and services, all activities undertaken.

Meretäht- Meritähti - Seastar I

Prevention of Migratory Prostitution in Cross Border Regions

01.12.1996 - 01.09.1999

Since October 1996 for September 1999 this work has been carried out, within the framework of the project “SEASTAR” – Prevention of Migratory Prostitution in Cross Border Regions, which was a Finnish-Estonian joint project, financed partly by EU and partly by Helsinki Deaconess Institute. The SEASTAR project was the part of UMBRELLA NETWORK projects, co-coordinated by SPI (Social Pädagogischen Institute in Berlin, Germany). Partner organization from Finland, who implemented the projects, was Pro-tukipiste www.pro-tukipiste.fi.

Within the framework of SEASTAR sex workers receive the following assistance:

- * Free advising on safer sex and HIV/STD prevention
- * Free tests on HIV and STDs
- * Free treatment of STDs
- * Free counseling of the specialists (venerologist, narcologist etc.)
- * Free legal, social and psychological assistance.

The state AIDS Prevention Center www.aids.ee participates in the project as a coordinator, offering just methodological assistance to the project staff.

During the report period (01.12.1996 to 31.09.1999), nearly 1200 sex workers were counseled, tested on HIV/STI and given information on safer sex.

In Tallinn, customer work has focused on providing health services, counseling, safer sex education and outreach work at the first half of the period at Helsinki and Tallinn, later at Tallinn only. Counseling, medical examinations, safer sex education, specialist consultations (venerologist, gynecologist, narcologist, psychologist) for sex workers were arranged at the AIDS Information and Support Center.

The center provides doctors surgery hours six days in the week (in the afternoon).

Condoms, lubricants, safer sex informative materials, leaflets about safer kinds of work, about services in both countries, has been distributed on fieldwork visits and in center.

Staff and volunteers of the center have long time experience of voluntary work. During our visits to Helsinki sex bars (Kings Kakadu, Mermaid, Mikado) and on the streets, during field work once a week in Tallinn we spread more then 1000 safer sex «gifts» with the various kinds of condoms, lubricants and informative materials about activities of both services in Tallinn and Helsinki.

Survey

«Meritäht-Seastar»

01.12.1996 - 01.09.1999

447 sex workers - first visitors:

STD	01.12.1996 - 31.08.1998		01.09.1998 - 01.09.1999		01.12.1996 - 01.09.1999	
	Nr of parents	% of the first visitors	Nr of parents	% of the first visitors	Nr of parents	% of the first visitors
Lues	15	4.4	1	1	16	3.6
Chlamydia	74	21.9	1	1	75	17
Trichomonas	48	14.2	2	2	50	11
Gonorrhea	23	6.8	6	5.5	29	6.5
Herpes gen.	4	1.2	0	0	4	0.9

341 sex workers - multiply visitors:

STD	01.12.1996 - 31.08.1998		01.09.1998 - 01.09.1999		01.12.1996 - 01.09.1999	
	Nr of parents	% of the first visitors	Nr of parents	% of the first visitors	Nr of parents	% of the first visitors
Lues	3	0.9	0	0	3	1
Chlamydia	19	5.6	0	0	19	5.5
Trichomonas	5	1.5	0	0	5	1.5
Gonorrhea	3	0.9	4	5.5	7	2.1
Herpes gen.	0	0	0	0	0	0

Medical examination was given to 788 sex workers, out of whom 451 were first visitors and 337 multiply visitors. Totally nearly 35 % of the girls, consulted and examined medically during their first visits were discovered minimum one sexually transmitted disease.

Nearly 45% of those sex workers, who visits center through the project, were diagnosed candida and gardnerella.

The corresponding figures among multiply visitors were decreased considerably, especially when the girls come regularly.

Totally nearly 8-9 % of the girls, consulted and examined medically during the multiply visits are discovered minimum one sexually transmitted disease. 18 % of these girls were diagnosed candida and gardnerella.

The reason why multiply visitors are still discovered to have so many diseases is that very often they get infected when not working or because they fall victim of sexual violence when working

No other non-profit organizations deal with the problem of prostitution. Over the years there have been few cases when sex workers have turned to the Crisis Intervention Center assistance or psychologists but by no means can such work be considered systematic.

Sex workers have also turned to different STD specialists but they have received only medical help for charge, not advising, training or psychological and social help. Unfortunately this project was never been supported or financed by the state.

Harm Reduction Project Among Sex Workers Intravenous Drug Users 01.01.2001-31.12.2002

Sex workers - drug addicts is quite new phenomena in our society and the number of sex workers -IDU-s increased remarkably at the last two years. The needs of sex workers - IDU-s are specific, comparatively with others IDU-s, who are mostly man.

Previous activities during last six years in work with sex-workers shows, that during last two years the number of IDU-s among sex-workers increased dramatically from 1% in 1994 to 18% of sex workers IDU-s in period 1996-1999.

Experience of the work with IDU-s shows, that the sex workers IDU-s contribute special activities and measures, including not only needle exchange, but counseling about STD-s and safer sex.

Previous work shows, that it is better to provide services to sex workers IDU-s separately from other IDU-s, who are mostly men and have different habits.

The problems of prostitution, trafficking of women and girls inside and outside the borders become more and more serious and dangerous. From the year 2001 center start the 2-year "Harm Reduction Project Among Sex Workers Intravenous Drug Users, financially supported by IHRD www.soros.org/harm-reduction, Open Society Institute www.osi.hu from New York and our own resources and still no any financial support from the state.

The approach of the project was:

- Education of staff of the project for work using harm reduction methods.
- Implementation of services for sex workers: needle exchange, counseling, voluntary testing on HIV, STD, Hepatitis B and C. Distribution of information materials, condoms, etc.
- Creation of "peer-education" system among sex workers - IDU-s. Organization of outreach work.
- Spreading of activities undertaken from Tallinn to 6 another cities of Estonia (cities at risk).

The main goal of the project was:

To prevent the spreading HIV/AIDS infection among sex workers - drug users and in the future to prevent spreading of infection from IDU mother to child.

The project was implemented with following aims and objectives:

- To implement a harm reduction methods among sex workers - drug addicts
- To involve in the project as many sex workers - IDU-s as possible by using the method of outreach work
- To reduce the number of Hepatitis B and C and STD-s among sex workers - IDU-s as much as possible with using safe injecting and safer sex practice
- To prove that IDU-s sex workers also have human rights and right for health

- To change the stigma concerning sex workers - drug addicts in society from “witch hunt” to tolerance and assistance
- To clarify real situation with sex workers - IDU-s
- To educate the staff of the AIDS Information & Support Center, to implement harm reduction methodology in work practice of the staff of the project SEASTAR, concerning HIV/STD prevention among sex workers
- To make available for sex workers - IDU-s counseling, needle exchange, safer sex practice education, voluntary confidential testing, informative materials, sterile equipment for injections and condoms
- To spread positive experience of the project from Tallinn to other cities - (Pärnu - at summer time increasing number of sex workers and Narva - high level of unemployment, high number of sex workers - IDU-s)

For this purposes following measures were undertaken by team of the project with collaboration of other partners:

- Personal of the SEASTAR project (HIV/STD Prevention among sex workers) was educated and trained, how to implement harm reduction approaches in their work (four persons)
- The personal of needle exchange and methadone program was used in work
- Outreach work was provided with aim to reach as much as possible sex workers - IDU-s
- Referrals for following of kind of services for clients of project were provided: needle exchange program, counseling of medical doctor, psychiatrist, provide possibilities for sex workers - IDU-s, who want to be “drug-free” to have access to detoxification treatment, and for heroin users methadone maintenance treatment (who need it).
- IDU-s informational materials (about safer sex practice, safe injections, prevention of Hepatitis B and C, prevention of STD-s), condoms, bleach, sterile injection equipment were distributed for sex workers IDU-s
- Voluntary and confidential HIV/STD testing, pre- and post counseling was provided
- More active sex workers - IDU-s were recruited to be “peer-educators” for others sex workers - drug addicts in question of AIDS prevention
- Survey for sex workers - IDU-s in order to find out about existence of factors of risk behavior, frequency and opportunities of avoidance (questionnaire) was implemented
- Some former sex worker - IDU-s were acquired for outreach work
- Intervention among sex workers - drug addicts were spreaded in Tallinn, Pärnu and Narva since that is a large amount of cases reported of Hepatitis B and C among IDU-s and high level of prostitution there.
- Psycho-social support and advocacy of sex workers - drug addicts were provided

Project staff

included 3 persons: project leader,
2 medical doctors, and two outreach workers -medical nurses.

Previous experience of AIDS Information & Support Center shows that the main difficulty is stigmatization of such groups in society, like sex workers and IDU-s. So sex workers who are at the same time the drug addicts are double stigmatized. Social support of that targeted group faced with the ignorance and opposition of decision-makers, and finally of all society.

One main measure for changing opinion of society is work with mass media. Project workers have a useful experience in organizing media campaigns and use this method in future for creating tolerance and support.

For these efforts they build co-operation with National AIDS Prevention Center and National Drug Prevention Program.

Project workers tried to prove to governmental structures and decision-makers the importance and necessity of such kind of work.

After end of project results we hope to apply continuing financing from governmental recourses. Very important side of this project is to take advocacy efforts with aim to guarantee human and sexual rights of young women, involved in sex business and drug use.

- During first year of the project 532 SW were reached more than once (two or more times multiply visits individuals).
- During first year of the project approximately 822 SW IDU-s in 8 cities Tallinn, Narva, Parnu (summer months), Sillamäe, Kohtla-Järve, Jõhvi, Ahtme, Kiviõli were participated in syringe/needle exchange.
- 31020 syringes, 33542 needles total number of needles/syringes distributed to sex workers through this project during the past six months.
- In Tallinn, Parnu (summer months), Narva, Sillamäe, Kohtla-Järve, Jõhvi, Ahtme, Kiviõli 31020 (16000 in first 6 month) syringes, 33542 needles (17000 in first 6 month) were distributed to sex workers IDU-s in 1 year.
- 15 total number of sex workers assisted by referrals to other places for medical and social services and 12 of them succeeded in accessing and using those referrals.

The greatest outreach, harm reduction and service needs for the SW IDUs clients looks as follows:

- testing and treatment of STD, HIV
- gynecological services
- drop-in center services
- legal advice
- rehabilitation services for drug users (methadone detoxification, methadone maintenance)

From the working with SW IDU-s project workers find that the part of the adolescent girls are quite bigger, especially if we talk about this girls, who don't work in usual locations (bars, clubs, saunas etc), but sell sex for earning money for drugs. In last year the part of Estonian speaking IDU-s was growing, same process was happened among sex workers IDU-s.

Other health and drug-related risks:

- Problems with police problems with owners of sex agencies
- Unwanted pregnancy, abortions
- HIV, Hepatitis B and C
- infected children

Through the contacts with sex workers IDU-s we have now quite clear picture about kinds of drug use, the “brothels” sex workers IDU-s use mostly amphetamines, also inject heroin, take tablets, smoke marihuana and other group, working in occasional places, old houses, street, use mostly heroin.

The first group works in saunas, sex clubs, hotels, massage saloons, striptease clubs and use drugs to keep themselves in “working” conditions, the others work in apartments, old, ruined houses, streets, drug users gathering places, cars, toilets etc. and use received payment for immediate acquisition of the drugs.

During 1996-1999 years fortunately the workers of projects don't find the HIV positive sex workers, but during last 1,5-year situation changed, already are diagnosed more then ten women, who are HIV positive drug users and sell sex for drugs. More of that, some man, which were founded infected through the HIV/STD testing in our center for general public (not drug addicts themselves) give us information, that they are sure that they were infected by prostitutes.

Unfortunately the group of sex workers IDU-s from bars, clubs, saunas, brothels is affected by their clients, who ask unprotected sex and are ready to pay 2-3 times more for that. Because in those cases sex workers don't need to pay this “additional” money for pimps, guards, and other mediators - the girls very often agreed to serve clients without condoms. Other groups of young girls, who sell themselves for drugs or for money to apply drugs is affected by immediate need earn money and buy drugs. Some of them don't use condoms at all, motivation to buy condoms is very weak, and it looks that for that group extremely important to guarantee free condoms and lubricants.

As result of project promotion City Government of Tallinn and Ministry of Social Affaires gave additional financial resources for needle exchange in Eastern part of Estonia, which is mostly affected by epidemic of HIV.

It was allowed to open 6 additional needle exchange sites for IDU-s in region (May 2001). The staff of opened sites was trained for needle exchange and counseling of IDU-s and SW particularly. Local sex workers now have possibility to visit these new sites in Narva (additional mobile unit), Sillamäe, Kohtla-Järve, Jõhvi, Ahtme, Kiviõli.

Biggest success is the first signs of acceptance of harm reduction ideology by government and policy makers. As result of this, first time through HIV/AIDS era the state gave finances for needle exchange program, what include particularly services for sex workers too.

Neighbor countries in Baltic region, especially Finland and Sweden began to put more attention for serious situation with HIV, drug use problems in Estonia and try to support some activities.

The government should give a special attention to these problems in a frame of extremely fast spread of HIV infection in last year.

Before year 2000 total number of HIV positive people as nearly 100. In year 2000 - 390 new HIV cases and 3 AIDS cases were founded, in year 2001 - 1474 HIV cases and 7 AIDS cases, and in 2002 year 899 new cases, including 224 in prisons. Nearly 30% from new infections in 2002 were women. All together 2859 HIV positive people were diagnosed, 11 people

diagnosed

AIDS.

Nearly 70% of new infections this year were young people in the age of 15-24 years. They are mostly intravenous drug addicts.

It should be pointed out that it is a clear epidemic situation among drug users, especially in the age 15-24 years old and the number of infected women is constantly growing. The infected drug users are in the age of high sexual activity and a very common situation is as follows: young boys IDUs, who were founded HIV positive, who live in Ida-Virumaa (Narva, Kohtla-Järve) have girlfriends, who work on a temporary basis in capital (sometimes in sex business). It is an alarming situation and because of that situation immediate and common measures are needed. The latest tendency in HIV statistics shows that there is a constant growing of the number of cases, when HIV spreads through sexual way.

Drop-in Center for sex-workers

Drop-in Center For Sex Workers, located in the premises of the AIDS Information & Support Center, was opened in October 2002 with financial support from the Mama Cash Foundation (www.mamacash.nl) (The Netherlands), the Embassy of Finland in Tallinn, methodological help from the AIDS Prevention Center (GO) and advisory from the GENDERS Center (Riga, Latvia).

Through consultations and fieldwork with sex workers, and research on trafficking of women and girls, the team of the AIDS Information & Support Center faced the immediate necessity to create premises for case management and urgent help for them.

It consists of two rooms for that purpose, located on Kopli street 32, Tallinn. Kitchen, WC/shower room, TV, computer (in future), press, literature, condoms, lubricants etc. This center is open 5-7 days a week for four-six hours. For extraordinary situations it is possible to provide temporary lodging for 1-2 persons. The project includes 2 workers and medical nurses.

The main aims of the project are to create confidential, culturally and linguistically appropriate anonymous services for sex workers - drop-in center on a daily basis, possibility to talk about problems, receive literature on safer sex, condoms and lubricants, consultation on reproductive health, medical advice, psychological consultation, wash clothes, get coffee/snacks, have a shower, referrals to a venerologist, gynecologist, therapist, video/TV.

In different reception hours confidential, personal and anonymous services for possible victims and case management for victims of trafficking - drop-in hours for trafficked women and lectures for possible victims, legal consultations, informational services (computer) - background of firms, details of legal work abroad, computer courses, video/TV (special films about trafficking), language lessons, temporary financial help (if possible), consultations of a psychologist, self-help groups.

Following objectives were followed for implementation of the project:

- To prevent the spread of STD-s and HIV/AIDS, to reduce risk of HIV/STD infections among sex workers in Tallinn

- To create a strong commitment for promotion of prostitution policies based on principle of treating sex workers with dignity, respect and confidentiality and to promote their health, safety and civil rights, providing culturally and linguistically appropriated services
- To identify social and health service providers and to make there services available, appropriate and accessible to sex workers
- To provide sex workers with information on safer sex, promote the use of safer sex techniques in prostitution
- To provide possible victims of trafficking with information of legal possibilities to work abroad, about background of advertising companies, legal situation in countries of destination, risks and possibilities to get help from NGOs and governmental institutions, embassies abroad.
- To provide case management for victims of trafficking

Expected results will be:

- Health care delivery and management of support system for sex workers will have been integrated within the services, offered of existing NGO-s and governmental institutions
- The risk of HIV/STD infection among sex workers in Tallinn will have been reduced
- Through integration of activities concerning reproductive health of sex workers into the prevention and health care activities, reduction of risk of unwanted pregnancies will have been acquired.
- A network of social and health services which provide sex workers with non-discriminatory health promotion programs will have been created
- New and innovative instruments for health promotion activities for sex workers (adequate information, drop-in center, outreach work, peer education, community based organizations with direct involvement of sex workers) will have been created
- The level of STD-s among sex workers, especially after safer sex education and multiply visits to focal point will be decreased.
- The awareness and information about trafficking and possible risk of working abroad should be increased considerably

Activities planned and at the moment partly implemented:

- Renovation of two rooms
- Renovation of toilet; installation of shower cabin, hot water boiler, mixer and sink
- Applying furniture, light equipment, gas cooking range, small refrigerator, coffee-maker, tape recorder, television, video, computer, kitchen ware, heating appliance, burglar alarm, microwave, washing machine, bedclothes.
- Creation of library of literature on prostitution and trafficking, data-base on computer
- Applying condoms and lubricants, printing and copying of appropriate literature on 2 languages
- Partly renovation of procedure room for making tests on STDs and AIDS for sex workers
- Providing safer sex trainings for sex workers
- Providing possibilities for shower, washing clothes, snacks, coffee for sex workers
- Showing training films about sex work and trafficking of women
- Organizing the daily hot-line for the sex workers

- Organizing possibility for STD/HIV testing, STDs treatment, counseling by gynecologist, venerologist, therapist and psychologist
- Choosing and training peer-educators from the number of sex workers
- Organizing self-help group for sex workers

Meretäht-Seastar II project
HIV/STD Prevention Among Sex Workers
01.04.2002-30.03.2003

The goal of the project “MERETÄHT-Seastar II project

HIV/STD Prevention Among Sex Workers” financially supported by Family Health International from USA www.fhi.org is prevention of HIV/STI among sex workers, reducing the number of STDs among sex workers in Tallinn, increasing the level of safer sex knowledge.

The following strategies and activities, confidential, anonymous, culturally and linguistically appropriate services for sex workers were implemented in one year period:

- Voluntary testing on HIV/STD: pre- and post consulting, treatment of STD, referrals to other service providers - both governmental and NGOs.
- Consultations: medical advice, legal consultations, psychological consultation, consultation on reproductive health, appointments as necessary with venerologist, gynecologist, therapist, narcologist.
- Safer sex promotion: Distribution of special literature on safer sex, condoms and lubricants, safer sex education, promotion the use of safer sex techniques in prostitution.
- Everyday services: drop-in services (wash clothes, get coffee/snacks, have a shower)
- Peer education of sex workers: self-help groups, identification of possible peer educators, trainings for peer educators, peer education events on base of drop-in center.
- Outreach work
- Work with mass media: articles, TV, radio interviews for reducing of the level of stigmatization of sex workers in society and increase awareness about sex work issue.
- Work with others service providers and governmental structures: for creation of the strong commitment for promotion of prostitution policies based on principle of treating sex workers with dignity, respect and confidentiality and to promote their health, safety and civil rights, providing culturally and linguistically appropriated services. Identify social and health service providers and to make services available, appropriate and accessible to sex workers. Referrals to anti-trafficking project STOP II (AIDS Information & Support Centre), governmental STD clinic, Methadone treatment program, needle exchange and rehabilitation centre (AIDS Information & Support Centre), Institute of Human Rights (NGO) if needed.
- Intervention campaigns in other cities Narva and Parnu: informational campaign, dissemination of condoms, lubricants, stickers, leaflets for sex workers and clients in

Narva - city of origin of nearly 35% of sex workers and Parnu - resort and very popular transfer place of sex workers in summer times.

- Changing experience: visit of project leader to Prague, visit NGO R-R , specialised on work with sex workers (shelter, mobile car unit for testing, social assistance, drop-in centre), centre for child prostitution, LIGHTHOUSE - 24h services house for HIV positive persons, incl. sex workers.

Regular information (on monthly basis) is constantly collected about number of project visitors, their location, time of involvement in the sex business, age, nationality, educational background, condom use, alcohol, drug and tobacco use etc. For monitoring the use of services and to better understand the needs sex workers, a questionnaire which was implemented will be analysed at the end of the project.

At the end of the project comparative statistic data about age, education, ways of involvement , sex work conditions (violence, sexual abuse questions), drug use, alcohol use, condom use, location etc of the women in sex business will be collected and analysed.

Also the epidemiological data concerning HIV, STD will be collected and analysed, comparing first and multiplyed visits (influence of safer sex education, condoms use).

The project is supervised

by Dr Nelli Kalikova from AIDS Prevention Center and Dr Tatjana Kurova from GENDERS center from Riga. Activities with trafficked women can be coordinated by Kvinnoforum from Sweden.

Project team includes 3 persons:

project manager, doctor and medical nurse outreach worker.

During first 8 month of project were served 164 first time visitors and 104 multiply visits that receive even one medical procedure.

Total number of contacts with sex workers was closely to 350 including medical services but also safer sex education and condom, literature, lubricants distribution and visits for drop-in. For sex workers during reception, drop-in center open hours, outreach work and using peer-educators the total number of 4500 condoms were distributed.

Also in period October 2002-December 2002 male sex workers start to visit the project and received some medical services. It was 7 first time visits and 15 multiply visits, male sex workers were mostly interested in condoms, lubricants and testing on STI's.

Family Health International will to continue financial support for this project additional year from April 2003.

With the aim to find additional resources for the services for sex workers project manager undertakes following measures:

Participate in writing project proposal for the Global AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Fund www.globalfundatm.org with the help of international expert and in collaboration with CCM (Country Coordination Mechanism group), which was created with participation of Ministry of Social Affaires. Positive result was announced in late January.

AIDS Information & Support Center participate in project proposal competition for Health Department, announced by Tallinn's City Government with the purpose of providing services for sex workers in November 2002 for the period of 3 months (it was first attempt of local city government to response the problem of prostitution at all. Unfortunately, for the several reasons - not acceptance of NGO for the participation in principal; burocratic procedure (24

documents requested); breaking the rules of tender - the winner, Lasnamae Polyclinic have not 3 years experience working with sex workers, like it was required in the rules - for this reasons the Center don't receive this additional financing. The results - just few visitors to site of Lasnamae Polyclinic period of 1,5 month, negative reaction of society, because the wrong way of advertising project activities in mass-media and society, very low interest in service from sex workers.

Trafficking in women

It is very hard to estimate the number of trafficked woman in our country, because it is no official statistics and no special research provided on this issue. There are two ways of trafficking in woman in Estonia:

Inside the country, when the girls enforced to go to the capital and bigger cities from the country side and small cities (mostly from Ida-Virumaa with bigger part of Russian speaking inhabitants and higher rate of unemployment)

Outside the country, when the woman can be trafficked crosses the borders to the other country.

Estonia is mostly country of origin of trafficked woman and in some way country of destination, because in prostitution in Tallinn and bigger cities are involved previously young girls from the countryside and smaller cities. If 5-7 years ago it was a number of cases when the woman was coming from Byelorussia, Russia, Latvia, now nearly all trafficked woman are local. Thanks to stronger border regulation the number of foreigners trafficked is insignificant.

The ways of trafficking are various: we have a wide range of destinations of trafficked women from Estonia. But most «popular» are: Finland, Sweden, Poland, Holland, Spain, Italy, Norway, Denmark and Germany. But we have also information about other destinations like Thailand, Greece, Cyprus, Japan, and USA.

They are trafficked for the following purposes:

- To work in prostitution
- As a domestic workers, nannies, householders etc.
- To work as striptease dancers, dancers, waitresses etc.
- For the marriage with purposes of sexual or labor exploitation

Very often women, failed by promises of high income, security, medical insurance, good work conditions, are have no intentions to work like prostitutes, but the situation, they find out their selves in abroad, put them make very difficult choices, which arise from absence of legal status (tourist visas, end of visas, passports), financial situation (no money for the return home); physical or psychological violence, blackmail.

The main way of recruiting women is the advertising of «marriage agencies», «employment companies», and straight invitations for sex work in 3 main advertising newspapers - Kuldne Börss, SOOV, Privat-INFO, one weekly magazine - Den Za Dnjom and one sex magazine MAJA, also from the working prostitutes from existing brothels and clubs. It is very few individuals who work independently on sex market, it is all the time some mediator (pimp,

owner of club, driver, bodyguard etc.) between sex worker and client. The attempts of some women began to work individually, advertising they phone number in papers, are mostly ends by fiasco because of threatening by violence and financial racket.

The traffickers are mostly local, previously criminal persons; often ex-prostitutes; also on this field are very active traffickers from Finland, Russia, Germany, and Holland etc.

It is the clear linkages between traffickers from country of origin (Estonians, Russians) and countries of destination (owners of clubs, agencies, hotels, bars etc.)

In a society exist very different attitudes regarding the problem of trafficking in woman, violence and prostitution. But if 3-5 years ago the tone of articles and reports in mass media was totally sensational, now prostitution theme is quite «usual», but it still less awareness about trafficking.

Policy and law regarding trafficking and prostitution

Estonian Penal Code does not specify trafficking of human beings or trafficking in woman as a single valued crime. However that could be criminalized in concurrence of offenses:

Division 6: Offences Against Liberty

Enslaving (PC Art. 133) –

Placing a human being, through violence or deceit, in a situation where he or she is forced to work or perform other duties against his or her will for the benefit of another person, or keeping a person in such situation, is punishable by 1 to 5 year's imprisonment

The same act, if committed:

against two or more persons,
or against a person of less than 18 years of age
is punishable by 3 to 12 year's of imprisonment.

Abduction (PC Art. 134) –

Taking or leaving a person, through violence or deceit, in a state where it is possible to persecute or humiliate him or her on grounds of race or gender or for other reasons, and where he or she lacks legal protection against such treatment and does not have the possibility to leave the state, is punishable by a pecuniary punishment or up to 5 year's imprisonment.

The same act, if committed:

against two or more persons, or
against a person of less than 18 years of age
is punishable by 2 to 10 year's of imprisonment.

Chapter 11: Offences Against Family and Minors

Sale or purchase of children (PC Art. 173) –

the sale or purchase of children is punishable by 1 to 5 year's of imprisonment. The same act, if committed by a legal person, is punishable by a pecuniary punishment.

Chapter 16: Offences Against Public Peace:

Illegal crossing of state border or temporary border line of Republic of Estonia (PC Art. 258) –

Illegal crossing of the state border or temporary border line of Republic of Estonia, if committed:

- in disregard of a stop signal or order given by Border Guard official;
- by a group;
- by a means of transport in a location not intended for crossing;
- at least twice;
-

is punishable by a pecuniary punishment or up to one year of imprisonment

The same act, if committed:

- by using violence, or
- by causing serious damage to health;

is punishable by 4 to 12 year's of imprisonment.

Provision of opportunity to engage in unlawful activities, or pimping. (PC Art. 268) –

Pimping, or providing premises for the purposes of illegal consumption of narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances, for organizing illegal gambling, or for prostitution, is punishable by a pecuniary punishment or up to 3 year's of imprisonment. For an offence provided for in this section, the court may impose a fine to the extend of assets as a supplementary punishment pursuant to Art. 53 of this Code.

Also offences can be combined with rape (PC Art. 115) or sexual passion satisfaction in an unnatural way (PC Art 115.1) or buggery (PC Art.118).

The special laws against trafficking in woman do not exist.

It is no remarkable pressure to develop this kind of laws from Parliament, politicians or woman organization. The interest and concern of state institutions such as ministries of justice, health, foreign affairs and social affairs are very weak.

It is no any legislation or regulation concerning enforced marriages or marriages on convenience. The General Assembly adopted the UN United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime in November 2000. The Convention is currently supplemented by two Protocols, one is trafficking in persons and one is on smuggling in persons. Estonia signed the Convention on 4 December 2002, which has entered into force on 19 January 2003. Estonia is going to sign the both Protocols in the near future.

Judicial co-operation for these offenses are possible also under Council of Europe conventions in criminal field, ratified by Estonia in 1997. The trafficker - being a citizen of Estonia - can be penalized when the crime was committed in another country, because Estonia ratified the European Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons on 26 of February 1997, in force since 01.08.1997.

Prevention and education of trafficking

The special programs or separate projects for the prevention and education regarding trafficking in woman, initiated or supported by the state, do not exist.

The first NGO, which start to deal with awareness about this issue 5-6 years ago and the prevention and education projects, including services for trafficked woman was the NGO AIDS Information and Support Center (AIDS-i Tugikeskus).

STOP-1 and STOP-2 projects (1998-2000), initiated by STAKES - Finnish National Research and Development Center For Welfare and Health - www.stakes.fi/sexviolence - and Finnish Ministry of Interior Affairs involved some Estonian state institutions (police, prosecutors, border guards, schools, social and health sector civil servants) but only on issue of prevention of sexual abuse and involvement in prostitution the minors (under 18 years old).

“Training and Capacity Building Against Trafficking in woman and Girls in the Baltic Sea Region” project

From March 2000 AIDS Information and Support Center in cooperation with NGO-s from Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Latvia and Lithuania implemented 1-year project «Training and Capacity Building Against Trafficking in woman and Girls in the Baltic Sea Region» - project, initiated by Kvinnoforum www.qweb.kvinnoforum.se from Sweden and financed by Daphne initiative.

The general aim of the project was two folded:

Firstly to enhance the capacity of work related to trafficking among local NGOs interested and working with women at risk of being trafficked or victims of it.

Secondly to develop the network between these organizations in the Baltic Sea Region.

This aim was reached through fulfilling the following objectives:

- Creation of national focal points (in Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia) which works now as resource centers and coordinators in the national NGO-work against trafficking, as well as communicate their activities to other focal points, the media and the general public.
- Designing and executing a workshop, in each participating country, for NGOs providing important methods and facts when working against trafficking in women.
- Establishing task force groups, which will facilitate the capacity building of NGOs working against trafficking in women.
- Creation a network consisting of e-mail lists on specific topics concerning trafficking. This network is linked to the European Network Q-web (i.e. the network established during 1999).
- The needs of training and capacity building vary for each participating country. Therefore, each NFP was analyzed the needs fore each country and suggest accordingly focus for their work. The NFP for Estonia is director of NGO Aids Information & Support Center Jury Kalikov.

Activities of the project:

Training workshops

Two-days workshop in each of the Baltic countries and a one day workshop for each of the Nordic countries were organized.

For the participation at the national seminar in Estonia were invited 33 persons, from which 22 persons attended. Notwithstanding of several attempts some invitations have no response (police, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, border officials). In process of preparing workshop we find out the fact, that at this moment (July 2000) and unfortunately at the present no one person in police is responsible for the work with prostitution and trafficking. Continuous staff replacement, corruption, priority on dealing with problems of growing drug use rule finally for the situation, that the special group (Narkopolitsei), some of specialists of which deals with prostitution and trafficking cases just sign out this issue from their responsibilities. The specialists of Consular department and border officials have a very weak impression about trafficking like phenomena with comments like "it is not our problems".

To the seminar were invited mostly the members of existing NGOs, which meet or can meet through they work the issue of prostitution and trafficking, some persons from governmental institutions. On seminar was video film "Bought and Sold" was presented. The members of Baltic network Rima Praspaliauskiene from "Praeties Pedos" Lithuania, Tatjana Kurova and Rimma Kurova from GENDERS Center from Latvia were participated in seminar

Seminar includes 2 days of lectures, workshops, discussion, the focus of the first day - main presentation about phenomena of trafficking of human/trafficking of women, lectures of joint network members. The second day consists discussions, workshops and evaluation.

Concrete results: The basis of the national network against trafficking of women was formed, the main tasks were defined, the e-mail list was formed (including also not presented on the workshop organizations and persons), exchange of reports about situation in other Baltic States aware understanding of global character of trafficking. The work, implemented before the workshop, receives new impulses for the new kind of activities.

Networking

The NFP were network with other NGOs and organizations locally and regionally. According to the needs of each country the NFP focus their work on other activities throughout the year. These activities are optional and may include lectures, contacts with media, lobbying among politicians and decision-makers, writing articles or other.

Unfortunately the international project regarding trafficking in women starts without any help from the state. This project was continued for the first three months of 2001 with the financial help of Likestilling Senteret www.likestilling.no from Oslo, Norway

"Continuation of "Training and capacity building against trafficking women and girls in the Baltic region"

The aims of this successful short project were:

- To enhance the capacity of work related to trafficking among local Estonian NGO-s interested and working with women and adolescent girls at risk of being trafficked or victims of trafficking in Estonia

- To provide case management for trafficked women (layer, crisis financial help, psychologist consultation, medical services, travel expense for return home etc)

NGO AIDS Information and Support Center started two new trafficking prevention projects for youth at the end of 2002.

“Preventive -informative Campaign Against Trafficking in girls and women in Baltic States (Lithuania and Estonia)”

November 2002- September 2003

Project partners

Lithuanian Women’s NGO “Praeities Pedos”

NGO AIDS Information and Support Center in Tallinn (AIDSi Tugikeskus)

Activities of the project:

- To produce two preventive documentaries “Legal work abroad” (20 min., in Lithuanian and Estonian). The documentary will promote, inform and encourage girls to look for legal ways to get employed abroad. Therefore, the documentary will actually help girls to avoid a possibility to fall into a trap of the traffickers. The project envisages creation of two separate versions of the documentary (for the Lithuanian and Estonian audience), as different institutions provide the information on legal employment opportunities in Estonia and Lithuania.
- To prepare the lecture “What do you know about trafficking in women and girls?” (in Lithuanian and Estonian; different versions of the lecture for both countries) that would be delivered during the informative campaign.
- Informative campaign will be carried on at several levels - meetings with senior students and teachers from Estonian and Lithuanian provinces, as well as training-seminars in Lithuania and Estonia:
- The essential part of the project - meetings with students and teachers of main secondary schools in the Lithuanian and Estonian provinces (26 towns, 168 high schools). They will include demonstration of the documentary “Legal work abroad”, delivery of the informative lecture “What do you know about trafficking in women and girls?”. Moreover, additional meetings with local journalists, social workers as well as police officers involved in the work with juveniles will be arranged in the regions.
- To hold two training-seminars in Lithuania and Estonia. The seminars will be intended to pass the expertise of the Lithuanian NGO “Praeities Pedos” and the Estonian NGO AIDS Information and Support Centre to other NGO in both countries and discuss the results of the project “Preventive-informative campaign against trafficking in girls and women in Baltic States (Lithuania and Estonia)”; the findings and recommendations presented by the people involved in the implementation of the project during the seminars will facilitate highlighting and actual reconciling of different views of public authorities with regard to legalisation/criminalisation of prostitution in Estonia and Lithuania. Presently, it becomes particularly crucial for

both Lithuanian and Estonian societies. Reasoned discussions will undoubtedly help to foresee the strategy for further prevention activities. Participants of the seminar: Lithuanian and Estonian NGO's, journalists, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Interior.

Project for the Prevention of Adolescent Trafficking (PPAT- ESTONIA)

Project was developed by The International Organization for Adolescents (IOFA) www.iofa.org in collaboration with NGO Living for Tomorrow and NGO AIDS Information & Support Center and financially supported by United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM) www.unifem.undp.org.

This project proposes to replicate in Estonia already implemented “Project for the Prevention of Adolescent Trafficking in Latvia (PPAT-Latvia)” currently sponsored by the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM). PPAT-Estonia is being developed in response to a growing body of evidence, which indicates that 1) trafficking is a burgeoning problem in Estonia, 2) the problem of trafficking is not being adequately addressed in Estonia, and 3) victims of trafficking in Estonia tend to be under the age of 25. The goal of this project is to prevent the trafficking of adolescents in Estonia by raising awareness and educating youth about the issue of human trafficking and forced labour. The project will also focus on building the capacity of local youth serving NGOs to educate youth on the issue of human trafficking and work to increase the cooperation between NGOs and the Estonian government on the issue of combating human trafficking.

Previous projects focusing on trafficking in Estonia have successfully established a network of NGOs committed to combating human trafficking. This project will build upon that foundation by providing youth serving NGOs in this network with the training, skills, and tools to educate youth about the issue of human trafficking. As a result of this project, youth throughout Estonia will have the opportunity to receive free consultations by trained and knowledgeable professionals before going abroad to work. During the consultation with a trained counsellor, a file is created which contains a copy of the young person's passport, his/her work contract, and contact information both at home and abroad. During the consultation young people receive information on protecting themselves while working abroad, watch a film about working abroad safely and are advised how to check the legitimacy of their job offer.

Implementing the PPAT model in Estonia is an important next step for the development of a cost-effective, sustainable, effective nationwide strategy to prevent human trafficking in Estonia.

The main goal of the project is to prevent the trafficking of adolescents in Estonia.

The main objectives of the PPAT-ESTONIA project are:

- To increase the awareness of human trafficking and forced labor among a significant number of adolescents aged 14-25 years in Estonia over one year
- To increase the awareness of human trafficking and forced labor among adolescent sex workers aged 25 or younger in Estonia over one year

- To increase the capacity of NGO's and government officials in Estonia to prevent human trafficking and forced labor
-

PPAT is a trafficking prevention program to be implemented nationally in Estonia over a one-year period. PPAT aims to increase adolescents' awareness of trafficking and forced labor in Estonia through several coordinated

Activities:

- A network of 6 youth centers throughout Estonia will educate more than 3600 young people under the age of 25 about forced labor and human trafficking.
- The youth centers will educate young people on human trafficking in three ways. First, a module on human trafficking and forced labor will be integrated into the existing curriculum of the youth centers. Secondly, career workshops will be organized targeting young people in the community who are not already connected to the youth centers. Finally, young people will be offered the opportunity to come to the youth center in their community and receive a free consultation before going abroad to work.
- Conduct a five-day training for the staff and peer educators from these 6 youth centers.
- The training, which was already conducted on 17.03.2003-19.03.2003 by local and international experts in the field of human trafficking, works to provide the project staff with a thorough understanding of the issues surrounding human trafficking. The training provides the project staff with the information, knowledge, skills, and tools to successfully implement the education component of PPAT. Finally, the training provides a forum for networking and coalition building among professionals working to stop trafficking.
- Support the local trainers as they educate and provide consultations to young people planning to go abroad.
- The project partners will work to provide on-going training and support to the project staff in order to ensure successful implementation of the PPAT education module. This includes site visits, monitoring, and evaluation of the performance of all staff members.
- Organize and train a Government Working Group in order to develop a coordinated strategy to combat trafficking and forced labor in Estonia at the national level.
- Four government working group meetings will be held to accomplish the following objectives:
 - 1) To provide a forum for government leaders to share information and experience in regards to trafficking and forced labor in Estonia.
 - 2) To provide additional resources and training to government leaders who are not familiar with the issue of trafficking and forced labor.
 - 3) To establish a link between the NGO sector and government leaders and policy makers regarding community based trafficking prevention programs, such as the Project for the Prevention of Adolescent Trafficking (PPAT-Estonia).
 - 4) To develop a concrete Plan of Action at the national policy level regarding Estonia's strategy to combat trafficking and forced labor.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the impact of the PPAT-Estonia project

Several steps will be taken to monitor and document the progress that is being made on each activity and towards achieving the overall project goals. As previously mentioned the Youth Coordinator and Training Coordinator will monitor and evaluate staff during site visits. In addition, the Youth Coordinator and Training Coordinator will work with an Evaluation Consultant to design data collection instruments (based on those successfully used in Latvia) to be administered to all young people who participate in PPAT activities at the youth centers. Training will be provided to all local trainers to ensure that data collection surveys are properly administered. Conducting pre- and post-tests with the young people who participate in the program will collect data collected on the impact of the education module, career workshops, and one-on-one consultations on the knowledge and attitudes of young people about trafficking. Analysis of this data will provide important information on the efficacy of the PPAT trafficking prevention model. A comparative analysis will also be conducted using this data from Estonia and previously collected data from PPAT-Latvia.

Victim support

«The Ministry of Social Affairs has presented to the Government of the Republic the part of national program of the crime prevention «Establishment of the system to assist the victims of crimes». Association «Support and assistance for victims» have been established, also asylums. Consult for victims, fiscal benefits, help of crisis are arranged by the Social Rehabilitation Center and Association. Assistance for the victims and their families is not sufficiently good. Respective programs are not elaborated, specialists are not properly trained and economic problems are not solved yet.»

It is quote from official response of Ministry of Justice, which was edited for the Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities of European Parliament three years ago. Unfortunately it is no remarkable changes till that moment.

It is not special governmental program or projects regarding victims of trafficking in women. It is very few organizations, which provide some victim support. NGO Tartu Support Center for Children, Tallinn Child Support Center - for adolescent and NGO AIDS-i Tugikeskus (AIDS Information & Support Center) - for the victims of sexual violence and rape on sex work (some psychological and social support, free tests on HIV/STD and medication, consultation of specialists - gynecologist, narcologist, venerologist etc.)

Violence against women

It is quite hard to estimate the amount of women who met the problem of violence in family, society, job place, during sex work etc.

There are no special help organizations for dealing with violence against women and no special statistics about it. According to Statistical yearbook of Estonia is a number of women in refuges and rehabilitation centers for domestic violence 171 in 1996, 161 in 1997, and it is the forth-biggest reason of going to refuge or rehabilitation centers.

Crisis Intervention Center in Tallinn has statistics that domestic violence is a reason for 1.9% (253 in 1994-1999) of women to ask for help.

Tartu Support Center for Abused Children has 30-40% of families with the problem of violence against women. They served altogether 399 families in 1999. The biggest problems of women in violent relationships are that they feel helpless and hopeless, hide domestic problems from colleagues and acquaintances, can't see that their children suffer for same reasons and can't help them, have long and undiagnosed depression, use alcohol instead of looking for effective solutions, lack of supporting friends.

But 30% of our sex workers visitors through the SEASTAR project (1996-1999) were sexually abused in the childhood (under 16 years of age). 40% of sex business employees who visited us, fall victim to violence and sexual abuse when working.

The sex workers are very often in situation of different kinds of dependence from the pimps, brothel or bars owners, traffickers etc.

Its can be illegal deprivation of liberty (in clubs, especially private houses, saunas, apartments); violence and sexual and physical abuse from clients and pimps; financial dependence from owners of brothels; or traffickers, who organize sex work abroad (travel costs, visa costs, accommodation costs, sometimes clothes and food); in way of financial punishment for "mistakes" during working with clients; social freedom deprivation - deduction of documents, blackmailing by informing the parents, partners, relatives of the girls "real job" - very often, especially in cases of the Ida-Virumaa girls, the parents, relatives, boyfriends don't know about actual activities of the young women in capital

The role of NGO's in social and medical assistance

Sex work is to great extent connected with criminal world and an already harassed woman does not trust state structures, fearing punishment. Because of that the main projects activities implementers in this field and initiators were non-profit none governmental organizations.

The structure of a non-profit, non-governmental organizations is very flexible, it is used to untraditional approach, is located in the vicinity of a prostitutes -: street work, work with pimps, interventions through Internet etc.

The staff of a non-profit, non-governmental organizations have received proper training, have a long-term experience, are customer friendly, which allows building up mutual trust.

NGO is an intermediate link between a sex workers and relatively stiff state structures, which, on the one hand, makes it possible to protect the interests of a sex workers (medical, social and psychological) and, on the other hand, those of the state (alienation of minors from prostitution, co-operation with police structures, prevention of STDs and AIDS).

NGO usually has good contacts with the mass media, which allows of shaping public opinion and developing understanding and tolerance towards harassed and used women.

LATVIA

Socioeconomic situation of women in Latvia

In Latvia, as in other post-Socialist countries, prostitution development was very closely connected with the period of economic transformations. Prostitution has spread along with the rapid increase and feminisation of poverty in Latvia, which has occurred against the background of a high level of unemployment.

Economic problems lead women to be dissatisfied with their place and role in society at a given time. There are several factors in this process - the idea that under a free market system one can trade everything, including traditional honour, respect and sexual inviolability, as long as somebody is ready to pay for it; and very popular trend - "everything that is not prohibited is allowed". It is the high proportion of the "shadow economy" in Latvia's GDP. - around 30%. By the other determinations from 16 to 40% (Rosenberg's 2001). Along with these factors, the rapid spread of drug use among young people, as well as traditionally high levels of alcohol consumption also promotes prostitution in Latvia.

The prostitutes who were surveyed in Latvia said that they need money and a source of income. A look at the economic environment in which women choose prostitution as a source of income, is provided by data about standard of living in Latvia. An analytical evaluation of living conditions in Latvia was recently done on the basis of the study in 1994 and another in October 1999, and was run by the Latvian Central Statistical board (CSB) and the Norwegian Institute for Applied Social Research (CSP, 2001).

The overall level of welfare among Latvia's residents is stable with some slight tendency upward. This is indicated in regular household budget studies that the CSB runs. Despite the favourable macroeconomic indicators, like a rising of GDP indicator per capita from 934 Ls (1587USD) in 1995 to 1603 Ls (2725USD) in 1999, however, poverty data shows that it is becoming more widespread, and there is increasing inequality in Latvia.

Poverty in Latvia, per cent of all equivalent consumers

Poverty index				
	1996	1997	1998	1999
Latvia, in average	32.9	35.7	37.5	37.3
Urban	30.8	32.0	31.5	29.6
Rural	37.8	43.3	43.3	54.8

Source: CSP 2001:101, where the poverty threshold in 1999 was 53,97 Ls (92USD). The value full survival minimum "basket" of goods and services was 83,18 Ls (141USD) per month.

Between 1996 and May 2000, the registered unemployment rate in Latvia has ranged from 7,1 % to 10,1 %, according to the National Employment Service. In more detailed way situation is described in CSP labour force studies, which focus on the proportion of job seekers who are not working, as measured against all economically active residents. The

proportion in November 1996 was 18,3 % and has declined gradually since then - since 1998 it was ranged between 13,8 % and 14,4 % (CSP, 2001:94).

Women in the age group from 20 to 24 were most active in looking for work in the survey period, and the proportion of women in this age who were looking for work ranged from 13,7 % to 15,8 %. That is a comparatively higher percentage than is found among middle-aged women. It is also true that there were high indicators in this area when it came to the parents of the younger women - those who are aged 40-49. This means that parents have comparatively fewer opportunities to support their children while they are studying or not working.

Among women who looked for work in 2000, nearly 19 % were 24 years old or younger, approximately one-half had no job experience, and 20 % had an elementary education or less (CSO/CSBL. 2001a:D-1, D-3).

Overview of developing prostitution and sexual business in Latvia since 1991

Estimation of the number of CSW

In Soviet Latvia the prostitution exist in hidden way, others when street prostitution, which was impossible. Prostitutes usually found in bars, restaurants, hotels, where the personnel mediate their services and protect them. Society was not accepted prostitutes, although sex in return of vacations, career opportunities, clothes, and gifts was not seen as prostitution.

Latvia announced “new” independence, and after that the United Nations convention on discrimination against women was acceded.

The economy of new independent country was started general economic reform on principles of world market. Private initiatives start to be very popular; hundreds of new private businesses were established around the country. Prostitution start to grew up rapidly, because everything, including human body, came to be seen like business product.

Street prostitution, like phenomena start to be visible on the streets of Riga in the early 90's. Sex bars and clubs were opened, they start advertise their services openly in mass media. The rapid growing of development of sex businesses was noted in summer 1992.

According to experts from the Latvian Centre for Gender Studies “GENDERS” (T. Kurova), there were between 10,000 and 15,000 prostitutes in Latvia in the period between 1996 and 1998.

Other experts have said that in Latvia there are actually as many as 35.000 prostitutes, and the number of 10.000-15.000 prostitutes work only in Riga (A. Vilks). This estimation is based on assumption that the number of sex workers in all country is roughly proportionate to overall population numbers.

Due to statistics of Narcotics Office of the Criminal Police Board of the National Police, there were between 2.500 and 3000 man and women involved in full-time prostitution in Latvia in 1999 and 2000. The Vice Squad, however, has said that the real number of commercial sex workers in Latvia is probably remarkably higher - nearly 9.000 prostitutes.

Women from small towns and rural territories who wish to improve their economic situation and for this purpose engage in prostitution normally go to capital. Usually they hide the fact of working in sex business from the relatives and friends. Also the number of potential clients of sex workers is visibly bigger in Riga, including foreigners. Some women from Northern and North - Western Latvia go to the Estonian capital Tallinn to work in prostitution, because of more developed tourist business and bigger number of potential clients. This is become possible, cause visas are not required among inhabitants of Baltic States and all three capitals of the Baltic States are geographically comparatively close to one each other.

A lot of Latvian girls now are going for the working in sex business to the Western countries, and they are constantly replaced in Latvia by a new generations of local girls, as well as some women who arrives from other countries (Belarus, Russia, Ukraine) on the basis of temporary permits usually related with visiting relatives in Latvia

General socioeconomic preconditions for working in sex business in Latvia and abroad

Economic and demographic characteristics of women employed by sex business

Statistics show that the average member of a household in Latvia in 1998 had access to 62 LS (105USD) per month; while in 1999 the figure was 65 Ls (111USD). The net average monthly wage of working people was 73 LS (124USD) in 1995, 97 LS (165USD) in 1998 and 103 Ls (175USD) in 1999 (CSBL, 2000)/ High-ranking government officials in Latvia, who receive money from the national budget, receive approximately half as much money as an average prostitute who works in foreign countries.

Sex workers who work exclusively in Latvia earn 2 or 3 times more than the average monthly wage, and in many cases they get two times more money than specialists with higher education.

When asked about their reasons for working in sex business, several CSW in addition to the ability to earn money spoke of satisfaction of curiosity. Experts have differing views about these secondary motivations. Due different recourses approximately 20% of prostitutes work in the business at least, in part, in order to satisfy their own sexual needs.

Only few women said that their relatives know what they are doing. Far more often the women tell their families that they were working as babysitters, hotel employees or secretaries abroad. The comparatively enormous amount of money which prostitutes earn is often spent on entertainment needs; perhaps this suggest that women who have trouble in finding self-affirmation need to find some sort of compensation.

The fact that retail turnover in Latvia has increased more rapidly than the income of working people, suggest that there is money in circulation, which is outside of the tax system. It also shows that there are some people who receive regular unlawful income. Some of this money is money that sex workers earn abroad, and it is basically split up half-and-half between the sex workers and those who run them in Latvia. The Vice Squad has said that approximately 100 women leave Latvia each month in order to work in prostitution. If one assumes that each of those women has a pimp or an "owner" and that the average sex worker work in the West for two months while earning 2500 to 3000 USD each month, then the result is that intermediaries in Latvia receive at least 100 000 USD each month.

These figures apply to the income derived from the sex workers who are abroad illegally. In fact there are many more prostitutes in foreign countries than those who travel regularly without violating residency requirement. There are many women who are working as sex workers in economically developed countries without legal residency status.

We cannot know how many of them are working for themselves and their foreign pimps, nor is there information about how many of them send money back to intermediaries in Latvia. Presumably, however, sex business in Latvia are interested in finding as many direct and permanent contracts with club and bar owners in other countries as possible, so as to limit the individual of sex workers and to beat the competition.

There are various economic crimes in the "shadow" economy in Latvia: smuggling, the sale of drugs, fraud, money laundering and modified forms or racketeering (Rosenberg's, 2001).

The main reasons for the presence of unlawful work in Latvia is the fact that there are limited opportunities for legal work - there are only a limited number of jobs available, and young people have serious problems in terms of choice of jobs because their educational levels.

A major difference in income between lawful and unlawful business in modern-day Latvia suggest that the principle in all forms of organized crime are one and the same - those who do the work get enough to survive, those who organize it get all of the profits. The result is that there is a small group of people in Latvia with enormous resources on their disposal - these are the ones who direct the process of organized crime.

We can look at the income levels that the interviewed sex workers cited. A common street prostitute, for whom sex work is the main source of income, can earn up to 300 Ls (510USD) per month in Riga if she services 2 clients in a day. This excludes the lowest category of prostitutes - those who work at the train station and streets in order to get drugs or food. A woman who works intensively at a club can earn between 300 Ls (510USD) and 500 Ls (850USD) per month (5-7 clients per day).

Prostitutes who work only in Latvia tend to spend all of their money on everyday needs. Cigarettes can be seen as a luxury item, because they represent large line item in the budgets of sex workers. Women who work in Latvia can save up a bit of money only in the summer, when there are more clients, including foreigners.

Only those prostitutes who periodically work in foreign countries can hope to save money up for serious needs that exceed elementary survival requirements. If a prostitute works abroad as scheduled, does not avoid work, does not get carried away with alcohol and drugs and otherwise controls her behaviour, then she can earn around 2000-2500 Ls (3400-4250USD) per month, when servicing six or seven clients per day. It was only these sex workers who in survey talked about their future plans - saving up money to buy an apartment, to go to school or to start the business. The monthly income of sex workers varies from country to country, and it depends in large part on the amount of money that has to be paid to intermediaries. Most commonly the 2000-2500 Ls (3400-4250USD) represents one third of the money that a woman has collected from the clients. This means that the pimp or club in Latvia who sent the girl abroad receives an equal sum and the last third is going to the club where she works.

Prostitution in Latvia developed in wide range of forms and kinds of services, such as club's, hotel's, massage saloon's, sauna's prostitution, individual prostitution, street prostitution, male prostitution, minors prostitution, prostitution abroad.

Individual prostitution

Nobody has tried to count up the possible number of individually working prostitutes in Latvia, because of very difficult access to this hidden group. We can say that it is not remarkable group of women.

The reasons are that individual prostitutes are less protected from aggressive clients when they working (street prostitutes have a pimp, bar prostitute - security); in most cases prostitutes who start to work independently in more or less short time began to use some intermediaries services, they could be taxi drivers, bartenders, metres d'hotel etc.

Its looks that mostly there are high-level sex workers, who have stabile and wealthy clients, can be more or less independent.

Minors in sex work

Three surveys can be used for the description of situation with minors in sex business in Latvia. A survey (Kurova, Zarina 1997) showed that nearly every fourth prostitute is younger then 18 years old. The peak of adolescent prostitution was in time of big economical changes in Latvia in the early 90s and in the mid-90s.

Adolescent prostitutes work mostly in parks, markets; on train station and they offer services for very small amount of money, often for doze of drug or even food (Vavere, Mozalevskis, 2000).

Published materials and articles in newspapers indicate that United States, Sweden, Denmark and other countries are countries of origin of the men who visit Latvia for sex tourism and often use minors.

The experts of other research (Vaivars, Fridrihsone 2000) have said that minor prostitutes, both male and female, between 13 and 16 years old almost always come from families in which the parents drank, in which poverty is the norm of life, children were not given any attention, are street children, or are drug addicts. There are also street children in Latvia, including some who do not attending school.

Prostitution in clubs, hotels, massage saloons, saunas, escort services

Club prostitution may be the most widespread form of prostitution in Latvia. Sex clubs prostitution usually involves services offered in club, but also sometimes provides those services in rented apartments or at the client home. Sex clubs are closely linked to the legal entertainment industry (casinos, striptease clubs, massage saloons etc).

The cost is usually no less then 15-20 Ls (25-35 USD) per hour. The sex worker usually gets only half of the payment. The rest of the money goes to intermediaries, and there are more of them, then in street prostitution. They use it for own profit, for financing the office (rent, phone bills etc), to pay for the driver, security services, sometimes provide bribes for policeman so that they warn the club owners about planned raid.

Club prostitution functions on the basis of specific structures, with various forms.

Some of them advertise themselves in classified advertisements magazines and newspapers and declare that they are escort services. They usually have small office with telephone and some women (often former prostitute) who answer on phone calls and arrange the deals. Prostitute can visit client at his home or provide sexual services in apartments, which are rented specially for this purpose. Clients are almost never serviced in the office.

Sex clubs usually have a car and car driver to bring sex workers to the client and pick up them at the agreed time. Very often clubs owners use for that purposes taxis, having with taxi companies some kind of informal agreements. Most club sex workers have a mobile phone for connection with pimp or madam and for using if they are in danger. It is some several ways in which sex clubs protect their workers. Some clubs have their own security guards; some have agreements with legal security companies.

The fact is that sex clubs turn a tidy profit even with all these expenditures. The average club has between 2 and 10 women, each of who can earn between 300 and 500 Ls each month (from 500 to 800 USD).

The sum depends on the number of clients and the social-economic background of them. Those clubs, which provide sexual services to foreigners and tourists, earn comparatively much more, so there is reason to believe that there is significant differentiation among various clubs in terms of income levels and the quality of services.

Street prostitution

Street prostitution is most visible in capital of Latvia. Women involved in street prostitution can be divided into several levels:

- Highways prostitution
- Prostitution in harbour and near railway station
- Prostitution on the streets
- Prostitution at the market

Sex workers who work on the highways usually get less payment than those who work in traditional locations, but they also have to turn over some of their income to the pimp. Prostitutes who work near Central railway station commonly receive only few dollars for the services - often just for applying drugs, or even for the dose of narcotics. Sometimes they paid with alcohol or drugs. Sex work at the markets provided in common for the food or alcohol.

Sex workers in traditional locations get the best income. It is usually 15 Ls (~22 USD) for hour, and if the service were provided in shorter time, prostitute usually get one-hour payment. This sum of money is shared with pimp - usually sex worker get 10 Ls (14 USD) and the pimp 5 (8 USD).

Street prostitution also exists in next biggest cities of Latvia - Daugavpils, Rezekne and Liepaja. In capital prostitutes work walking cross Chaka Street almost all along its length, in neighbourhoods of Pernavas and Grizinkalna streets, also Maskavas street.

On all the streets where sex workers offer services, there clear separation of “spheres of influence” to “our” location and “their” territory.

Pimps show the sex workers place to stand on the street, and the process is all the time “supported” by a pimp. Women, who were coming from other place to Riga with purpose of earning “quick” money cannot simply take up the place on the street and take the clients, cause it provokes immediate negative reaction not only from the pimp, but also from other sex workers, located in this place.

Pimping on the streets is totally common. Pimp is usually not visible on the streets, but he is all the time somewhere near. Sex workers usually take payment in advance and often give it to another girl in same location, sometimes directly to the pimp. Prostitutes working on the streets usually have mobile phones for the protection. They call the pimps, or sometimes security guards if they have some troubles with clients or they feel their selves in danger.

Women on the streets usually can avoid drunk, aggressive clients and clients with specific needs, the girls knows and sometimes write down car numbers of clients who are rough or aggressive.

Sex services are provided mostly in cars, parks, nearest buildings, in a yard, at clients home. Sex workers who act in this area usually wait their clients in several small cafes, bars. Sometimes bartenders act like a pimps and mediate contacts with the clients.

Sex workers on the streets are usually younger than other prostitutes, and for many women the street is the first plane to gain experience in sex work. On streets we can find women from Riga, but also those women, who come from small towns and rural areas around Latvia, both - sex workers who earn their income only by streetwalking and other, who are involved in this business only occasionally with purpose to earn a bit of extra money.

Women are usually involved in street prostitution through acquaintances, their friends, who are already on the streets.

Male prostitution

The only study of the male prostitution in Latvia was implemented by Latvian Association for Safe Sex, working with HIV/AIDS issues with financial support of “Youth of Europe” and UNAIDS. Approximately 800 men who provide sexual services for money were surveyed and interviewed in 1997-1999 (Vavere, Mozalevskis 2000).

From the study results follows that male sex work reveals certain specifics about sex business. According to the study, main difference between female and male prostitution is that male sex work is much more hidden. Both service providers’ clients, nearly 70% of the cases, engage in heterosexual behaviour in their every day live.

The authors of this study divided up male prostitutes into two parts:

Men who provide sexual services for man

This is a lager and more varied group of prostitutes. The authors divided those sex workers by groups:

- Minors aged 13-16.

They are usually street children, children of unemployed parents, drug addicts and offer sex services for surviving. Many of them see clients as potential saviours who can help them and change their lives. Clients, in turn, are usually poor men with low income who pay between 0,5 of Ls (~1 USD) to 2 LS (~1,5 USD) for the services. Sometimes they feed the kids or provide them with accommodation for some days.

With time those kids become disappointed in those searches for “saviours” and begin to suffer from depression.

- Young men working as a prostitute aged 17-24.

These young men have a stabile life, but sometimes without steady income. Many of them have no other job experience or skills.

Services provided by them take place in bars, parks, and toilets usually with intermediaries - pimp, advertising or in sex clubs.

The cost of services is between 5 Ls (~7 USD) and 15 Ls (22 USD) and they serve one-two clients in a week.

- Young men searching for sponsors.

Those are young men who make attempts to improve their life conditions by searching, finding and using permanent clients. They start with those activities in age of 19-22. The potential sponsors are usually homosexual or bisexual men, often married. In most cases they are gay’s who are looking for other men, who can finance their needs, travel, education, provide well-paying job. Sometimes those guys become independent from the sponsor, sometimes they broke relation with men with the purpose to find new and richer.

- Elite sex workers, escort prostitutes can be found on various presentations,

receptions and other events in embassies, government institutions and businesses. The services not necessary involve payment, but relations and people met on these events can help in career movement. They usually in age 18-25, handsome and often well educated, sometimes with university degrees. The cost of services in average is from 100 Ls (145 USD) to 300 (435 USD).

- “Weekend or Sunday sex workers”

They come from well situated or average-income families, end they deal with offering sexual services irregularly and in dependence of offers received. They have no problem with food or accommodation, their finance situation is generally stabile and they spend more money than they have available to them in home.

They are very careful to hide the fact of working as sex worker from others. Usually they are students; they charge 20 Ls (~30 USD) to 60 Ls (90 USD) from the clients for their services.

- “Little tricksters” - specific category of youngsters aged 15-17, who seeks

out wealthy and more or less well-known men. They purposefully try to involve the men in sexual activities, after that blackmailing them with the statement, that if the client doesn't pay up, the young men will accuse him in pederasty and solicitation. The clients usually pay to keep the young's men silence.

Men who provide services for women

Those are so named "gigolo's", who are very presentable with excellent manners, find in places where wealthy women spend their rest and time; those relations are often not sexual in nature. Some of those men try to find women who can "keep" them - paying for pleasures, clothes, apartments etc. This is done using the advertising and Internet. This is fairly large group of young men, often students and unemployed.

The study of Vavere and Mozalevskis shows that the incidence of male prostitution is on the rise from year to year. Some men consciously become involved in sex business in order to earn money for survival or for improving the level standards of their lives. Younger men sometimes become involved in prostitution because they are simply curious and interested in a process itself.

There are such an intermediaries in male sex work, but the role of them does not appear to be as great as in the case of female prostitution.

Working in prostitution abroad

According to the Vice Squad, some 100 women and men depart Latvia each month to go to various European countries to work as prostitutes. The police tend to have only fragmentary information about what these people are actually doing abroad. It is usually only data about and from prostitutes who have been deported back to Latvia.

Due the survey, organized and implemented by Inna Zarina used in report to International Organization of Migration IOM www.iom.int ("Trafficking in women and prostitution in the Baltic States: social and legal aspects" IOM 2001) 33 sex workers were questioned. 23 had experience of foreign work. Ten were surveyed in Latvia and ten in Netherlands.

According to sex workers, as well as several surveyed experts, the number of women who depart from Latvia without knowing that they might end up as prostitutes has declined since mid-90's. Women either know or at least sense what they will be doing. The surveyed respondents all said that sex work in other countries was nothing more than work through which money could be earned - no other main arguments were mentioned by anyone.

In all of the countries to which women from Eastern Europe who wish to work as prostitutes have gone, they became involved in the same kinds of prostitution which had historically developed there.

In almost all the cases, sex workers are given information about employers or pimps while they are still in Latvia. The fee for this is either a specific sum (1 000 USD), or a share of money from each client. The person who sends the prostitutes to the West usually gets some money from the person who is interested in hiring women. Sometimes the sex worker herself

makes the payment. Depending of the country and the type of work, the debt can be repaid in as little as one to three weeks.

Relatively small clubs and bars employ 6-10 girls as prostitutes. The sex workers, for example in Switzerland are mobile in the sense that they go from bar to bar every few weeks, with pimps helping the bar owners to handle this process. Sex workers also tend to travel not only within a country, but also from country to country with the help of the pimps.

Most of surveyed girls travelled legally and made an effort not to violate restrictions on residency so as not to damage their documents and to be able to go to country, where they work, repeatedly, or even regularly. Most of the sex workers said that the burden of working in a bar or club could be sustained physically for two months, while in the third month many girls feel very homesick and want to go home and relax. Some return to Latvia a week in advance.

When a women works in a bar, she average five or six clients a day. Working with a pimp at a bar, hotel or brothel, the number of clients is greater - between six and ten, or even more.

Street prostitutes work only with the pimps. Of the ten Latvian women who were interviewed in Netherlands, two were working on the streets. They too serviced clients in bars or other indoor spaces. Sex workers, who work with pimps, also tend to provide services to clients in hotels.

From ten sex workers who were interviewed in Holland eight were working at the "windows" - which was at that time a legal process in Netherlands. But only for people with legal residence and work permits from EU, Switzerland, Norway. Other women e.g. from Latvia cannot work in organised prostitution anymore (since Oct 2000). How much money a prostitute earns is entirely up to her. If a sex workers wants to work a lot - without any day off - then she can clear between 7 000 and 18 000 USD in month.

The likelihood of getting entangled with the police largely depends on the owner - the way which he organizes the work, and the extent to which his facility disturbs the neighbours. Women can find themselves in the clutches of the police for the same reasons that exist in home country, for instance, if they lose control of themselves, get drunk or use drugs.

According to the interviews, the prostitutes are very much afraid of getting caught by the local police. There are several reasons for this. One is deportation - the fact that the passport is then "damaged" is another, with the women not being allowed to go back to the western countries to work. Others reported that the police confiscate all the money that the prostitute has earned. Some sex workers said that local police usually don't want to interact with foreign prostitutes, which basically leaves them at the mercy of the criminals.

All of the interviewed sex workers with experience of work in Western Europe said that girls who end up in the hands of traffickers usually find themselves in that situation because they have been stupid. The work is dangerous in the sense that a woman must never lose alertness, and she must never lose control over herself. This means never trusting unknown people, never getting drunk or using drugs, never turning over one's documents to someone else, and never walking around alone. It's much safer to work with other girl as companion - preferably one who is from your own country. Another safety measure was the requirement that someone in Latvia must to know where you are and what you are doing.

All of this is far more difficult for young girls who have less experience and low level of education. Education seems to be a particular importance - all the interviewed sex workers

who were working with relative success abroad had no profession, but they did have a solid general education.

Nearly all of the prostitutes said that they had heard of women who were sold.

By Inna Zarina, (report to International Organization of Migration IOM "Trafficking in women and prostitution in the Baltic States: social and legal aspects" IOM 2001) the basic model here is that intermediary's promises to women that he will find a job for her and then forwards her to others who prepare the travel documents, cover the costs, give information about employer and pocket money if necessary. This is most common among sex workers who are going to work for a three months - the maximum amount of time that a person from Latvia can reside in another country. This suggests that there are good contacts and agreements between traffickers in various countries.

Most commonly sex worker receives one-third of what she earns. In Germany, for example she pays one-third part to the club, where she works, another one-third part goes to the intermediary in Riga. It can also be that a pimp in the country of destination handles entire process, and in this case he receives two-thirds of all earned money.

Law enforcement in Latvia

Legal regulation of prostitution and control by the institutions

Supported financially from Riga City Council, a Vice Squad of 15 officers was set up in April 1993. Despite certain shortcomings in the law, the Vice Squad worked to check out the documents of the prostitutes and to ensure that they underwent medical examination. The Vice Squad had a register of prostitutes, which listed approximately 2/3 of all sex workers in the mid-90's, according to police experts. In April 1996 the financial support was withdrawn, and the Vice Squad was shut down in July 1997. Four people continued to do the work under the Narcotics Office of the Criminal police, but they were fairly circumscribed in terms of the work that they could do.

In November 1998 the Cabinet of Ministers adopted new regulations aimed at limiting prostitution, but these have had virtually no effect. Since March 2000 the law has provided for an administrative punishment for violating rules concerning the limitation of prostitution, but during the year from March 2000, administrative punishments were levied against only 79 sex workers. In 1999 there were 13 administrative cases involving pimping and one (Logos scandal) about involvement of minors in sexual activities. One criminal investigation was launched on the trafficking of women in 2000.

The laws were improved and the activities of the Vice squad were reinstated and expanded only after information about organized pedophilia in Latvia came to light. In May 2000 Parliament amended the criminal law to address the issue of involving minors in prostitution, adding Article 165', which deals with the sending of an individual to be used sexually. In April 2000 the Cabinet of ministers adopted new regulations on limiting prostitution:

Accepted by the Cabinet of Ministers on 2 April 2001, Riga A

Regulations to limit prostitution

1. These regulations set out the order whereby the provision of sexual services with the intention of thereby receiving compensation (hereafter - prostitution) is to be limited and controlled.

2. Engaging in prostitution shall be forbidden for minor persons and all persons who do not have a health card. A health card, the sample for which shall be approved by the minister of welfare, shall be issued by a certified dermatovenerologist upon an initial examination of the relevant individual.

3. Local governments in territories with more than 20 000 residents shall specify locations at which physical persons who engage in prostitution (hereafter - prostitution) may offer sexual services or accept commissions for sexual services. Other local governments shall specify the said locations upon being asked to do so in writing by the National police.

4. Prostitutes shall be forbidden to offer sexual services or accepting commissions for sexual services outside of the locations that are specified by local governments, or in an apartment or home which do not belong to the prostitute or with respect to which the prostitute has not concluded a rental agreement.

5. Prostitutes shall be forbidden to gather in groups

5.1. In an apartment or home, which does not belong to the prostitute or the relevant client or with respect to which the prostitute or the client has not concluded a rental agreement

5.2. In any apartment or other space within which a minor person is present.

5.3. In any apartment or home where other residents of the said apartment or home object to the prostitute's providing sexual services.

6. Prostitutes shall be forbidden to gather in groups to offer and provide sexual services or to accept commissions for it.

7. Each prostitute shall undergo a health examination upon a monthly basis. The extent of the said examination shall be specified in instructions that shall be approved by the minister of welfare. The health examinations shall be done by and relevant notations on the prostitute's health card shall be made by a certified dermatovenerologist.

8. Where a prostitute has been determined to be suffering from an illness or disorder that is included on a list that has been approved by the minister of welfare, the said prostitute shall be forbidden to engage in prostitution while treatment is being given and/or while medical or serological observations are being made. The said ban shall remain in effect until such time as the certified dermatovenerologist has determined that the prostitute is completely well.

9. Persons in whose blood antibodies to the HIV virus have been specified or with respect to whom the diagnosis of AIDS has been determined shall thereafter be forbidden to engage in prostitution.

10. Sexual services shall not be offered or advertised on the Internet, in the press and in other forms of mass media (except for publications of an erotic nature), nor shall they be offered or advertised through the involvement of other persons.

11. No activities in which a third person engages with the intent of promoting prostitution shall be permitted.

12. A prostitute shall display the prostitute's health card where asked to do so by a client.

13. A dermatovenerologist who has issued one or more prostitutes shall once a month submit to the commander of the National police a list containing the registration numbers of all health cards that have been issued.

14. Upon receiving a written request from the National police, a medical employee who has issued a health card, has examined a prostitute or has assigned treatment to a prostitute shall provide the National police with the requested information within 3 working days. The National Police may issue similar requests to the national register of sexually transmitted and contagious skin diseases, the Latvian Infectology Centre (the AIDS Division), other medical institution, which specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted disease, and the Centre for AIDS prevention.

15. The implementation of the terms of these regulations shall be supervised by officials as assigned to do so by the commander of the National Police, doing so in collaboration with the relevant local governments/. The Inspectorate for Control over the Quality of Medical Care and Expert Analysis of Working Ability shall supervise the order whereby prostitutes must undergo health examinations.

16. Where an individual fails to observe the terms of these regulations, the said person shall be held liable in accordance with the procedure referred to in the law.

17. Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No 427 of 4 of November 1998, "Regulations to Limit Prostitution" (Latvijas Vestnesis, No 336, 1998) shall hereby be declared null and void.

The Prime Minister
The Interior Minister

Andris Berzins
Mareks Seglins

A Vice Squad expert feels that the new regulations will really be a tool in limiting prostitution only if a network of Vice Squad officers is organized in all of Latvia.

The police closely link prostitution with a deterioration of the situation with criminals in Latvia, especially in terms of many latent crimes. The crimes that prostitutes commit most often are theft against clients, providing information to other thieves about a client's apartment, which can be burgled. Victims, fearing for their reputation and family scandals, in general keep quiet or lie to the police about what has happened.

The new rules on prostitution say that in local government territories that have more than 20 000 residents, local governments must specify locations at which commercial sex workers can ply their trade. The restrictions also seem to indicate that the prostitute can provide services in her own apartment or in the apartment of a client, but only if there are no minors in the facilities and if others who live in the relevant apartment or home, do not object.

The Interior Ministry of Latvia and other ministries in 2000 elaborated a programme to limit and control prostitution. Elements in the programme include:

- The establishment of a special police unit for this purpose

- Making sure that medical institutions engage in preventive care and issue health cards to all prostitutes
- Ensuring social rehabilitation for minor prostitutes
- Reopening special educational institutions
- Updating laws and regulations on social rehabilitation programs
- Informing the national police about every prostitute who has become infected with a disease that is on a list of diseases prepared by the Ministry of Welfare
- Engaging in informational work and campaigns
- Improving cooperation among social aid services and NGO's
- Interviewing people who leave Latvia and enter it.
- Doing explanatory work at schools and universities and producing informational brochures
- Providing shelter and rehabilitation of HIV-infected former prostitutes and those who are suffering from AIDS
- Elaborating norms to regulate the provision of sexual services such as erotic massage, escort services etc
- Licensing the right to produce and distribute erotic and pornographic materials

At the moment only one (1) from the elements 1, 4 and 11 in this program, which require financing, were implemented while elements 12 and 13 were put in place by the end of 2001. Regulation about prostitution have always said that sex workers must have a health card, but the fact is that no more than 200 sex workers have had the document since the law become into the force. That is a tiny amount when compared to the number of active prostitutes in Latvia.

By people from NGO's, providing outreach work with street prostitutes, sex workers have different views about health card system and new regulations. Mostly they approve that they don't need this card, cause already regularly visit their own doctor for tests, consultation and treatment. Most said, that card is needed for displaying to police officers and clients never ask to see it. Main argument against health card system is that sex workers afraid of being registered in some database where information is stored and that it is not so confidential and secure like it should be. The card has medical information, identification number, age and photo of sex worker. For sex workers this was in many cases one of the reasons not apply the health card.

Social assistance Service providers

At the moment there is only the one non-governmental organization in Latvia that is directly working with sex workers as a risk group. The Latvian Gender Problem Centre "GENDERS" is a non-profit, non-governmental organization founded in 1994, in Riga, Latvia. One of the main aims of "GENDERS" are to develop preventive strategy and measures against AIDS/STD among prostitutes, trafficking in women, lobbying policy makers for improving legal situation for women. In all activities, from management training and organizational development to mobilization on a grassroots level, "GENDERS" recognized the differences between women and men. Gender differences are used as a tool for change and for

constructive, efficient, quality improvement. "GENDERS" influent men and women at all levels in society, governmental, non-governmental and the business sectors, to look through gender glasses. "GENDERS" has also elaborated and initiated new forms of civil society co-operation with these sectors. Since the beginning, "GENDERS" has developed non-traditional, forefront methods, which successfully have been implemented in many national and international projects on gender issues. Communication and information creating public awareness of the existence of prostitution and trafficking is also a part of the centres aims. Then "GENDERS" also publishes leaflets and articles sometimes aiming at the public, sometimes aiming specific at the prostitutes - e.g. information on safe sex.

The aims and objectives of "GENDERS" are:

- To develop new methods based on theoretical research and practical knowledge in core groups of women
- To move and collaborate between within all levels of society through a broad network of contacts
- To increase women's and men's participation in change processes through resource mobilization and motivation
- To stimulate women's and men's possibilities and willingness to improve themselves and their world
- To promote a healthy lifestyle, safe sex education and prevention of STD and HIV infection
- To develop a functioning network of experts, both locally, nationally, and internationally in the field of violence against women and children
- To prevent STD and HIV infection among prostitutes
- To support female prostitutes in solving health problems and social problems
- To assist victims of trafficking by helping them in situations of crisis
- To develop methods in working with health problems and social problems among prostitutes
- To work in co-operation with other organizations and associations in the field of different issues

The main projects among sex workers, implemented in GENDERS centre, were:

Project focusing on cross border prostitution and trafficking in women - November 2000

Financially supported by the Centre for Gender Equality in Norway and Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Norway. One aim of this project is to raise the awareness and the knowledge of cross border in Norway. The financial support was suggested to those NGOs, which are dealing with information work directed at girls and women at risk

Project "MoonLight. Safe prostitution" November 1999 - October 2002

This project is carrying out in partnership with TAMPEP International Foundation (Holland) www.europap.net/links/tampep.htm and the Latvian Gender Problem Centre "GENDERS" (Latvia). The Matra Programme Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs financially supports this project. The project "Moonlight" combines research and prevention work, actively involving sex workers. It is a model of cooperation between NGO's and state institutions.

Target group:

Female sex workers who are operating in Riga, Jurmala and Jelgava. They work mainly on the streets, partly in night and sex clubs, hotels, bars and escort services.

Project objectives are:

- to reduce risk of HIV/STD infection among female sex workers in Latvia
- to introduce and develop an effective and realistic model of multifaceted prevention strategies based on non-discriminatory policies and to promote these prevention policies in co-operation with local governmental and non-governmental health and social services
- to create a strong commitment for promotion of prostitution policies based on principle of treating sex workers with dignity, respect and confidentiality and to promote their health, safety and civil rights
- to develop a common quality standards of HIV/STD intervention among sex workers which could be applied in other countries of the region
- to support the creation of basic community projects by directly involving sex workers in the activities of the intervention strategies

Project "LightHouse - Shelter for prostitutes and women victims of trafficking" August 2000 - February 2001

This project was carried out by "GENDERS" and financially supported by AIDS Foundation, Foundation Fondsenwervingsacties Volksgezondheid and Queen Juliana Foundation. The aim of contribution was towards the costs of reconstruction & renovation and internal design & equipping of the First Shelter. A variety of services will be offered in women's refuge: informational service, educational service, and social service, medical and psychological service, legal assistance. The main purpose of Shelter is to support, protect, and treat the victims of trafficking.

First Shelter in Riga, Latvia

The aims of the refuge are to support, protect and treat the victims of trafficking and prostitutes.

A variety of services already offered by Latvian Gender Problem Center "GENDERS" in a refuge such as:

Informational service. Here women can receive all possible information about human rights, the social system as it pertains to women in Latvia, publishing, printing and distributing booklets, organizing public campaigns, co-operation with mass media and government authorities

Educational service (Library & Seminar room). Here we provide lectures on health and gender issues both on site and I schools, holding seminars and training courses on women's rights and reproductive health and current threats as trafficking and violence against women

Social service (Refuge meeting room). Here the professionals of "GENDERS" and other institutions provide social support for target group such as young women, single mothers, victims of trafficking and violence, sex workers, HIV-positive people and their relatives.

Medical service (Doctor's office & med. nurse's room). Here medical specialists provide consultations and medical examinations including professionals such as gynecologist and dermato-venerologist. Their service will be available for victims of family violence, sex workers, victims of trafficking and sexual harassment. Family physician services for general health evaluation also are available here.

Psychological service (Consultation room). Here we provide psychologist consultations including diagnosis and practical psychological methods for helping individuals as well as a group therapy. Professionally trained moderators will lead psychological service.

Short-term housing service (Refuge room & Refuge kitchen). Here we provide temporary bed and board for victims of trafficking. (Search funding)

Administrative activities (Head office). Here is the heart of the Latvian Gender Problem Center "GENDERS". The main activity of "GENDERS" is carried out here. It is the general co-ordination and international network, projects accounting, co-ordination and implementation, data analysis and evaluation, report preparation, printing and distribution is carried out from this office.

Unfortunately lack of financial resources, endless promises of local city government and AIDS Prevention Program to support idea and proper functioning of the shelter stay just promises and it the sustainability of the shelters project is constantly damaged.

Trafficking in women – policy and law, prevention of trafficking, victim support

The extent for trafficking and the reasons for it

By doctor Tatiana Kurova, director of “Gender” Centre economical and political changes over the past decade have created extreme financial hardship in Latvian Republic, particularly for women.

These difficulties have resulted in dramatic increase in the number of women and girls in the sex work industry, either voluntary or against their will. Some are illegal foreign immigrants fleeing hardship and poverty in search of a better life; others are the victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation. Throughout the newly independent democratic Republic of Latvia - there are an alarming lack of awareness about the very real problem of trafficking in Human Beings. The most developed kind of human trade in Latvia is trafficking in women and girls where they get tricked into the forced sex-trade business. This illegal activity makes one of the most dynamic and profitable crimes in Latvia.

The geographical position of Latvia, close vicinity to Scandinavian countries and the existence of wide trade connections with these countries and other Western countries make ideal conditions for a creation and expansion of a big prostitution market. Latvia in the same time is a sending, receiving and transit country for sex workers from various former soviet bloc countries. Though there is no special official statistic on it - the personnel of the NGOs, social and outreach workers, medical doctors and psychologists actually state the increasing number of persons requiring the help in this field. The same tendency was experienced by

GENDERS: after the year 1999 (when during the 3 month of hot-line action were got over 140 calls from persons - victims of trafficking or needed the information on this issue) - for the present period - the Centre offers the help and assistance for much bigger number of persons.

There are also increasing the number of women getting deported from foreign countries for reason of illegal prostitution abroad.

One of the most popular ways to engage somebody into trafficking in Latvia - to take out the advertisement promising the lucrative jobs as waitresses, models, nannies, dancers, escort or agriculture workers when as a result many persons arrive just to find themselves the victims of the modern slave trade. Lately the most popular countries of destination for Latvian inhabitants become Denmark, Spain, and Germany.

The primary reason why Latvian inhabitants choose to migrate - is extremely poor economic situation in Latvia (by the estimation of World Bank - the level of absolute poverty in Latvia is 7%, what is very high). But as it's said in the old slogan of the Swedish women's movement of the 1970s - "The personal - is political". The wide spread of violence against human beings - is clearly political problem in Latvia. The most vulnerable group as potential victims of trafficking makes here countryside population, young women and Russian minorities (there are 28% of ethnic Russians and 38% - linguistic of the total population of Latvia).

The case is that medium of the Russian language is reducing, Russian schools get closed what limits the further opportunities of this group for development and high education, which besides all is very expensive. There is also very high unemployment in Latvia. Women suffer very strong discrimination - they are less welcome to the good-paid and "important" positions within firms and institutions; they are less paid for the same work with men. There are also very strict demands for the employee in Latvia: it must be in posses of special "Latvian language knowledge document" if the native language is other than Latvian. For many professions there are obligatory required the Latvian citizenship while 25% of total population in Latvia have no citizenship but the very unique in the world practice status of "Aliens of Latvia". More than a half of stateless makes the Russian minority of Latvia. That all reduces very much the chance to get employment for women from minorities. The group of Russian-speaking minority may also have less access to the public information on the problem of trafficking since for the present only 25% of the air-time could be given in other than Latvian language.

Besides all mentioned above - the lack of basic legal education of population especially in the country-side and among the minorities, the expensiveness of the juridical assistance and non-stableness of law system makes easier for traffickers to deceive the person and violate it's human rights. Inhabitants may not know how to check if the firm or agency promising the job is legally registered, have the right license or how should be the Contract made.

Woman may also dream to migrate hoping to marry good educated man since there also exists nationally spread very alarming problem of alcoholism and drug-use among male population who may hardly create and keep normal family life and support it financially.

The stateless population bears the big restrictions to get a land and is excluded of the political life. Thus they get no strong connection with the Republic of Latvia and the politics of the State give them no choice but to migrate searching for better opportunities to study, earn the money for them, their parents and children or make a family.

Bearing the high unemployment, the poor economy, high criminality, corruption, the lack of juridical and administration system of dealing with problem of trafficking and feeling despair of the poverty and having no hope for changes inhabitants of Latvia tend to be trusting and confident that all listed as employment, travel, marriage or model agencies are legal, honest and reputable. Unfortunately that is not a case. Well-organized Mafia which may be also powered by authorities take an advantage of the situation promising the inhabitants of Latvia opportunity to make high salaries, travel to other countries and be able to send money home to family members but instead throwing them for a life of prostitution, violence, sexual abuse and virtual slavery.

For the moment the number of victims of trafficking is still increasing and the Latvian society with its big social transformation processes has not yet elaborated and created models for support and civic approach of these groups. Though there were worked out the legislation supposed to combat the trafficking and punish the offenders - no case of trafficking reached the court. In Latvia there is no comprehensive state sponsored support system for victims of crime, including those for victims of trafficking. NGOs receive limited or no state or local government funding.

The problem of trafficking has been escalating during recent years and there is little experience and skills in trafficking prevention among the target groups and educational approaches in Latvia.

Legal situation

Before the year 2000 the Latvian legislation base did not specify the trafficking as the separate kind of crime. In May 2000 there were adopted the first anti-trafficking article (№ 165(1) in the Criminal Law criminalizing the sending of human beings to the foreign country for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Such activities, depending on whether it was committed for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation against the person are punishable by imprisonment for up to 5 years (against minors - for up to 15 years).

Latvia is also the member of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in persons and of the Exploitation of the prostitution of others of the year 1949. In accordance to this Convention there are also articles in the National legislation concerning such punishable activities as trade of human beings and exploitation of prostitution by others.

The Latvian Criminal Law also criminalizes deprivation of liberty, kidnapping, compelling people to engage in prostitution (article №164). Concerning prostitution Latvia follows the regulation policy with the help of adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers in the year 1998 Regulations on the restriction of prostitution. According to that the sex worker is required to be in posses of "health card" and offer their services in the specially determined by the local authorities places. Since the year 1999 by the new Criminal Law was increased the punishment for the pimping and presently there is supposed the punishment up to 8 years of imprisonment. Victims of trafficking may submit a civil claim if they have suffered the losses due to the crime and want to demand compensation. Since known none of victims have made use of existing law.

Due to its status as a sender country Latvia has not considered granting of the residence permit to non-national women - victims of trafficking for testifying against traffickers. Latvia

has lately increased the number of police officers of the State Police Drug Enforcement Bureau's Vice police department who works on such crimes as compelling persons to engage in prostitution and trafficking in human beings.

Anti-trafficking initiatives in Latvia

Presently there are acting some initiatives towards prevention of trafficking in Latvia. It is among others - The Project for the Prevention of Adolescent Trafficking in Latvia (PPAT-Latvia). PPAT is a two-year project funded by UNIFEM, the trafficking prevention program to be implemented nationally in the Baltic State of Latvia over a two-year period. GENDERS is one of the three project partners implementing this project. The lead organization is the International Organization for Adolescents (IOFA) www.iofa.org. The goal of the project is to prevent the trafficking of adolescents in Latvia, to increase the awareness of human trafficking and forced labour among a significant number of adolescents aged 14-25 years in Latvia over two years, to increase the awareness of human trafficking and forced labour among adolescent sex workers aged 25 or younger in Latvia over two years, to increase the capacity of NGO's and government officials in Latvia to prevent human trafficking and forced labour.

IOM bureau in Riga initiative Prevention of Trafficking Women in the Baltic Countries campaign (1 October 2000 - 1 October 2001) contributes to international joint efforts to counter the trafficking of women. The purpose of the project is to increase the awareness of the emerging problems of trafficking in women among relevant authorities and NGOs in the Baltic States, and to discourage and prevent future trafficking, especially from the Baltic region to EU countries.

The IOM Project Prevention of Trafficking in Women in the Baltic Countries II is a logical continuation and is aims to widely disseminate research results and targeted practical information to potential trafficking victims, as well as to increase the administrative capacity of the Baltic States to tackle and prevent trafficking. The Seminar "Trafficking in women in the Baltic States: challenges and remedies", was also organized by the IOM bureau in Riga in March 2001.

Soros Foundation in Latvia booklet "Work abroad" of the series "Know your rights" prepared by the specialists of the Latvian Gender Problem Centre - was published in the end of year 2002 contributing to the increasing of the knowledge of population of Latvia on the basic legal aspects of the work abroad.

There were also Seminars "Combating and control of prostitution" and "Cooperation among Criminal Police, law enforcement institutions and NGOs for combating the sexual violence" organized by the Chief Criminal Police Department of State Police; giving it's input in the awareness raising on the legal aspect of trafficking in human beings and phenomenon of prostitution.

The representatives of the Latvian Gender Problem Centre recently organized seminars and participated very actively in the local and International Conferences making the problem of trafficking in Latvia visible on the International Stage, shared it's experience, established new contacts and gave it's inputs to the following Seminars and Conferences: the Seminar "Violence Against Young Women in Europe" organized by the Council of Europe at The European Youth Centre Budapest; General Assembly of the European AIDS Treatment Group (EATG); The First Baltic Sea Area NGO Forum in Lubeck, Germany; The official Meeting at Riga Municipality - Round Table; Women & Democracy, Reykjavik-Vilnius held in Vilnius, Lithuania; Working Group meetings of A Cabinet of Ministers of Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Latvia; Seminar "Trafficking in women in the Baltic States: challenges and remedies" organized by the IOM bureau in Riga.

There were also the booklets “Be smart - be safe” disseminated by the USA Embassy in Latvia aiming the prevention of trafficking and giving the recommendations to the persons preparing to search for work abroad.

The key areas of concern and suggested strategies

There exists the real need to make the articles of the Criminal Law of Latvia more clearly stating the meaning of trafficking crime, the organizers as physical or legal persons, identifying the illegal acts, etc. One of the strongest reasons why victims of trafficking report to the police on the crimes so rare - is the insecurity feeling, fear that them and their families will not be guaranteed the protection from the State Police. Thus the rights of victims of trafficking or witnesses to special procedural protection if they testify in criminal cases should be better worked out and defended.

The Victim compensation and Support State fund must be established. To battle the existing situation of trafficking in Latvia there should be the strong cooperation of the Ministry of Interior, Office of the Prosecutor of General, Ministry of Justice, High Court, State Police, Interpol and NGOs. Also the electronically equipment of those institutions would allow the strongest network cooperation. The practice shows that victims of trafficking are more likely to turn for help to the non-governmental organizations, feeling thus safer to get the unbiased attitude. This fact should be admitted by the Authorities of Latvia and functions implemented by NGOs respected and supported.

The success in combating trafficking in human beings in Latvia depends a lot on active prosecution policy of traffickers, cooperation of state Institutions and NGOs working in this field, necessary funding for supporting the informative and public educational activities, the recognition of the existing of human rights violation towards national minorities and discrimination of women in Latvia.

What NGOs can do - is to develop programs, projects, activities that address:

- Prevention of trafficking: public awareness campaigns,
- Protection of victims of trafficking: safe houses, shelters, and ongoing education, social, medical, psychological consultations;
- Prosecution of traffickers: cooperation with Police, ministries, and government institutions.
- The NGOs should also stimulate a political debate on the issue of trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation at local, European and international levels.