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THE POLITICS OF MARGINILISATION: IDENTITY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING  
IN POST SOVIET ESTONIA

Master's Thesis

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### University of Tartu Declaration of Originality

This thesis conforms to the requirements for a Master's thesis

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I have written this Master's thesis independently. Any ideas or data taken from other authors or other sources have been fully referenced.

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## ABSTRACT

The following research seeks to answer several questions about the relationship between trafficking, identity, and vulnerability in Estonia today, looking at the underlying causes affecting the phenomenon and the response. Human trafficking is a phenomenon that occurs throughout the world though it often manifest itself in places where structural and social factors intersect to create conditions that put people at greater risk for exploitation. Estonia has struggled with human trafficking since the transition period following the collapse of the USSR. Estonia is a source and transit country for trafficking, with members of its Russian-speaking minority community disproportionately represented among victims. The paper explores how issues like poverty, gender inequality, conflict, and ethnic tension can all contribute to an increased risk of vulnerability for individuals belonging to certain groups and thus an increased risk of trafficking. In addition to capturing the current narrative of trafficking in Estonia, this analysis also seeks to highlights the causes of trafficking and how they have helped shape the counter-trafficking response and influenced the efficacy of these methods.

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## INTRODUCTION

On July 30, 2014, the United Nations marked the first World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. That such a designation is so recent should not belie the protracted nature of the response to trafficking which, while not a relatively new phenomenon has seen an explosion, if you will, in the past twenty years. On the occasion, Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Yury Fedotov decried human trafficking, saying that it “exploits the dream of millions for a better life for themselves and their children. Traffickers steal this hope to turn people into commodities in a perfidious trade, that despite our efforts, continues to operate with impunity” (UNODC, 2014). Mr. Fedotov's statements aptly capture the current state of trafficking which has evolved into both a criminal and deeply social phenomenon. That high numbers of humans are trafficked for sexual and labour exploitation, many ending up in slave like conditions, constitute what some call the greatest shame for modern society. It is a truly global problem affecting all countries regardless of their development or their borders. While the degree or extent of trafficking is different depending on the country, the conditions that give way to trafficking are similar across nations. The commodification and exploitation of humans by others, made easier by the structural and societal conditions that make some individuals more vulnerable than others, continues despite attempts by international organisations, governments, civil society and academia to combat the problem. As has been noted, trafficking reaches all corners of the planet from the suburbs of California in the US to open air markets in Ghana or the streets of Bangkok; however some parts of the world experience higher rates of trafficking given shifts in their economic and political systems that leave large numbers of their population in precarious positions.

Such was the case for citizens of many of the countries in Eastern Europe following the collapse of the Soviet Union. There is much discourse that explores the social and

economic conditions created by post-Soviet transition as contributing to the increased rates of trafficking in the past twenty years.<sup>1</sup> Countries such as Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine became primary source and transit countries of individuals who ostensibly sought better economic prospects abroad but often found themselves facing sexual and labour exploitation. It is a particular manifestation of trafficking sprung from the conditions created by the end of the Soviet Union that this paper seeks to address.

Among the countries that found themselves in the thrust of transition following the disintegration of the Soviet Union was the newly sovereign state of Estonia. Located in northern Europe on the Baltic Sea, abutting Russia to its southeast, Finland to its north and Latvia to its southwest, Estonia has a population of 1,313,271 (Tammur, 2015) making it the smallest nation of the Baltic states, which comprise of Lithuania and Latvia as well. An annexed member of the Soviet Union, the republic regained its independence in 1991 and quickly thereafter began the long process of accession into the European Union. During this time, Estonia like many other post-Soviet nations faced economic instability and saw increased rates of migration as the number of people willing to move to more developed nations in search of better opportunities increasing. This contributed partially to Estonia's status as a source country of trafficking and migration in the immediate aftermath of the dissolution. Major changes such as joining the EU in 2004 and entering the Eurozone in 2011 generally lead to improvements for the country but no doubt also had an affect on trafficking.

Despite an alleviation of many of the immediate post-Soviet factors that contributed to initial rates of trafficking, Estonia still has a problem with human trafficking, for both labour and sexual exploitation. Whereas in the past, ethnic Estonians were largely among these numbers, now members of the Russian speaking minority are overrepresented among those trafficked from the country and it is a key transit country for individuals from Russia and other parts of the former Soviet Union to Finland and other countries in the EU. Despite being the wealthiest former Soviet state as ranked by the United Nations Development Program Human Development Index (UNDP, 2014) and EU membership in

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<sup>1</sup> For further discussion on trafficking and post-Soviet transition, see Pickup (1998), Corrin (2005), IOM (2005), and Clark & McArthur (2014). For a more detailed analysis of economic policies and poverty during transition, see Cornia (1994) and (2006).



the EU, Estonia is ranked at the same level as Moldova, a country still in transition, on many international assessments of trafficking matters (USDOS, 2014). The 2014 United States Department of State (USDOS) Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report, which is referred to by the UN and other bodies, found that Estonia still “does not fully comply with minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking” (p.170). The report also noted that members of the Russian-speaking community were particularly vulnerable to trafficking (ibid). Issues around identity politics and nationalism that stemmed from Estonia's post-Soviet nation-building (or nation-restoring) practices, particularly rules around citizenship and language policies have served to divide the two communities, with the Russian-speaking community facing discrimination, social exclusion and high levels of poverty in Estonia making them particularly vulnerable to trafficking (IOM, 2005, p.12).

### **Background Information**

Trafficking is a phenomenon where one's identity can play a substantial role in their likelihood of becoming a victim. The United Nations, the US State Department, and other international bodies have called attention to the additional risk of vulnerability faced by certain members of a society including women, children, ethnic minorities as well as those with questionable citizenship. The additional risk posed to those in these categories stem not from their own inherent vulnerability but through their interaction with broader systems of patriarchy and globalisation, among other institutions and phenomena, that help construct their worth in relation to dominant society. Considering these facts and applying an interdisciplinary feminist theory approach, one rooted in post-modernism that takes into account the role and interaction of social constructions, this paper examined the various factors involved in the manifestation of trafficking in post-Soviet Estonia. Key questions to consider included the status of trafficking as well as the social and structural issues that contributed to trafficking and also shape the counter-trafficking response in Estonia. Additional questions around the disproportionate representation of Russian-speakers among victims as well as the efficacy of counter-trafficking measures are also addressed. The hope was to uncover on-going issues that could explain why Estonia, despite politically and financially investing in combatting trafficking, still continued to face difficulty in managing the problem. The aim of this project was to use interviews with NGO professionals as well

as decision makers to explore the narrative around human trafficking, how it is constructed and if and how this narrative, in turn, affects policy responses from the state. By speaking with stakeholders at NGOs greater insight into the field of trafficking and on-the-ground trends would be gained. Through interviews with decisions makers such as ministry officials and other figures who have played a role in Estonia's political response to trafficking, the author hoped to better understand the policy considerations made as well as the narratives that informed them. This research looked specifically at how categories such as nationality, citizenship/ethnicity, gender and class might intersect with the issue of trafficking, particularly around the constructions of trafficking and its perceived causes, as well as the types of associated political response.

Research was split into two major parts, largely comprised of discourse analysis and empirical data gathered in the form of interviews. Discursive analysis of theoretical literature was conducted to explore how elements such as nationalism, gender, class and ethnicity intersect in human trafficking in general thus providing the framework around vulnerability and identity and providing more background information for the context of the research questions. To describe the current manifestation of human trafficking in Estonia including rates, victims, state response, and public awareness, discursive analysis of relevant publications was conducted. Reports, articles, treaties and other official documents created by the EU, IOM, UN, OSCE, and US State Department among other bodies were consulted. Estonian domestic source materials including publications from various ministries and NGOs as well as reports and legislation, when available in English, were also used. The final component and the most crucial consisted of interviews with stakeholders and decision makers. Seven interviews were conducted to capture the differing perspectives of the issue, all of which help shaped the narrative around trafficking that is analysed in the context of the literature, looking at how the trends overlapped or diverged in the Estonian case.

Following this introduction, which includes specifics regarding project methodology, the thesis delves into its first chapter which looks at identity and trafficking. The contributions of feminist scholarship to trafficking discourse are highlighted. The increased risk of trafficking faced by those with a minority identity will be looked at. How

gender, ethnic and other social identities and their relationship with broader society creates the dynamics that make one particularly vulnerable will be explored. This includes other social phenomena like the feminisation of poverty or the economic and social transition following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Continuing with an analysis of trafficking in the post-Soviet context, the case of Moldova will be briefly presented, providing a basis for comparison of how trafficking has played out in other post-Soviet countries, in preparation for the analysis of trafficking in the Estonian context in the next chapter. In addition to looking at statistical information of trafficking including rates and prosecutions in Estonia, this chapter will delve deeper into the socio-political issues facing Estonian society. Elements of nation-building in post-Soviet Estonia including the Citizenship Act, laws on language policy and the country's relationship with its Soviet past will be analysed and their impact on the status of the Russian-speaking minorities in Estonia and its relationship with broader Estonian society will be gauged. The following chapters then present the findings of the interviews, depicting the poignant and diverging themes that emerged and how these compared with the literature and key questions.

Trafficking in all its many forms is a multifaceted issue that requires a multi-pronged response. Further complicating the matter are fundamental issues with defining the problem as well as capturing accurate data on its proliferation. When evaluating trafficking, questions regarding its definition, scale, and causes are important to keep in mind to gain a better understanding of the issue, its manifestations, and how to best shape a response. Trafficking has grown from a relatively obscure phenomenon to a global crisis. The changing conditions of an ever modernising and increasingly connected world have helped shape the evolution of trafficking. Given the variety in the forms of trafficking, it has been difficult to define what does or does not constitute trafficking, which leads to further confusion around the issue. Across academia, states and international development circles, the generally accepted definition of trafficking comes from Article 3 of the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons. Issued in 2000 and commonly referred to as the Palermo Protocol, it defines trafficking as follows:

“(a) 'Trafficking in persons' shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use or force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or

of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

(b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used;

(c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;

(d) 'Child' shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.”

(UN, 2000, p.2)

While comprehensive, scholars and others working in the field of trafficking have highlighted the problems posed by this definition, as it tries to draw distinctions between trafficking and smuggling, when the two often go hand in hand. The intent to exploit by force may not be present in smuggling at the onset, however it is not uncommon that individuals who willingly elect to be smuggled become victims of trafficking. This is especially the case with migrants who anticipate smuggling as a one-time transaction only to later face on-going exploitation (Chong & Clark, 2014). Further literature on the difference between smuggling and trafficking emphasize not only the on-going nature of the latter, but the final outcome of the victim's circumstances (IOM, 2005) as well. Trafficking is inherently linked to migration and the push and pull factors that motivate people to seek opportunities elsewhere. It should be noted however that trafficking does not always include international movement and trafficking within countries, regions and even cities can occur (USDOS, 2014). Prostitution is another social phenomenon which has bearing on the definition of trafficking and serves to complicate the response. The issue of consent, similar to the discourse around smuggling, is what largely separates trafficking from prostitution. The two issues are usually conflated given how blurred the lines can be between them. Instances where prostitution is forced, or when individuals are transported explicitly for the purpose of forced prostitution enter into the realm of trafficking, regardless of a country's stance on prostitution (Bernat & Zhilina, 2010). For the sake of this paper, the definition at Palermo will be used but it is necessary to acknowledge that

while there are commonly accepted notions of trafficking, there is on-going discourse regarding its definition and how it differs or does not from smuggling, labour migration and sex work which influence how responses to the matter are constructed.

As mentioned the scale of trafficking is another aspect of the phenomenon that has implications for how states and international organisations respond. Given the clandestine and illegal nature of trafficking it is difficult to get solid and consistent data on the matter. While bodies like the UN, IOM, US State Department and others can estimate the size and scope of trafficking, they also highlight gaps in their methodology and accept that the nature of trafficking prevents precise numbers from being gathered. While many countries have enforced counter-trafficking measures, prosecutions remain low and are not a reliable way to evaluate the true rate of incidents of trafficking within a country. Enforcing the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children is viewed as a way to help standardize responses and evaluations across nations yet 31 states are still not party to the Protocol (USDOS, 2014, p.10). And among states party to the protocol, many still lack efficient anti-trafficking laws and record low levels of prosecution which do not reflect the true rates. The United Nation's Global Report on Trafficking revealed roughly 40,000 reported victims of trafficking between 2010 and 2012, or victims who had criminal cases opened (UNODC, 2015, 17). The International Labour Organisation puts the estimate at 21 million people of forced labour with 4.5 million of those victims facing sexual exploitation (IOM, 2015) and the US State Department makes note of 20 million victims of trafficking who have not been identified in the past year (USDOS, 2014, Introduction). Such discrepancy between the leading figures in the field of combatting trafficking is indicative of the difficulties faced by those who are trying to accurately capture the size and nature of trafficking. This awareness will be necessary in later portions of this paper that address the rates of trafficking in post-Soviet countries in general and specifically in Estonia.

Some final consideration needs to be given to the causes of trafficking. International bodies as well as academia acknowledge how violent conflict, war, rapid economic transition and income inequality contribute to trafficking as it makes large segments of populations economically vulnerable and in some instances, takes away any protections or

services offered by the state. As will be discussed at length in this paper, the political and economical upheaval brought about by the transition from communism contributed to many of the push factors that lead to mass migration and thus mass trafficking of residents of these post-Soviet countries. Globalisation, the rise of criminal syndicates, feminisation of poverty and idealisation of the West are among the themes addressed in much of the literature (Bernat & Zhilina, 2010; Buckley, 2008; Burke, 2013; Jacobsen & Skilbrei, 2010; Lee, 2010) that look at trafficking not only in the global context but how these factors converged in the specific context of post-Soviet countries. It is also important to consider how identity intersects with these themes as will be shown in this paper, women, children, ethnic minorities and those who are poor often find themselves even further in the margins. While this paper does not strive to provide a complete and comprehensive overview of trafficking, it hopes that in highlighting some of the discourse around different aspects of trafficking, a greater understanding of the manifestation of trafficking in the Estonian context and the role of identities in influencing a response will be gained. The following chapters of this thesis will explore this.

## **Methodology**

Human trafficking, making its initial modern appearance in the form of a “white slavery” panic that took over parts of Europe at the turn of the 20th century, continues today. While the debates regarding the definition of trafficking, the scale of the phenomenon and the best methods to combat it are on-going, the problems trafficking poses to the nations afflicted, which is practically all, are very much real. The United States State Department's Trafficking in Persons report is the most commonly referenced evaluation of trafficking worldwide. Its designation of Estonia as Tier 2, meaning the country is not doing enough to combat trafficking was the initial catalyst for this project. Estonia has struggled with increased rates of trafficking since its independence in 1991. Currently a member of the EU and the wealthiest post-Soviet republic, Estonia still struggles with trafficking, finding itself ranked among countries like Afghanistan, Moldova, and Nigeria who also struggle according to the US TIP report. The researcher sought to explore the issues and intersections specific to Estonia that allowed for the persistence of trafficking.

The causes of trafficking is another on-going debate that often tries to address not

only the social, cultural and economic factors contributing to trafficking but how these things intersect and affect some individuals more than others. As has been previously stated, not all people who face conditions that are thought to contribute to or exacerbate trafficking fall victim to it. Gender dynamics, ethnic and racial issues as well as regional transition and conflict are among the variables commonly cited as influencing trafficking. The interplay between these variables and how they contribute to Estonia's specific manifestation of trafficking is what is looked at in this project. Building on past research into the causes of trafficking as well as research into trafficking in Estonia, this project aims to capture an updated overview of the current situation and possible areas of improvement regarding combatting trafficking.

The purposes of this research project are:

- To develop a deeper understanding of how identity and other social factors contribute to an increased risk of trafficking in general
- To describe the conditions in Estonia and how these factors intersected in ways specific to this environment and contributed to trafficking
- To explore how the problem of trafficking has been addressed over the years
- To learn about the issues and challenges to fighting trafficking as explained by those directly involved in it
- To identify areas for further research regarding combatting trafficking in Estonia

As this project is an analysis of trafficking in Estonia it incorporates literature on trafficking as well as on post-Soviet Estonia. Trafficking has extensive literature that explores various elements of the phenomenon. This includes those pertaining to its precise definition, the intersection of trafficking and prostitution as well as the role of globalisation, migration and transnational criminal syndicates. Extensive examination of these discussions is beyond the scope of this project however these matters do show up in the analysis. With Estonia, much literature exists on issues of nationalism and post-Soviet conflicts with Russian-speaking minorities within the country. There is also much literature on the country's integration into the European Union and its implications. Literature on

contemporary Estonian issues were consulted and referenced in their relation to their influence on trafficking as evaluated by the researcher. The literature review conducted for this project provides an overview of the research as it pertained to causes of trafficking and how these variables intersect in the Estonian context, both in contributing to trafficking and complicating the response to combat it.

Several assumptions were drawn from the literature review on trafficking and post-Soviet Estonia. These assumptions shaped the direction and focus of this research:

- The response to trafficking has been shaped by feminist debates. Feminists have helped introduce the framework of trafficking as a human rights violation and have shifted the view of the trafficked individual as a criminal to a victim/survivor. Feminist scholarship has encouraged prioritizing the experiences and well-being of victims in research on trafficking and determining how to combat trafficking. The two feminist camps of trafficking discourse has influenced the legislative response of trafficking and thus an understanding of their contributions is necessary in order to analyse these measures and others related to trafficking in general and specifically in Estonia.
- Identity is an important factor in trafficking. Ones gender or racial/ethnic identity can lead to marginalisation in society which makes them further vulnerable to trafficking.
- Conditions created as a result of regional transition or conflict can lead to increased rates of trafficking. Structural issues such as poverty, high employment, reduced social spending, and limited access to education or legal migration make people more vulnerable and likely targets for trafficking.
- NGOs and international regulatory bodies have taken the lead in combatting trafficking and often work with the State on determining appropriate counter measures and providing services



- Estonia has unresolved social and cultural issues that contributed to rates of trafficking immediately following the collapse of the Soviet Union. In the past 10 years following EU and Euro zone integration, some of these factors are still at play and contribute to on-going issues of trafficking.

The research methodology was qualitative and incorporated elements of ethnographic field work and feminist research as guided by feminist theory (Reinharz, 1992). Research into trafficking has taken many different approaches. There are empirical researchers who draw their conclusions from quantitative measures such as international statistics and police figures and others who draw their conclusions from the experience of those involved in trafficking, usually the victims. Feminist theories and approaches to trafficking have largely embraced the latter approach, using interviews and other ethnographic tools to capture different experiences and new perspectives. Much will be said on how feminist scholarship influenced changes to the trafficking paradigm, especially since its recent explosion in the last 30 years. What will be reiterated here is the feminist emphasis on identity as it relates to trafficking, an approach that is generally characteristic of feminist theory in all fields. This project is guided by a feminist theory approach to trafficking, focusing on how identity and other features of an individual contribute to their lived experiences. It is this analysis that underpins the project's focus on identity and social factors. While this project does not solely focus on gender, it incorporates a feminist perspective that 'insists on the value of subjectivity and personal experience'. Feminist research guided by feminist theory urges researchers to consider how pre-existing systems of power and oppression intersect on issues that disproportionately affect women. With trafficking being such an issue, the use of a feminist approach and thus analysis of trafficking felt appropriate. It is a feminist approach as it looks at gender or a gendered issue and takes into account how identity and other social factors such as nationalism or sexism influence its particular manifestation. This project differs from other feminist works that ground themselves in interviews with trafficked individuals. This work tries to contextualise the already captured experience of victims among the literature on trafficking

causes and the information gathered from those who work to combat it, the stakeholders. Background research into trafficking as well as socio-cultural and historical developments in Estonia has helped to shape the picture, additional insight into how these things are interacting on the ground is needed. While previous work on trafficking featured the first hand accounts of victims and others directly involved in trafficking or sought to quantitatively capture public awareness and perception, for the scope and scale of this project, expert interviews were chosen as they were felt to have the potential to yield information from those with various entry points into trafficking in Estonia, thus painting a more complete picture. Before the findings of interviews are discussed, a more detailed analysis of the findings of the literature review will be provided in upcoming chapters.

## CHAPTER ONE: IDENTITY AND OTHER SOCIAL VARIABLES FOR VULNERABILITY

Human trafficking is a phenomenon that appears everywhere. While it occurs to lesser or greater extents in certain countries and regions, trafficking cases have been found across the spectrum of wealthy and developing nations. It may take many different forms including trafficking of those sold into debt labour by their families or consensual smuggling turned trafficking. Despite the different contexts created for trafficking given any nation's particular history or economic situation, across international borders trends within trafficking have emerged. Reports conducted by major international organisations and NGOs as well as those by academics and state organisations have shown that those belonging to marginalised identity groups, those living in poverty and those inhabiting areas facing conflict or social and economic transition run the highest risk of being trafficked. In the case of human trafficking, finding out who gets trafficked can give great insight into why trafficking occurs and how to combat the matter. Feminist discourse regarding trafficking has been at the forefront of focusing on the voices and experiences of those who have been trafficked. Prior to the growth of such discourse, human trafficking was primarily viewed as an offence against the state and the response to the issue was often framed in the context of crime and security. Feminist analysis, dating as far back as the 1970s, changed the focus to trafficking being a crime against the person, ultimately laying the groundwork for what has become a dominant view of human trafficking as a human rights violation. This chapter will be divided into two sections. The first section will explore the contributions of feminist analyses in shaping the discourse around trafficking, particularly as relates to victims and their experiences. The second section highlights trends found in the literature regarding the common causes or conditions that lead to the

manifestation of trafficking and explores these in relation to trafficking and vulnerability, focusing on factors such as gender, race or ethnic identity, and transition. The final section of this capture presents a brief overview of the Moldovan experience with trafficking. This case study is commonly referenced in the literature on post-Soviet transition and trafficking given the fallout it experienced following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Overall, then, the chapter serves as the literary and contextual basis for the aspects of trafficking in Estonia that will be examined more in detail later in this paper.

### **The Feminist Debates**

While the on-going discursive arguments within feminism regarding trafficking, particularly in its relationship to prostitution, are far beyond the scope of this project, any discussion of human trafficking, especially for sexual exploitation, would be remiss without mentioning the contributions of feminist analyses. Given the interconnectivity between trafficking and labour, with many organisations such as the ILO regarding trafficking as forced labour, in all future instances except where specified, human trafficking will refer to both sexual exploitation and forced labour. As will be shown later, far from being static and limited to the academy, various states and international bodies have adopted protocols and enacted legislation and action plans based on different elements of feminist analysis, making such discussions very important to understanding the current state of human trafficking. While this paper focuses on trafficking in the Estonian context which occurs for labour and sexual exploitation of both men and women, the importance of feminist discourse in not only shaping the ways we talk about human trafficking but also influencing global and domestic response cannot be ignored. By presenting the core tenets of the two main streams of feminist thought regarding trafficking, the author hopes to provide an overview of the literature related to trafficking and thus situate this project and its findings in the larger body of work on trafficking.

Trafficking as a human rights violation should not be assumed as a given nor inherent fact of the phenomenon but as a discursive product of feminist theory whose roots dates back to the turn of the 20th century as a new kind of “white slavery” emerged (Shelley, 2010, p.208). The collapse of the Soviet Union and the resulting conditions lead to a subsequent increase in rates of trafficking in the newly independent states and this

event is often viewed as a rhetorical flash or starting point for the resurgence in trafficking seen today. While this incarnation is largely tied to globalisation and transition in the region in recent times, the modern origins of human trafficking, and thus anti-trafficking campaigns, are also connected to earlier flows of trafficking victims from the East, in places that make up modern day Ukraine, Moldova, and Russia for instance, to the West (Pickup, 1998, p.998; Shelley, 2010, p.208-210). Shelley (2010) notes that white slave trade thrived in the Baltics, Ukraine, and what is present-day Moldova to North and South America between the 1880s and the 1930s (p. 208). While trafficking occurred in different parts of the world even during this time, “between 1889 and 1901, seventy-five per cent of registered working women came from Europe and Russia” and represented the majority of prostitutes in places such as India and Argentina (Pickup, 1998, p.997-998)”. During this late Victorian era, what can be called a “moral panic” (Weeks, 1981, p.88-89) took over as states and organisations began to decry the horrors of the white slave trade. “Historical advocacy against international human trafficking – which was taken to mean the traffic in women in sexual exploitation – arose in the context of concern for the virtue of white women (Lobasz, 2009, p.342)”. The fear was that naïve and innocent young white women were being coerced or kidnapped into trafficking and prostitution and held their against their will. There were racial undertones behind this message as countless sources identified Jewish criminal organisations of overseeing the trade in trafficked women as well as forcing women, even those in their own family, into trafficking which was largely connected with forced prostitution and brothels at the time (Pickup, 1998, p.998). This association with prostitution inspired what would be called an abolitionist response which saw the eradication of prostitution, or at least increased criminalisation, as a means of stopping the flow of white women into sexual slavery. It is important to highlight the important role given to coercion and organised crime in these early narratives. It was the common belief that women were tricked or forced into prostitution, often by criminal gangs or even their own families and as such, it was society's role to help save them by eradicating prostitution. Given the physical and psychological toll of prostitution as well as the social stigma, prostitution was not something any woman would willingly participate in,

and its existence was in part, if not solely, responsible for human trafficking. It is this historical occurrence that is the basis for the radical feminists' analysis of trafficking.

Radical feminist thought on trafficking as espoused by Jeffreys (1997), Farley (2009), Barry (1979), Miriam (2005) and others builds on the condemnatory aspects of early abolitionists toward prostitution. In 1979, Kathleen Barry released *Female Sexual Slavery*, which was viewed by some as bringing feminist interest back to human trafficking and anti-trafficking campaigns. In her summary of feminist radical views, Lobasz paraphrases Barry, claiming "her position thus entails a rejection of any distinction between 'forced' prostitution and 'voluntary' prostitution, as the latter is a contradiction in terms. Women who believe they are voluntarily engaged in prostitution have fallen prey to false consciousness as a survival strategy. Worse, women engaged in prostitution who are also proponents of prostitution are actively supporting patriarchal exploitation of other women (Lobasz, 2009, p.335)". Known as the new abolitionists, feminists following Barry's line of thinking saw the elimination or criminalisation of prostitution as key to combatting trafficking. In addition to waging war against prostitution, these feminists also began injecting the voices of those who were trafficked into the discussion as a means of highlighting how prostitution and forced sex work were a result of patriarchy and men's domination over the bodies of women.

Radical feminism situates trafficking in relation to liberalism and its presupposition of the inherent freedoms and rights afforded to an individual. Liberalism is at the base of any rights-based approach to advocacy, especially in the case of trafficking.<sup>2</sup> By integrating the experiences of these women into the broader framework of liberalism and human rights, radical feminists were able to get institutions and states to start viewing trafficking as a violation of the human rights of the individual. Emphasis on coercion and force were central to early responses against trafficking that frame those in trafficking or prostitution as victims who needed to be saved by the state or non-governmental organisations. This approach was largely gendered as radical feminists focused solely on how these issues affected women and children and tied anti-trafficking and abolitionists work with broader

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<sup>2</sup> See Miriam (2005) and Pateman (1988) for further analysis of liberalism and the radical feminist response to trafficking.

movements and advocacy for women's rights. Such an approach, however, was not without criticism.

In the 1980s a cleavage began between radical feminists and those who challenged the basic tenets underpinning the former's analysis of human trafficking. The main issue this opposition took offence to was radical feminism's insistence that all prostitution was forced or coerced and thus all women, even those who willingly participated in sex work, were victims. Sex work and trafficking were also conflated to the point that all sex workers were viewed as victims of trafficking, if not victims in general. "The conflation of 'international human trafficking' with 'trafficking of women for sexual exploitation' reflects gendered notions of agency that frame men as actors and women as victims – those acted upon (Lobasz, 2009, p. 339)". The victimisation of all women and the demonization of sex work were ascribed to a morality based feminism which did not represent the views of all women. Rooted in similar criticisms launched at second-wave feminists, liberal feminists began to criticize radical feminism as not being inclusive or considerate of voices of all women, including those who are prostitutes by choice. They were also concerned that the paternalism involved in radical feminism which was effectively built on a response to protect white western women, often at the expense of women of colour. Among the liberal, or sex work feminists, were women, especially of colour, who criticised radical feminism as largely advocating for and basing their values on those of White western women without consideration of other voices or experiences, especially of women in the developing world. They argued that the narrowness of radical feminists, not only in their views on prostitution and pornography, but also on how to combat trafficking were not only limiting, but dangerous. By operating from such a standpoint, radical feminists failed to consider the agency or empowerment of women who actively chose sex work and were also imparting their judgement on the lives of others.

For instance, many feminists saw advocating the criminalisation of prostitution as an attack on the choice that some women made to participate in sex work, which carried implications for how she could provide for herself and her family. They found fault with abolitionist feminism's work with organisations espousing anti-abortion or evangelical messages, especially since many early anti-trafficking organisations founded by abolitionist

feminists were founded in the United States.<sup>3</sup> Additional arguments relating to liberal, or sex-positive feminism, can be found in Kempadoo & Doezema (1998), Segrave (2009), and Agustin (2005) whose works (as well as those of others), approach sex work in a broader context of labour rights and abuse faced by marginalised or low-wage workers, often women, as well as unfair migration policies. They advocate for a feminism reflecting the lives and concerns of all women, not just those in the West. The paternalistic aspect was also problematic as liberal feminists were concerned that those in the West or more developed nations saw their feminism as almost a “white man's burden” and took it upon themselves to save their more unfortunate sisters in the global south while also imposing a form of Western anti-sex rhetoric (Kempadoo & Doezema, 1998).

For liberal feminists, the focus was to acknowledge the differences between forced prostitution and sex work and to improve the labour conditions of the latter, as they viewed it as a legitimate profession that could be a legitimate option of work for women if the standards were improved and their rights respected (Lobasz, 2009, p.338). They also felt that by focusing on criminalising prostitution and waging a moral war, radical feminists were ignoring more crucial issues like labour exploitation or discriminatory migration policies that limited women's choices in the first place (Corrin, 2005, p.543). Looking at trafficking in terms of migration and the agency of women in making similar choices as men for survival were also discussed by feminists (Kempadoo, 2005). In summary, though, the main point of contention between the camps was their differing stances on prostitution and whether it should be legalised and its connection to trafficking. The implications of these differing views would have very substantial implications for the global anti-trafficking campaign.

Despite this discursive battle, it is generally conceded that abolitionist feminists have won some victories especially regarding the early adoption of their views by states and institutions engaged in anti-trafficking work. The most important would be the elevation of trafficking as a human rights matter as well as encoding anti-prostitution rhetoric and measures in some of the earlier international protocols as well as anti-

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<sup>3</sup> For further discussion on the sex-wars please see Lobasz (2009), Miriam (2005), Jeffreys (2009), Limoncelli (2009).



trafficking response from states and other international bodies (Carpenter et al. 2013, p.2-3). Effectively, since the explosion of this present iteration of trafficking in the early 1990s, much of the response has been based on radical feminist analyses. For instance, some scholars cite the broad language used in the UN Palermo Protocol, the most commonly referred to framework, which included different interpretations of coercion in prostitution as a major point of concession to radical feminists (Limoncelli 2009, p.262). During this time, the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW), an anti-prostitution non-government organisation founded in 1993 had been lobbying at the international level for abolition of pornography and sex work as a means of eradicating trafficking. It was said that the group used anti-trafficking campaigns as a means to an end for the abolition of prostitution, seeking to close brothels and rescue the women (Jeffreys, 1997). They tried and failed in several attempts in the late 1990s to include “requirements for states to dismantle sex industries and oppose legalisation of prostitution (Carpenter et al., 2013, p.6-7)”. That the Palermo Protocol refused to specify language regarding the legitimacy or definition of prostitution was seen as a compromise in favour of radical feminists, whose analyses had started losing appeal by the early 2000s. The on-going “sex wars” (Miriam, 2005, p.1) regarding the different feminist camps and their stance on human trafficking is crucial in understanding the state of affairs, particularly regarding legislation, for anti-trafficking. The nuances of the arguments, however insightful, are not the central purpose of this project. It is nevertheless important to acknowledge that “[f]eminists' most important contribution [...] lies in the investigations of the social construction of human trafficking, which highlight the destructive role that sexist and racist stereotypes play in constructing the category of trafficking victims (Lobasz, 2009, p. 319)”.

In her analysis of the differences between the radical feminist and liberal feminist stance on trafficking, Limoncelli (2009) critiques the inability of either side to provide a truly critical analysis of human trafficking. She faults radical feminists for putting gender ahead of the economic context that enables trafficking that affects all victims while also faulting the sex work feminists for “degendering” sexual labour and focusing on the right to engage as opposed to looking critically at the inequalities that might lead one to exercise this right. Limoncello ends with a challenge to feminist scholars that they “partner with

those, in academia and on the ground, working on gender, poverty, and economic justice (Limoncelli 2009, p.261-262)”. This challenge partly captures the framework of this paper which is one that finds itself in the middle ground that reconciles the analysis provided by radical and liberal views, all of which are very relevant in the case of Estonia. This project seeks to examine the social dynamics and inequalities that make some portions of populations more vulnerable than others to trafficking.

### **Identity, Structural Changes and Vulnerability**

As highlighted by several scholars, one of the major contributions of feminist analysis to the discussion of human trafficking was the importance it placed on identity in relation to vulnerability of those who are trafficked. Feminist discourse focused on who the victims of trafficking were and how their experiences might give insight into why trafficking occurs and manifests itself as it does. Narratives of trafficking victims were not only useful in capturing and relating, in some instances, the horrors of the experience: they also provided valuable information regarding different factors contributing to trafficking and ways to combat it. This on-going trend of focusing on the victims is demonstrated as recently as 2014 by US Secretary of State John Kerry in his introduction to the annual TIP Report. Kerry stressed the importance of “focusing on victims as survivors” and as survivors, they “know better than anyone the steps need[ed] to take to identify those enslaved and bring to justice those responsible (USDOS, 2014, Introduction). By putting victims at the forefront, feminist scholars encouraged analyses of broader factors that contributed to the individual's experiences. Lobasz (2009) highlights that feminist analysis “prioritiz[es] the security of trafficked persons and recogniz[es] the manner in which victims are threatened by both traffickers and the state itself” (p.319). This last point is significant as it alludes to the possibility that in addition to falling victim to traffickers, individuals face risks from the state as well. This could include poorly conceived policies or social conditions that contribute to their marginalisation initially and further victimisation once they have been trafficked. That some groups are more vulnerable than others within a society should not come as a surprise. NGOs and other institutional bodies have a precedence of advocating on behalf of minority or marginalised groups whose increased vulnerability, in comparison to the dominant society, warrants the very existence

of such bodies. In the case of human trafficking, there are special task forces and committees to address trafficking in at risk populations, with research and programs targeting women, those in poverty, those belonging to ethnic or racial minority groups (UN, 2014), even those who are sexual minorities (USDOS, 2014). The common trend that emerges in trafficking is that those who are most vulnerable are often those who are already marginalised in their society.

Trafficking does not occur within a vacuum. It does not manifest itself independent of the prevailing social conditions and norms that surround it. So it stands to reason that in some instances, trafficking can reproduce or perpetuate existing systems of inequality specific to the conditions under which it originates. In fact, the prevalence of trafficking and how it operates are all shaped and influenced by the social context of the respective countries and regions that find themselves facing this problem. This relationship, between what Cameron and Newman (2008) call structural and proximate factors, is at the root of their approach to human trafficking:

"It begins with the assumption that it is important to understand human trafficking in its broad social, economic and political context (structural factors), and seeks to relate this to policy and governance issues (proximate factors). The overarching argument is that the interaction between structural factors or variables (such as economic deprivation and market downturns, social inequality, attitudes to gender, demand for prostitutes) and proximate factors (such as lax national and international legal regimes, poor law enforcement, corruption, organized criminal entrepreneurship, weak education campaigns) is key to understanding why some individuals are vulnerable to trafficking through the use of deception and coercion. It is this conjunction of factors which helps to explain where and why vulnerability occurs" (p.1).

This analysis speaks to the complexity of trafficking, looking not only at commonly cited push and pull factors for trafficking but how these things intersect and actually make some individuals more vulnerable than others to trafficking. Not all illegal migration leads to trafficking. Not all areas in conflict experience increase rates of trafficking. Not all people in poverty face the same risk of trafficking. What are the features, both structural and contextual, that contribute to elevated risk? Further exploration into these categories of vulnerability, including such factors as gender or ethnic background but also regional origin, is necessary to better understand how these factors intersect and influence trafficking. The

US TIP report provides analysis on topics of special interest and includes sections highlighting the increased vulnerability of LGBT individuals, Romani, and Indigenous Persons to trafficking. Organisations from the United Nations to the International Office of Migration and the International Labour Organisation all have special publications addressing the challenges to the rights of these individuals as well as those with disabilities, those who are migrants, and women, trafficking included. Regional task forces and special units on trafficking often shape their programs based on the needs of targeted communities, such as those who work specifically with sex workers in Thailand (Shelley, 2010) or refugees in Syria (USDOS, 2014). The ILO acknowledges that some groups are more vulnerable than others noting that “victims are frequently drawn from minority or socially excluded groups” (ILO, 2015). Identity is an important consideration regarding who gets trafficked and also how to structure a meaningful and effective response that addresses the underlining issues in the first place. The remainder of this chapter will examine some structural and proximate factors that are said to contribute to trafficking. The first step will be to establish issues, such as gender, ethnic and racial dynamics, and post-Soviet transition as structural and proximate factors, in order to set the context the context for later chapters, which address how these factors intersect in Estonia and influence its particular iteration of trafficking.

### **Gender and Risk**

When one thinks of gender or gender roles as a structural factor affecting trafficking, the broader implications of gender in that society need to be addressed as well. Existing systems of patriarchy and sexism which relegate women to an inferior position must be reconciled in order to better understand why it is women and girls who are trafficked so frequently. Gender is important. It is “a social category that significantly contributes to a person's life chances and participation in society,” especially considering it is often the basis upon which rights and status are conferred (Cameron and Newman, 2008, p.38). As a result, women are often disadvantaged. “In many cultures, being born female can consign the girl child to the peripheries of society where her safety is denied and her human rights are routinely violated (Rafferty, 2013, 1)”. Despite liberal feminism's critique of radical feminists' focus on women and their problematic gendering of human trafficking, statistics

do not lie. The ILO finds that women constitute a majority among individuals who are trafficked (ILO, 2015). Of the roughly 21 million people who are trafficked or trapped in forced labour at any given time, 55 per cent of all victims are women and girls. Of this 21 million, 22 per cent or 4.4 million persons are forced into sexual exploitation, with women and children accounting for the vast majority, almost 80 per cent, of victims (ibid.). The patriarchy and sexism that underpin radical feminists' understanding of trafficking are also the same dynamics that put women at an increased risk of trafficking in the first place. In arguing for the use of a gender perspective in trafficking, D'Cunha (2002) writes that such a perspective “recognizes that prevailing gender stereotypes and women's less valued social roles marginalize them from ownership and control over material (income, land) and non-material resources (time, political participation) (p.7).” The plight of women and children, especially young girls, internationally is recognised as a distinct, if not perilous, experience. Women throughout the world are victimised through gender roles that subjugate them to men, placing little value on their own lives. Women's labour is less valued than men and compensated as such (GAATW, 2010, p.12) than men while women also face discrimination at home and in the workplace. Women are denied access to education and often have little if any political agency. These factors in turn leave women even more dependent on men and limit the ability of women to control their own lives (D'Cunha 2002).

To support the picture of women as group whose rights are under threat, one need look no further than the countless human rights NGOs and domestic and international state initiatives that focus on improving the well being of women and children (Rafferty 2013, p.1). The UN's Convention/Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women as well as their Convention on the Rights of the Child, “the most universally accepted human rights instrument in history (ibid, p. 2)” are but two examples of internationally sanctioned and commonly referenced frameworks that attempt to address the various issues that leave women and children vulnerable to exploitation at the hands of others, including the state. “Women and female children are particularly vulnerable to trafficking because of their low social status and the lack of investment in girls”, conditions that come about as a result of gender inequality that permeates social norms and customs as well as cultural, civic and business institutions (Shelley, 2010, p.16). These conditions

drive women into poverty at alarming rates, with the latter being another structural issue that contributes greatly to trafficking. Women are more likely to live in poverty and have fewer options to escape. The disproportional rates of poverty among women and how it contributes to their risk for trafficking will be addressed later in this chapter.

### **Ethnicity and Vulnerability**

Another structural factor that weighs largely in determining one's vulnerability to trafficking is ethnicity or racial identity. Race-based discrimination that exists within a state/society is likely to have an impact on a person's legal rights and entitlements, and ability to access and complete education and find employment. This same discrimination affects people's vulnerability to trafficking. Membership of an ethnic minority may mean lack of access to employment, which can in turn push people to look for opportunities to find work elsewhere, particularly the possibility of migration (Cameron and Newman, 2008, p.44). That racism, and sexism, exist and contribute to factors influencing one's vulnerability to trafficking should be a given. As previously mentioned, much of anti-trafficking responses have been designed around the regions or communities that face increased risk, often those of ethnic minorities. Programs like the UN's Interagency Project on Human Trafficking operate in areas where ethnic inequality has led to increased vulnerability, such as among the indigenous and other ethnic minority communities of the Greater Mekong Sub-region of Southeast Asia with additional programs targeting other problematic regions. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) as well as the IOM and the Council of Europe have called for special measures or implemented action plans to address the high rates of Romani victims of human trafficking (USDOS, 2014, p.19). Again, these are but a few examples of how racial and ethnic identity are considered when structuring anti-trafficking responses as these same factors are what contribute to high rates of trafficking in the first place. These large international bodies often work with national governments and NGOs who target different at risk communities.

Racial or ethnic identity is a significant because like gender, it can factor into the rights and access one has in society. Ethnic minority groups including indigenous populations face discrimination and social exclusion, often through state sanctioned means

which include conferral of rights contingent on citizenship or language abilities. These groups face constant and on-going threats to their human rights and their religious, cultural and linguistic freedoms. “Race-based discrimination that exists within a state/society is likely to impact on a person's legal rights and entitlements, and ability to access and complete education and find unemployment (Cameron and Newman, 2008, p.42-44)”. With limited access to education and employment, these groups become even more marginalised and this in turn is exploited by traffickers who take advantage of the deplorable conditions some ethnic minorities face in broader society. As has been shown, various state and non-profit bodies try to monitor and improve the rights of these communities, in a general sense and when it comes to trafficking specifically. In academia, various studies and additional research has been conducted on minority communities and trafficking. Bryan & Poucki (2014) looked at how the social exclusion and marginalisation of the Roma population, already features of the society, influenced their vulnerability to human trafficking in Serbia. Acharya (2014) found that indigenous women in Mexico face an increased risk of trafficking than their non-indigenous counterparts. Natividad Gutierrez Chong (2014) gets to the heart of the intersection of race/ethnicity and trafficking in Human Trafficking and Sex Industry arguing that “social classification of women based on the construction of their racial and ethnic identities as non-dominant, which is also categorised by the hegemonic ideology and discourse as inferior, plays a major role in exposing them to trafficking, due to structural poverty and marginalisation, and to sexual violence, which is a common factor in the domestic and social realm that works to socially alienate them (Gutierrez Chong, 2014, p.198)”. In future chapters, the role of ethnic identity will be further examined, looking at national identity and ethnic division in Estonia since regaining independence in 1991 and the role it may play in the country's experience with trafficking.

### **Structural Changes and Marginalisation**

While the previous two factors mentioned belong in the realm of social or identity categories, the following factors, a mixture of structural and proximate, can be considered the external variables that create the contexts under which trafficking operates. Trafficking as a phenomenon in areas of conflict or those undergoing transition is a common theme in

the literature (D'Cunha, 2002; Corrin, 2005; Pickup, 1998; Hughes, 2000; IOM, 2005). Stories of trafficking “have become common in all areas of the world, as imbalances in the labour market, post-conflict situations and governments in transition, migration flows, a globalized economy of both legal and illegal products, existing criminal networks, and corruption combine to exploit people for profit (Albanese 2007, 56)”. Albanese highlights globalisation, migration, and transition among the main phenomena that contribute to trafficking. The remainder of this chapter will focus on the connection between globalisation, migration and the transition period following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Much discourse exists on globalisation and migration as distinct points of analysis regarding trafficking however such discussions are beyond the scope of this project. Globalisation and migration will be examined in the context of transition, looking at the ways they contributed to or further exacerbated the problems of the time. As has previously been stated, the end of the Cold War has often been cited as the triggering point for the explosion in the rates of international sex work and trafficking. In this last section, we will look at the features considered the hallmarks of post-Soviet transition, demonstrating how these features influenced the vulnerability of those living through this experience thus contributing to the regions notoriety for trafficking.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was a confluence of these structural and proximal variables resulting in ideal conditions for trafficking. Issues in this region “stem[med]...from the socio-economic problems associated with the common process of restructuring from a centrally planned economy to a market-based one (Orlova, 2004, p. 14)”. The rapid shift to a market economy led to poverty for millions over a short period of time. Savings were worthless and protections once provided by the government ceased to be. Industries downsized or closed completely rendering large segments of the population unemployed. This was felt especially hard in rural areas and factory towns, especially those in the lesser developed former republics. Prior to the transition period, “the centralised social, economic, and political controls imposed by the Soviet Union guaranteed stable employment for all its citizens. Social security, health care, and many other social programs were provided for all citizens along with housing and day care (Clark & MacArthur, 2010, p.132)”. The safety net provided by these initiatives was taken away and



citizens of the former Soviet Union found themselves with few legitimate options available for survival.

As has already been noted, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rapid transition to a market economy and for some, newfound sovereignty, led to unprecedented levels of chaos in many parts of the region. This next section will touch on globalisation and migration, influential factors during the transition period, highlighting some of the unintended consequences that came about as a result of trends during the time. Many citizens of former Soviet Republics found themselves thrust into poverty as industries collapsed and inflation rendered their savings and pensions almost useless. Civil war broke out in Tajikistan (Clark & McArthur, 2014; Weine, Bahromov, & Mirzoev, 2008). Russia experienced mass waves of immigration. Conflict plagued the Caucasus. Organised crime filled the vacuum created by the weakened rule of law and limited capabilities of government. Suddenly populations were struggling to survive and this left many individuals vulnerable to exploitation as they tried to find ways to provide for themselves and their families. In this context of desperation and change, human trafficking began to take hold as push and pull factors such as poverty, social unrest, and idealisation of the West increased the rates of people willing to migrate for employment.

Across the literature, Moldova has become synonymous with human trafficking in the post-Soviet space. Nearly every catastrophe to befall a post-Soviet republic occurred in Moldova, including a civil war, economic collapse, and political corruption. The countries' ills, like most former Soviet republics, could be traced back to the economic crisis that came about as a result of the shift to a market economy. The government was effectively bankrupt and unable to provide for citizens. Industries propped up by the Soviet government collapsed which contributed greatly to the increase in unemployment. Forty per cent of Moldova was involved in agriculture and when development slowed, rural poverty increased drastically. Many people left the villages in hopes of better opportunities in the capital, Chisinau, adding to the number of displaced persons already there. In addition to economic struggles, the country also had myriad social issues to deal with. Violence was a very big problem with child abuse and other types of domestic abuse occurring in many households. Women were the primary caregivers but also breadwinners for their household

and were duly burdened by sexism. They were discriminated against in jobs, where gendered notions of a male breadwinner, made some employers more inclined to hire men. Ethnic minorities, lesbians and gays, and other vulnerable social groups also faced increased problems during this time (Corrin, 2005; Nanu, 2010). In short, Moldova in the decade following transition saw increased violence, ethnic tension, political instability and a general collapse of civic life all of which encouraged a mass exodus from the country.

In literature on modern trafficking, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the destabilisation that followed are cited as contributing to an increase in human trafficking. Exact statistics on trafficking are hard to locate given the clandestine nature of the act as well as varying definitions despite this, however, it is possible to notice changes in the 'international sex industry' as a result of the gendered impact of economic restructuring in different parts of the world (Pickup, 1998, p. 999). In addressing trafficking in this context, discourse on migration and globalisation intersect as these two phenomena reinforced cycles that easily facilitated trafficking. "An important component of globalisation is the system of ties created by migration (Interpol cited in Nanu 2010, p.86)". Globalisation informs the factors that contribute to migration.

The phenomenon of globalisation has aided in the proliferation of human trafficking. "The social, cultural and technological conditions of globalisation (in particular, increases in the extent of global networks, the intensive of worldwide interconnectedness, the velocity of global flows of people and ideas) have arguably created 'new and favourable contexts for crime (Lee, 2011, p.24)". This is what is meant by globalisation creating and meeting the demand for trafficking. It is this promising exchange of ideas, capital and people provided by globalisation that influences migration. In fact, it has been said that "the causes of human trafficking are rooted in a (global) economy in which lives are commodities to be traded, used, and abused (Bernat & Zhilina, 2010, p.3)". And the cycle continued. Those made vulnerable in the society by the transition, the poor, women and children, ethnic minorities among them were the ones most likely to risk pursuing the opportunities offered by globalisation, only to be taken advantage of. Thus the cycle of trafficking developed during the transition period in the post-Soviet world. In the following chapter, we will look at Estonia's experiences during the transition period, and the specifics

of its human trafficking phenomenon including causes and challenges to combatting the problem.

## CHAPTER 2 – ESTONIA: JOURNEY THROUGH TRANSITION

In the previous section, factors such as gender and ethnicity were discussed in regards to how features of one's identity could increase their vulnerability to trafficking. The last section also highlighted the increased risk faced by those who live in regions or countries undergoing great social and political transition. Moldova was briefly mentioned, highlighting what is considered to be the quintessential example of trafficking in the post-Soviet space. "This was due to a number of economic, political and social factors, among which were economic deterioration, increased violence, discrimination and political instability. In less than a decade the country went from being one of the most prosperous states in the Soviet Union to being the poorest country in Europe (Nanu, 2010, p.144)". This profile stands in near stark contrast with that of Estonia, one of the three nations that made up the Baltic Republics of the Soviet Union. Estonia, a member of the EU, and the wealthiest post-Soviet nation by all appearances has taken a different trajectory than Moldova yet the two have more than a Soviet history in common. As has previously been mentioned and noted as a catalyst for this research, Moldova and Estonia are both designated as Tier 2 on the US State Department's 2014 TIP report. The following section explores in detail Estonia's own transition experience from independence to the EU, noting how political and social changes created favourable conditions for trafficking. Of particular importance is the relationship between Estonia and its non-Estonian minorities and the events that affected this relationship. In this section themes of nationalism and its expression in Estonia will be further explored, particularly any implications they may hold for human trafficking.

### **Restoring Estonian Identity and Independence**

Estonia resumed independence on August 20<sup>th</sup>, 1991 following a five year struggle with Moscow and Soviet officials in the country (Laar, 2004, p. 227). The Singing Revolution, a term coined by artist Heinz Valk to describe the series of summer festivals

that took place in 1988, was a pivotal moment for the burgeoning Estonian nationalism movement at the time (Smith, 2001, p.46). Changes were already occurring in Estonia, local reverberations of Gorbachev's *glasnost* and *perestroika* policies. Gorbachev underestimated or failed to anticipate how these policies such as those that allowed criticism of the regime and permitted the formation of population associations outside of the CPSU would facilitate the new national awakening that was occurring in the Union during the 80s. While *glasnost* and *perestroika* were assumed to be enough of a concession by Soviet leaders to quell the rise in discontent among citizens, it served to only reignite passions about what had hitherto been forcibly settled issues. For example, the protests and demonstrations around commemorative events in Estonia were the end result of the regime distancing itself from Stalinism. Gorbachev blamed many of the issues facing the Soviet Union at the time on the “flawed legacy of Stalinism (Smith, 2001, p.43)”. In doing so, the State inadvertently validated the longstanding Baltic claim, for instance, that they were illegally annexed as a result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and as such, were not willing parties to the Soviet occupation as was long claimed. The resurging independence movement was rooted in nationalism which sought to restore and conserve monuments, historical memory and other national symbols such as the national flag and colours, that had been destroyed or banned during the Stalin Era. The reappearance of these symbols helped to galvanise the mass movement for independence (Smith, 2008, p.1). For new Estonian nationalists, independence was connected to reclaiming their identity and rewriting the forced Soviet interpretations of their history. These were the blank spots (Taagepera, 1993; Smith, 2001) that were further revisited in the 1980s which served to only incite Estonians as well as nationals of other republics to reclaim their own buried or blurred identities. The Estonian fight for independence was a fight for the Estonian identity and such ethno-national identity politics had many implications for an independent Estonia.

### **Estonians and Others**

Estonia has been occupied by one power or another for most of its modern history. Geographically situated on the Baltic coast, Estonia's history saw it under the rule of Sweden, Germany and Russia, all of whom left lasting impacts on the country. While Jews, Germans, Swedes, and Russians made up part of the pre-war population of Estonia, by the

end of 1945, the Estonians comprised more than ninety-seven per cent of the population (Zabrodskaia, 2009, p.1). Estonia's annexation by the Soviet Union however brought about rapid changes in the demographics of the country as the non-Estonian population increased from three per cent just after World War II to 38.5 per cent in 1989 (Kirch & Kirch, 1995, p.1). Immigrants to Estonia during the Soviet era fell into many different categories with many coming as migrant workers, political refugees and ideological colonists, with the latter being largely Russian (Raud, 2004, p.262-263)". Soviet authorities offered generous housing and work benefits and colonists were perceived to benefit from the primacy given to Russian and privileging of Russians by the state. The difference in mentality between the groups was such that "non-Estonians saw Estonia as a tiny part of their 'own' territory, in other words a province, while Estonians considered Estonia, and only Estonia, to be their territory, and they made a clear distinction between Estonia and the Soviet Union (Taagepera, 1993, p.260)". The two communities lived apart and experienced two different realities given the cultural rift and the fact that Russian-speaking communities were distributed unevenly throughout the country with large concentrations in cities in Tallinn, Tartu, and Narva. This lack of a distinction between Estonia and the Soviet Union on the part of the colonists lead to misunderstandings and further division between the groups especially considering the population distribution. In 1989, non-Estonians accounted for almost thirty-nine per cent of the population. In restoring the Estonian state, national symbols and historical memory were invoked along with a strict rebuke of all things Stalin and all things Soviet, an identity still held by many non-Estonians. To ensure the survival of the Estonian nation the newly independent Estonian state would have to reinforce its national identity and define Estonian nationhood at the expense of, and in spite of, the substantial amount of non-Estonian citizens residing in its borders (Raud, 2004, p.257).

Among the earliest legislation passed in the democratic era was the Estonian citizenship law, passed in February 1992. The law granted automatic citizenship to individuals who resided in Estonia prior to 1940 but subjected Soviet era settlers to a different application process depending on their relationship to the state. Smith (2001) introduces the argument that the political system of Estonia could be considered a 'ethnic democracy', a term "used to denote a multi-ethnic state in which the 'core nation' possesses

a superior institutional status beyond its numerical proportion within the state; certain civil and political rights are open to all; and certain collective rights are extended to ethnic minorities (p.74)”. It was clear that Estonians had to reassert the primacy of their own ethnicity and culture and the citizenship law became a means to do so. Aasland (2007) notes that, issues around citizenship lead to further tension between Estonians and the non-Estonian minority. Russian settlers saw the division between citizens and noncitizens as discriminatory (p.60). Some settlers applied for Russian citizenship instead while others remained without citizenship completely. Further complicating the matter was the restoration of Estonian as the national language and language of state institutions. Many Russians were reluctant to learn Estonian or found it difficult to do so which worked against them. The Russian speaking minority came to be divided into three groups: 1) those who became Estonian citizens through naturalisation 2) those who were citizens of the Russian Federation and 3) those that held neither Estonian nor Russian citizenship (IOM 2005, p.12). Lack of citizenship did in fact prove to be problematic as non-citizens were not able to vote in national elections<sup>4</sup> or hold certain jobs. Of remaining jobs, some required a language test. Non-citizens had little to no rights because of their ambiguous or non-citizenship status although some rights were afforded residents. Aasland (2007) found that in Estonia “non-citizens run a greater risk of exclusion from the labour market than citizens (p. 61)”. Raud (2004) cites a prevailing idea among Estonian society even those who speak fluent Estonian but have Russian surnames may be turned down in favour of a similar candidate with an Estonian surname (p.265). The veracity of such an idea aside, the Russian-speaking minority faces many challenges in Estonia today with many claiming housing and employment discrimination because of the language requirements. They account for eighty per cent of the population in the north-eastern Estonia, a region that is characterised by poverty given the collapse of much of its industry following the end of the Soviet Union. As a result of the Estonian state's attempts to promote its own cultural and civic identity, it had to effectively reduce the electorate to those who shared in this collective identity. Undoubtedly, “the question of the non-Estonian population in the country is itself linked to that of the identity of the Estonians (Raud, 2004, p.258)”. By

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<sup>4</sup> Permanent residents have the right to vote in local elections. See Smith (2008, p.421-422).

using citizenship as a means of developing civic life, Estonia also excluded portions of its population from participating and created a political imbalance that had influence on social effects.

### **Transition and Trafficking**

In the heady years after independence, optimism characterised the outlook for the Estonian future. The nation was facing west, eager to make up for time lost under Soviet occupation. As Arjakas (2004) said, “no-one believed that there was not a good room reserved for Estonia in the 'hotel' called Europe (p.251)”. Despite these ambitions, the economic fallout from the collapse of the USSR was a reality. The Estonian economy had to simultaneously adapt to a market economy while also dealing with external factors including a damaged Russian market and loss of access to previous Soviet markets that no longer existed. Living conditions plummeted given the collapse of industry and trade and the rise in unemployment that followed. Rates of poverty, affecting more and more of the population as “[t]he central role of the labour market in defining living standards [...] left certain household’s particularly vulnerable (World Bank, 1996, p.i). As economic conditions worsened, household composition and other social structures changed as well. During the transition era, it was common for more young adults to raise children and rates of divorce and birth out of wedlock doubled. Rural poverty was also an issue as those outside major cities had even fewer options than their urban counterparts. Once hidden or minimised, social issues like alcoholism, drug abuse, prostitution and crime increased. People moved in with relatives, turned to the informal sector or looked to migration all as possible means of dealing with the economic instability (ibid, p.i-iii). Unemployment peaked at 8.9 per cent in 1993 but by 1995, it was thought that Estonia was well into recovery as its GDP began to rise and inflation and devaluation were stabilised. However, with more than 130 thousand people, or 8.9% still considered as poor in 1995, it was clear that poverty had grown to be a major social issues affecting newly independent Estonia.

Despite economic recovery in the mid-1990s, day-to-day life in Estonia like in Moldova was still difficult. The conditions were such that many residents, citizen and non-citizen alike were eager to migrate and given the limited amount of legal options at the time, informal networks arose to facilitate this. When connecting the transition period to the rise



in the occurrence of trafficking in Estonia, the IOM (2005) succinctly highlights how “trafficking in Estonia has been related to several factors linked directly to the post-communist transition phase. These factors include the socio-economic stratification of the population, the commercialization of services previously excluded from the market, and the idealisation of opportunities and living standards of Western countries (p.11)” and so the phenomenon widened. More and more women from the former Soviet Union were finding their way to the brothels and street corners of Western Europe. So large was the flow of women who ended up in sex work abroad from Russian and the former Soviet Union that prostitutes in Turkey and Israel are commonly referred to as 'Natashas' (Hughes, 2000, p.629). Trafficking had emerged from the high demand for immigration present in Eastern Europe. Part of the response of more advanced countries to the growing crisis of immigration and trafficking in their country was to secure their borders, limit residence and work permits, and tighten visa policies. With a fledgling economy and few legal options to emigrate, this all but guaranteed that women, and other vulnerable people, would have to turn to traffickers (Pickup, 1998).

Social problems arising from transition would continue to be an issue for Estonia however not to the extent that it deterred the country's ambitions. The country had long felt itself part of the European community and aspired to reach levels of wealth and development as its western European neighbours (IOM, 2005, p.21). It was already setting itself apart from other post-Soviet countries given its positive economic recovery and receipt of foreign investments at a time when state corruption characterised most of the FSU. Years of steady economic growth put Estonia on the path for EU accession. While economic recovery started as early as 1994, the extent of social issues like poverty and prostitution was ignored. For instance, Estonia began taking steps toward accession into the EU in the mid to late 1990s yet at this time rates of drug abuse and HIV/AIDS infections were a growing epidemic. During this time, the late 1990s and early 2000s, prostitution was major issue as well. Social issues and conditions are always of concern in any EU talks on ascension. Many questions were raised during initial talks with the EU regarding the status of the Russian-speaking minority community as well as issues regarding the citizenship law and language policies. Implications for their status should Estonia join the EU as well as

implications for the overall country were no doubt factors that came up during the process. Whatever the concerns, Estonia ultimately gained entrance into the EU. This time was not without its up and downs. In 2006, shortly after accession, Estonia was predicted to be a major destination country given its economic growth and small workforce (Kask & Markina, 2011, p.247). The recession changed all of that, as unemployment rose to more than 16 per cent in 2007, living standards fell, and the increased rates of vulnerability led to an increase in rates of trafficking and ultimately Estonia dropping to the Tier 2 watch list in 2011 (USDOS, 2011). What this shows is that despite economic development and growth, social issues still play a major role in influencing trafficking in Estonia. Already marginalised in Estonia, the economic instability of the transition period further impacted the Russian-speaking minority. As was highlighted in the previous chapter, gender and ethnic makeup can be influential in determining one's risk for trafficking. As inequality grew and social issues increased across the country, Russian-speaking Estonians felt these changes more acutely and as such, had the greatest incentive to leave. By the time trends in trafficking in the country emerged, Russian-speaking Estonians were disproportionately represented. This was especially the case for trafficking for sexual exploitation as "different Estonian experts seem to agree that about 80 per cent of persons involved in providing sexual services in Estonia are of Russian-speaking origin" and Finnish police found that most trafficking victims involved in forced prostitution were members of the Russian speaking minority (IOM 2005, p.36).

Now, more than 20 years after independence, tensions between the Russian-speaking minority community and Estonians have progressed with the occasional spark. From the drama following the Bronze Soldier incident in 2007 to an increase in sentiments favouring further distance between Estonians and the Russian-speaking community, it is clear that some of the issues rose during transition, particularly those that affect the dynamics between Estonians and the non-Estonian are still salient points. While the Estonian government has not explicitly targeted the Russian-speaking community, given the Soviet legacy, there are tensions between what falls within the rights of Estonia as a sovereign nation and what could be perceived as reflective on unresolved matters. As the Estonian state relied largely on national symbols and memories specific to their ethno-

cultural identity, it can be argued that non-Estonians were not conceived of or reflected in this vision of what Estonia should be. Accompanying political measures to build an Estonia envisioned by early nationalists were inherently biased against non-Estonians because of the importance stressed on creating and perpetuating Estonian hegemony. Looking back at Estonia's history, it is clear to see that there are points of animosity between ethnic Estonians and the Russian-speaking minority however these issues do not directly speak to discrimination or prejudice on behalf of the Estonians. The rise in social problems such as poverty, unemployment and crime has also greatly affected Estonians. The development of trafficking in the country as an issue initially affecting both parties but now disproportionately affecting Russian-speakers indicates that development within Estonia might not be distributed equally and that social issues affecting all might have special implications for the Russian-speaking community. This is another key question that this project seeks to address. Before we get to the findings from interviews regarding our key questions, a description of the research process and further information about the methodology will be provided.

## CHAPTER 3 – FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS: TRAFFICKING TRENDS, CAUSES, AND ENFORCEMENT

In the previous chapters, key issues around trafficking were explored. It was clear through the literature that much debate still exists regarding the basic tenets of trafficking. Research noted that it was hard to pinpoint exact statistics to support the claim that trafficking is as big of a problem as it is reported to be yet at the same time it was clear that regardless of the remaining rhetorical and scholastic gaps many individuals in countless circumstances around the world were being forced and coerced into various forms of labour and sexual exploitation. Highlighted were the various factors that contributed to trafficking and influenced its particular manifestations as well as debates around what constituted trafficking and the best means to combat the problem. The researcher incorporated many elements of feminist theory in the analysis of human trafficking, looking at the role of vulnerability and the factors that contributed to an individual's increased risk for trafficking. It was this lens that was used to further examine human trafficking as a phenomenon in Estonia. As outlined in the methodology, the research questions for this project were focused on capturing the nature and scale of trafficking in Estonia, looking at the structural and social factors that contributed to trafficking. Finding out these factors helped shape the policy response to trafficking as well as how effective these responses have been in tackling the underlying causes of trafficking were also additional aims. The following section reflects information gathered from interviews conducted to answer these very questions.

### **Overview of Research Design**

The research process began with a review of relevant literature on trafficking at the international level as well as literature that analysed the phenomenon in the context of the collapse of the Soviet Union, looking at the specific social conditions caused by this transition period that gave way to increased rates of trafficking in these countries after 1991. This brought to light the various social issues that contribute to trafficking and highlighted

possible areas of inspection when looking at the phenomenon in the Estonian context. After additional research was done on Estonia, looking at its path since transition and any social and cultural shifts that would influence trafficking, it was thought that empirical research on trafficking in Estonia would be the best way to unite the theoretical and descriptive aspects of the project. In doing so, the researcher hoped to use the interviews to further examine themes that reappear in the literature. As previously explained, it was felt that expert interviews would be the best way to explore how issues around transition, gender equality, social problems and nationalism intersect and contribute to trafficking.

Interviews were conducted with officials who worked on trafficking related matters in the government of Estonia as well as with individuals from the leading NGOs working on trafficking and labour exploitation issues. These individuals were asked about their work, their thoughts on trafficking in Estonia and its causes, and how to combat the problem. Themes that emerged in their response were noted for later comparison and analysis to themes that emerged in the literature.

### **Recruitment of Respondents**

To gather interview subjects, the snowballing technique was used. Given the small size of the nation, the community that worked on trafficking in Estonia was relatively small as well. An average of twenty individuals participated in an anti-trafficking roundtable which brought together representatives from NGOs and government ministries as well as the police to deal with issues related to trafficking, including new action plans as well as changes in laws and protocols and their implementation. These individuals were fairly familiar with one another and thus it was the researchers hope that in contacting one individual this would give way to others. An initial list of potential subjects were created with the consultation of Dr. Anna Markina, who in addition to serving as an advisor for the researcher, is an Estonian criminology specialist who has worked extensively on human trafficking issues in the region from various standpoints. Through her advice and suggestions, the list was narrowed down to key individuals who worked with victims, worked on enforcement, and worked on education around trafficking in Estonia.

Contact information was obtained from websites, online registries, and through colleagues. Potential participants were contacted via email with an introductory message

that outlined the research and the purpose for contacting them. Attached to these emails was the Plain Language Statement that further elaborated on the research goals and what could be expected of their involvement. Of the initial five participants who were contacted, all but one responded. Of the responses, two participants suggested additional candidates, some of whom were ultimately interviewed. Another candidate declined to participate referring the researcher to their subordinate, who had already been contacted.

### **Description of Research Participants**

During the month of February, interviews were held with members of the anti-trafficking community in Estonia, a network of NGOs and state institutions tasked developing counter strategies as well as providing services.

- The first set of interviews was conducted with Roman Krolov (RK), Director of ATOLL Centre, which is a part of Eluliin. Eluliin, which means ‘lifeline’ in Estonia, is the largest NGO in Estonia which provides services to women in prostitution or facing other types of gendered violence with ATOLL serving specifically as a point of contact for those who have been trafficked. Another member of ATOLL, Pille Kaljurand (PK), who is monitor at the shelter for victims of human trafficking also, provided an interview. ATOLL is one of the NGOs to participate in the anti-trafficking roundtable.
- The second set of interviews was held with the founder and director of Living for Tomorrow (LFT), Sirle Blumberg (SB) as well as her colleague Olena Valdenmaier (OV). Living for Tomorrow operates an emergency service hotline for human trafficking victims as well as trafficking prevention education and is another NGO that participates in the anti-trafficking roundtable.
- Interviews were held with representatives of the government including Kristiina Luht (KL), a Gender Advisor working for the Department of Equality Policies in the Ministry of Social Affairs as well as with a representative from the Ministry of Justice, Anu Leps (AL). Anu serves as the National Coordinator for all Estonia's anti-trafficking work, working with different organisations and government

institutions to develop strategy and action plans. She serves as an Adviser in the Ministry of Justice.

- The remaining interview was held with a representative, a Project Manager, of another large NGO which works on international issues of migration. This participant is referred to as PM. This participant as well asked to remain anonymous regarding information provided through their interviews. Those identified consented to the use of their names in any research products.
- The initials of the participants, as mentioned previously, will be used to identify areas where they supplied the source for a direct quote or paraphrase. The page numbers correspond to interviews in the appendix.

### **The Interview Process**

All of the interviews took place in locations specified by the participants. Interviews with participants from NGOs were held at their respective headquarters. Interviews with government officials were held in the location of their respective ministries, with one taking place in an official's office and the other in a general board room. Prior to entire process of recruitment and interviewing, interview questions were determined. Sample interview questions had been vetted through previous presentations and discussions with advisors and colleagues. Once participants were more or less finalised, a final list of questions was determined. These questions were open-ended and served as a sort of guideline to ensure that all participants spoke on similar topics and participants were free in their response. Prior to the interview, solicitation emails were sent that included an attached copy of the Plain Language Statement (See Appendix A). Participants were asked to read this form and respond with any questions they might have. Before the start of the interview, this form was referred back to again as participants signed the consent form (See Appendix B). They were asked if they had any additional questions and reminded that they could refuse to participate at this or any point in the interview. Once the consent forms were signed, the interview began.

Questions were open-ended and allowed participants to talk about the work they did, how they got involved, and the challenges they faced. Questions also addressed participants' thoughts on trafficking in Estonia, helping to highlight what they saw as the causes as well as the issues that affect the problem. Follow-up or probing questions were posed to participants following statements that required clarification or further elaboration. Participants responded to some questions in more detail than others and outside of the core questions, not all participants were asked the same questions.

The interviews ranged from 30 minutes to two hours in length. After each interview, notes on the content as well as the process of the meeting were made. Themes that emerged during the interview were recorded. Interviews were digitally recorded and later transcribed. Initials were used as most participants opted not to remain anonymous and were fine with their names and statements being associated.

Participants were informed of their right to receive a transcript upon request. Many deferred to the researcher, insisting this was unnecessary. Other participants requested only to see a draft of the final paper as they felt then they could better see how their words were used.

### **Data Analysis**

Notes taken during and after the interview as well as transcripts were reviewed and analysed at length. The themes and insight that emerged were noted for each interview. Following this, similar ideas and themes were grouped across interviews and coded according to a conception label. Analysis of this information was aided by the use of Atlas.ti, a qualitative data analysis program. The program allowed for advanced sorting functions that made it easier to identify themes across interviews and sort relevant material into these categories.

### **Boundaries of the Study**

Any research design or methodology has its limitations and this project is no different. Among the major limitations to this project were language and access. As the researcher spoke no Estonian and had a limited command of Russian, interviews were primarily limited to subjects who spoke English. As a result, the researcher acknowledges



that language did play a role in the selection of participants and it is possible that more viable candidates were excluded because of their lack of English skills.

The researcher was also aware of elite nature of some candidates and given concerns about their time and participation, it was felt that short one-time interviews were the best to gather information and maintain participation. Additional interviews or follow-ups could have proved useful but were not conducted and highlight a possible limitation of this research. Given their elite positions or recent changes, some individuals contacted were not able to participate.

As an MA thesis with a limited scope, much consideration was given to how much information needed to be gathered and an ideal number of interviews. Given the complex nature of trafficking and various viewpoints on the matter, the researcher acknowledges that additional interviews with more subjects would have been useful in framing the issue. For instance, demographic balance was sought however the majority of respondents were female. Additional perspectives from more men may have provided new insight however it is important to note that this limitation is largely a result of the fact that those who are most active in the anti-trafficking roundtable are women.

### **Strengths of the Study**

Despite the aforementioned limitations, there are many strengths to this study. The key strengths of this study was the understanding and insight gathered from the subjects. While interviews were limited in number, the individuals spoken to consisted of those most active in the anti-trafficking roundtable in Estonia. As such, they could provide the most comprehensive and updated information as this work was directly related to their day-to-day activities. Those who participated in interviews comprised the “who's who” of the anti-trafficking community in Estonia and this was reinforced through interviews where subjects referenced work by colleagues who were also interviewed.

Strength of this study is the use of qualitative research methods as a way to provide a more dynamic analysis. “Qualitative research such as the projects described in this publication often focus on small samples of participants. Consequently, research findings derived from such studies are often dismissed as anecdotal and not generalizable. The value of qualitative research, however, lies in the diversity and depth of the data collected and

analysed and the complex understanding attained of the context and conditions under which particular findings appear. Moreover, qualitative research using small samplings is often very useful for identifying future research questions and directions. (Hankivsky, 1999, p.2)”. It is the researchers hopes that given the calibre of participants, a qualitative research approach was the most meaningful way to gather the type of information desired. The summary of the findings of these interviews and their relationship and significance will be addressed in the next section.

## **Findings**

In the previous chapters, key issues around trafficking were explored. It was clear through the literature that much debate still exists regarding the basic tenets of trafficking. Research noted that it was hard to pinpoint exact statistics to support the claim that trafficking is as big of a problem as it is reported to be yet at the same time it was clear that regardless of the remaining rhetorical and scholastic gaps many individuals in countless circumstances around the world were being forced and coerced into various forms of labour and sexual exploitation. Highlighted were the various factors that contributed to trafficking and influenced its particular manifestations as well as debates around what constituted trafficking and the best means to combat the problem. The researcher incorporated many elements of feminist theory in the analysis of human trafficking, looking at the role of vulnerability and the factors that contributed to an individual's increased risk for trafficking. It was this lens that was used to further examine human trafficking as a phenomenon in Estonia. As outlined in the methodology, the research questions for this project were focused on capturing the nature and scale of trafficking in Estonia, looking at the structural and social factors that contributed to trafficking. Finding out these factors helped shape the policy response to trafficking as well as how effective these responses have been in tackling the underlying causes of trafficking were also additional aims.

While the social problems affecting the country are kept within her borders, Estonia's problem with human trafficking has gone international. As has previously been discussed, the US TIP 2014 report has highlighted Estonia's attempts to combat trafficking and despite the difficulties of attaining exact figures on trafficking in the country, Estonia does not argue with some of the assessment, acknowledging that trafficking is a problem

though the extent is not known. Of special note regarding the problem of trafficking in Estonia is the fact that members of its Russian-speaking minority seem to be disproportionately represented among victims of trafficking. This raises questions regarding how factors influencing trafficking in Estonia might intersect with ethnic issues such as discrimination and integration that leave Russian-speakers in Estonia even more vulnerable than their Estonian speaking counterparts to trafficking. These themes and more were touched upon in interviews conducted as the empirical portion of this project. Following the collection of these interviews done with those well versed on trafficking, particularly government officials and NGO representatives who serve on the country's anti-trafficking roundtable, there were new points to consider and areas for further research highlighted. These additional insights served to give a more complete picture of the issue of human trafficking, showing how the intersection of social and economic issues as well as international trends have led to the particular manifestation of trafficking found in Estonia and have thus complicated the response to the problem. The following is a summary of findings that emerged during the interviews.

### **Status of Trafficking**

One of the major aims of this project was to capture an up-to-date picture of the status of trafficking in Estonia. Earlier analyses of trafficking in Estonia had been conducted in the mid to late 2000s (Eespere 2004, IOM 2005) right as the nation was joining the EU leaving not only a substantial amount of time uncovered between then and now but reflections on how these institutional and social changes had implications for trafficking were absent. Accession into the EU had mixed results for trafficking in Estonia as the country dropped to the Tier 2 watch list in 2011 and has only been upgraded to Tier 2 since, with this year's designation again citing the country's inability to comply with minimum standards to combat trafficking. Although an EU member, Estonia was immune to the effects of the recession that caused economic troubles that might have contributed to this drop on the list. Given that the literature has indicated how difficult it is to obtain exact statistics on trafficking rates and considering the purported significance of the TIP report in the field of trafficking, it was important to explore the relationship between trafficking and the ways it is measured, the metrics used to help construct and thus talk about trafficking. It

was soon discovered that despite the seemingly objective nature of measuring trafficking, there are important considerations to be made regarding what constitutes trafficking and who is considered a victim.

Trafficking in Estonia is certainly an issue. The consensus in the interviews was that trafficking was a problem however several participants highlighted that this would not be clear from the statistics. If one were to look at the official number of reported cases of trafficking, that is the registered number of offences that of trafficking in human beings in Estonia or eight in 2013 (Leps, 2014, p.18) it would not appear to be an issue. Participants highlighted that this was due largely to the changing nature of trafficking as well as changes in legislation regarding the definition of trafficking victims. A key point in the responses to the question regarding one's thoughts on trafficking and whether or not it is a problem was the issue of victim identification. Until 2012 when Estonia added a separate offence for incidents of trafficking to its penal code, trafficking was not criminalised in the country. Prior to this, incidents of trafficking were identified following the guidelines indicated in the Palermo protocol which were also used to help determine victims. The Palermo definition hinges primarily on exploitation and includes sexual exploitation as well as forced labour as forms of trafficking. When Estonia passed its own law criminalising trafficking, it also further integrated directives from the European Commission regarding provisions for victim support. This ultimately led the country to implement changes in how victims were to be identified and what services they would be offered as a result. These changes to the law show the importance of how the construct of trafficking and thus a trafficking victim influence victim identification and ultimately statistics that reflect this phenomenon.

In April 2013, the Estonian government made changes to the Victims Support Service Act (from here on referred to as VSA) which outlined who were considered victims of trafficking under the law and what services would be provided to them by the state. The amendment designated victim of human trafficking as “a person in the case of whom criminal proceedings have been commenced with regard to the criminal offence committed against him or her based on elements of criminal offence specified” in article 133 of the Penal Code which criminalises trafficking (Estonian Penal Code). Whereas previously, both

officials at NGOs as well as police could declare an individual a victim under the terms of the Palermo Protocol, under the new law, only investigative bodies like the police and border guards, or the prosecutor's office have the power to identify victims. An NGO can identify an individual as a potential victim to police, who in turn open an investigation. They then determine if they have enough to move forward with a criminal case. If they do, then the individual is considered a victim and has access to services provided by the NGO as well as those only offered to official victims of trafficking. If for some reason the case is not moved forward; there is insufficient evidence or it proves to be a different violation and not trafficking, the potential victim will no longer receive any services in addition to general services offered by the NGO. If they were in government funded shelter, they have to leave. Having a specific clause that attempts to standardized the victim identification and service provision appears to help with ascertaining more precise figures but it further complicates matters.

The added step of a criminal case is problematic for a variety of reasons. First, victims might be hesitant to speak to law enforcement or get them involved. Many participants mentioned this fear when citing their concerns about the new law. Sirle Blumberg mentioned several instances where calls were terminated or individuals stopped seeking services after finding out that they would need to go to the police. She even mentioned instances where individuals would stop cooperating even after starting the process with the help of LFT. Ninety-per cent of individuals they identify as victims do not file a report, according to Sirle Blumberg. Previous research on trafficking in Estonia also notes this as a deterrent to reports (Eespere 2004, IOM 2005). Sometimes victims do not know their rights and fear the authorities, especially if they have been engaged in criminal activity. The fear of police involvement but also the added process of going through the criminal justice system makes it unlikely that victims will easily come forward. In some instances, it is not very visible that an individual has been a victim of sexual or labour exploitation so this raises questions about what information is needed to move forward with a case. Over the year as the public's awareness of trafficking has increased if not grabbed periodically by the latest sensationalised report or movie, certain narratives around trafficking have become commonplace. Accounts of extreme physical and sexual violence

are almost expected to accompany all instances of trafficking. “We always expect that the victim will come crying, like beaten up, like she tell you right away everything” says Sirle Blumberg, when talking about expectation of trafficking victims. Expectations like this can be problematic as they narrow the scope of what constitutes trafficking and can exclude victims whose stories and experiences do not fit this narrative. This has a dual affect. People will not come forward if they feel that they cannot prove that they are victims. They might never seek out services that are available to them because they do not identify as victims, since such gruesome things did not happen they may be unable to register their own experiences as that of trafficking. It is this same trend that is seen when it comes to awareness of trafficking. Participants felt that Estonians were aware of trafficking in the abstract but did not know what to do should they be in the situation. They also think it was not something that could happen to them but rather something that happens in far away places and Estonians often were not aware of the various types of things that comprise trafficking. In some instances, even victims were unable to recognize their own experiences as examples of trafficking. Certain expectations of victimisation as well as lack of a clear understanding of what exactly counts as trafficking are additional reasons why it is hard to glean the status of trafficking in Estonia simply by looking at the statistics.

The lack of a clear understanding of what constitutes trafficking or the various ways people can find themselves exploited has led to a large segment of trafficking cases not being considered as such. All participants acknowledged the growing trend of labour exploitation with some even stating that they felt that labour exploitation cases were more frequent than sexual exploitation. The problem was that these cases did not fit the image of what is expected of typical trafficking cases. Estonia's history with prostitution and organised crime in the years following independence has always been tied with trafficking in the country which has partially led to the strong association of trafficking and sexual exploitation. The Project Manager noted how gendered the construct of trafficking has become: “But obviously, it's evident that if you talk about sexual exploitation we mainly talk about women and somehow if we talk about labour exploitation then immediately people tend to think of the construction workers in Finland”. The issue is that the latter type

of exploitation is not always considered as related to human trafficking and thus another dynamic of the problem is ignored.

As the phenomenon has changed with large numbers of victims of trafficking experiencing labour exploitation the narrative has yet to catch up to reality as trafficking beyond sexual exploitation is not fully conceived. Organisations that work primarily on labour exploitation such as Living for Tomorrow acknowledge that they receive calls that could be the end result of trafficking for labour exploitation. For example, they had 43 suspected cases last year of individuals who might have been trafficked, calling into their hotline. However, since the exchanges are largely over the phone and not face to face, it was difficult to ascertain the full details. In fact, SB, as well as Olena V. who also works on the emergency hotlines acknowledged that it is possible that they have more instances of trafficking for labour exploitation however they lack the details and victims might only view the payment disputes as the main issue without looking at the broader context. As PM conferred, “I think with labour exploitation overall I think that often they don't acknowledge that they are being exploited”. Labour exploitation despite its growth is something that is only now emerging as an issue in Estonia and as such is not readily identifiable by civilians or those in law enforcement and thus their cases are not always added to statistics on trafficking.

The situation regarding the numbers and the scale of trafficking reflects that described in the literature. When it comes to trafficking numbers can be misleading as they reflect more so the metric used to measure trafficking and less the actual rate. We've already touched on the various ways that the VSA as well as Estonia's construction of trafficking might affect the count of victims and perpetrators. Another issue with the VSA in that it creates two classes of victims. This is the case in Estonia. Regarding the trafficking rates for the past year, several participants noted that Estonia had 234 recorded cases of trafficking and labour exploitation victims. It was however unclear if this consist of individuals who have received services as a condition of Estonia's law on trafficking or simply those helped by the NGOs. Thus the crux here is services, as use of services can be a measure of trafficking. The changes to the Victim Support Services Act complicate how such a statistic should be interpreted.

The Victim Support Services Act amendment almost creates a hierarchy of victims. The new act effectively narrowed the definition of who could be a registered victim, creating two classes of victims differing in their official relationship to the state and their ability to receive services. The VSA narrows Estonia's field of victims though the relationship between those who claim services and those who are victims is not as straight forward as would be expected. Many participants spoke about how while the law was problematic; it was especially problematic for those who experience labour exploitation. The experiences of victims of labour exploitation are also marginalised by the VS A. While the act does add an additional hurdle for victims in the way of getting recognised and receiving services, it does allow for more rights for certain experiences. For example, the VSA while requiring that an individual open a criminal proceeding in order to be eligible for services also has a clause that allows for the provision of services to anyone who is a victim of prostitution and sexual exploitation even if those individuals are not found to be victims of trafficking. For those who are victims of labour exploitation, if their cases do not move forward they have to forfeit all claims to services, particularly access to shelters and additional services offered by the law and not NGOs making them one of the most disadvantaged group of victims under the new law. So while it would appear that the VSA simplified the process of victim identification, it actually further muddled the numbers as not all those who received services were actual victims. There were victims of sexual exploitation receiving services who were not considered victims of trafficking and there were trafficking victims who received some sort of service, maybe not to the extent of the law, however they did not have criminal proceedings and so their number is not added to the overall count. Under the new system, NGOs could no longer declare someone a victim but could instead suggest to police or authorities that an individual is a potential victim. This individual would be included in the NGOs count of victims for the past year however unless that individual follows through with a criminal proceeding and is recognised by the court, they will not be included in Estonia's statistics of trafficking.

When the amendment to the VSA act was passed, it changed not only who was allowed to identify victims but it also had significant implications for Estonia's data submitted to the US TIP report. The US TIP report is an annual report issued by the US



State Department evaluating how countries of the world are doing in the fight against trafficking. The importance of the TIP report has been mentioned throughout this paper as it is a primary tool of the US State Department to evaluate other nations on combatting trafficking, a movement which the US has declared an international priority. In the interviews, the TIP report and its data collection process were discussed. Every early January, the US Embassy sends out the TIP questions. Anu Leps, as the national coordinator for trafficking, is responsible for gathering information from the different ministries to compile one set of answers for a response. Respondents are usually only given a few weeks to answer. Some participants were ambivalent in regards to the TIP report which was surprising at first given how commonly referenced the report has become. To complete country profiles, those in the TIP office contact not only those in relevant government departments but also those who work in the NGOs and non-profits as well as journalists. This is done, conceivably, to gain insight from different sides of the issues and to deter states or NGOs from over or understating the phenomenon should it be in their interest, however this causes other problems in Estonia.

Given the new changes in the victim identification and services law, TIP officials get very different numbers from the Estonian government and from the NGOs with the former listing only as victims only those individuals who had initiated a criminal case while NGOs included all individuals they considered victims, some of whom were only potential victims and thus not counted in the States eyes. To complicate matters, the TIP report does not inform participants of all the parties they are contacting in their country. The TIP report also does not allow for review or amendments before reports are published. One participant noted that it was not uncommon to receive an email notifying you that the report was ready or had been made public as the only correspondence once answers were submitted. Once the reports were published, it was not uncommon also to see information whose origins were unknown or which contradicted what had been stated in submitted responses. As has been stated, the TIP report is commonly used in the field of human trafficking and this new insight into its methodology has raised questions.

For one, these are the numbers that determine where a country is effectively ranked on their response to trafficking. If the origin of these numbers is questionable then the claim

they support might be just as dubious. In the case of Estonia, state officials and the country were held accountable for numbers they did not provide, for a report that did not capture the nuance in their victim identification system. The 2014 TIP report did acknowledge Estonia's new victim assistance mechanism and while it discouraged making receipt of services conditional on reporting to authorities, the report failed to go into further detail about how this new requirement might affect numbers. Additionally, there was no accountability to those asked to participate. One participant noted that questions of clarification sent to the TIP office were not addressed. One has to wonder about the role of the TIP report and how it influences the United States' relationship with other countries. It is possible that countries participate in order to maintain positive terms with the US. Without undermining what can be seen as an important foreign policy consideration, one has to wonder why the US has taken the lead in the international fight against trafficking and how others should feel regarding this self-appointed role.

Referenced by the UN and countless states across the world, the TIP report has faced some opposition but nothing too organised. One participant noted that some EU countries, particularly those who find themselves ranked as a Tier 2 by TIP while also complying with EU directives, have considered opting out of the TIP report or at least minimising the importance of its classifications. The report is seemingly objective but there have to be concerns about how the report is used and whose interest does it benefit. Another important question to ask is why is it the US that has been given this special task? This was another criticism of liberal feminists against early anti-trafficking legislation and international conventions. Some feminist scholars have contended that trafficking regulations another way for wealthy and white Western nations to police the sexuality and morality of other poorer nations. In the case of Estonia, the two are no so opposite however this can be considered an instance of a more dominant Western power exerting their power and influence over others. What right does the United States, a sovereign nation, have in judging the affairs of another sovereign nation? And given the questions raised by the discrepancy in victim identification not addressed in the TIP report, could there be other areas of deviation between how those who write the TIP and those they evaluate construct trafficking and the best ways to combat it? The interviews raised important questions about

the TIP report and further showed how objective measures of trafficking can be anything but. A primary methodology of measuring trafficking remains as difficult to locate as a fixed definition of trafficking.

### **Social Issues and Vulnerability**

As the interviews coincided with what the literature indicated that measurements of trafficking can elicit as much discussion as the definition of trafficking, other similarities between the literature and trafficking in Estonia appeared. One of the key research questions focused on vulnerability as a factor in human trafficking, looking for factors that increased ones vulnerability and thus their risk of falling victim to trafficking. In the interviews it was found that despite its positive economic development since independence, Estonia still suffers from structural and social issues that increase vulnerability. Gender inequality, poverty, high unemployment, and a weak social welfare system are factors that contribute to marginalisation of segments of the population today as well as in the period following independence. However Estonia's hesitancy to acknowledge and address these social issues, as they have done with past issues, is what is contributing to on-going problems associated with trafficking.

When speaking of some of the causes of trafficking many participants raised some of the common social issues Estonia is dealing with. As has been shown, there are structural and social factors that contribute to an individual's increased vulnerability to trafficking. Among the factors that increase vulnerability and are ultimately seen as influencing trafficking were poverty, gender inequality, high unemployment, and the country's poor social welfare system. Participants, particularly those who worked directly with victims, noted that there was no set profile or a standard array of characteristics for an individual who has been a victim of trafficking or labour exploitation. Depending on if it were instances of sexual exploitation or labour exploitation, victims could be male or female, young or old. They noted that the underlying theme in most of these instances is the vulnerability of the individual, who could find themselves at an elevated level of risk for a variety of things. As was highlighted in the earlier chapters, identity features and social factors play a tremendous role and this was certainly the case for Estonia. Gender

inequality, poverty, and social issues were the factors that contributed to trafficking in Estonia as these conditions left many in the country vulnerable.

Like in other parts of the world, gender inequality was one of the resounding factors mentioned that was connected with trafficking. Despite its Nordic image, Estonia is still fairly traditional in terms of gender, as was revealed in the interviews and in further research. “Mehe kodu on maailm, naise maailm on kodu (Man's home is the world, woman's world is her home?)” was the name of a report done to investigate the gender perceptions in the country (Estonian Statistics, 2011). Overwhelming it was revealed that Estonian society largely saw women as responsible for children and the home and men as the heads of the household. Such seemingly harmless notions about gender can have very negative effects on society as the research has shown. Olena V. had this to say about how the implication of the abuse of gender roles for both genders: “It’s easy to abuse any gender role. To abuse male in labour because they have to work harder to provide money for the family. To abuse [over-sexualised] images of women, [...] telling girls you can just be pretty and make money out of it”. What is also interesting about gender dynamics in Estonia is that this is not in keeping in line with the Scandinavian image it tries to project for itself. This could be where a certain dissonance is occurring in Estonia between how the country would like to see itself and how it actually is. If gender inequality has been an acknowledged issue, and it has been given Estonia's annual national action plans to address the issue, and the issue is still on-going as it is, one can argue that perhaps the public do not believe that gender inequality can be such a large part of the problem or related to trafficking. Sirle B. highlighted this phenomenon when she noted how gender inequality and related issues such as sexism were accepted as part of the culture and was something people did not want to talk about. In the interview she notes her shock at some of the ads in Estonia that normalise objectification of women. These ads, she suspects, were they to appear in Scandinavian countries would illicit important questions there that people are not asking in Estonia. Many other participants noted that Estonians did not find these gendered roles a problem and saw no issue with gendered questions for women. Participants mentioned how it was common for society to suggest that women do not need a proper education or a proper job and that women dependent on the support of men was more

innocuous than it would seem. The literature shows us that this is simply not the case. While Estonia is not on par with countries such as India or parts of sub-Saharan Africa where gender preferences are so explicitly in favour of men such as to drastically affect the lives of women, Estonia still is not free of all the problems caused by gender inequality.

The inequality does not stop at only gender roles with more tangible results of its expression. This can be seen in Estonia's gender pay gap, among the highest in Europe with women earning just over 70 per cent of what men earned in 2007 (Anspal & Rõõm, 2010, p.1) and not much more even today. There are still notions held about gender-specific vocations and often times, jobs thought of as exclusively for women are paid less and valued less. And these are the instances where the woman gets the job! In other instances, women are encouraged to stay home, with one participant noted that “In Estonia, a woman is not whole if she does not have a child”. If a woman is applying for a job, it is not uncommon for her to be asked if she has children, and if not, when she plans to. Children can be viewed as damaging to a woman's career. It can also be difficult to plan a career while also be expected to handle important duties at home. Women complain that while they are encouraged to take parental leave, if they do, they often find a workplace that was not prepared for them upon their return. Notions of gender norms suddenly become less innocent as they not have meaningful implications for the ways which women that provide for themselves and their families. Due to gender inequality, women are more likely to fall into poverty and have to find new methods of survival often resorting to the informal sector, making them vulnerable to trafficking (Sassen, 2000).

Additionally, given the high levels of objectification of women in the country and as one participant noted Estonia's previous attempts to unofficially market itself as a country of beautiful women, it was common to assume that if women were working it would be at jobs in bars or restaurants or other fields where the emphasis was on their gender and appearance and not necessarily their skills. So strong was the stereotype of women staying at home that despite the fact that many women have degrees in Estonia they ultimately still choose to become housewives, reflecting the pressure put on women in the society to adhere to gender norms even in the absence of more concrete structural barricades. For women without an education, broader issues of gender inequality in society collide with

socio-economic issues that render them even more vulnerable. One participant referred to human trafficking, particularly for sexual exploitation as one of the most visible effects of gender inequality. In a society where women occupy a lesser status than men such a drastic outcome can be expected but what makes trafficking and gender inequality in Estonia so complex is that the public does not perceive such matters as inherently connected, in my opinion. This seems to be the broader issue with Estonia and the country's response to social issues.

If gender inequality leaves more than half of the nation in an inherently precarious position then additional structural factors compound this and expand the marginalisation to even more people. In Estonia, the drastic effects of economic and social transition during the independence period are still felt. Like most post-Soviet republics, Estonia in the 1990s was characterised by high rates of poverty and unemployment. While the country has gotten better these are still major issues today with more than one-fifth of the population, or 21.1 per cent living in relative poverty in 2013. The unemployment rate in Estonia, once over 15 per cent in 2010 following the recession, has shrunk to 6.7 in 2014 from 7.6 in 2013 (Eurostat cited by Statistics Estonia, 2015). While this is promising, unemployment is still a problem and combined with poverty is one of the leading reasons people fall victim to trafficking. Sirle B. noted that “we are now in a position in the country where a lot of our people are traveling away from Estonia and the purpose is usually unemployment. And we see that this is a big problem to our nation, to the family, to the government. Let's say it kind of touch every structure in Estonia”. This is true. Other participants noted how poverty, unemployment, and limited opportunities in Estonia were what drove individuals to consider risky ventures that ultimately lead to trafficking). As part of the EU, Estonians now more than ever can travel and see how their peers are living in other countries. As Estonia has integrated itself into the EU, achieving development and benchmarks that put it on par with other EU nations has been among the main priorities for the country. The result of this has been that despite steady and continuous growth as indicated by its OECD and World Bank evaluations over the year, Estonia suffers from unequal development. One participant, PM, stressed the effects of rural poverty as a factor as well, expressing what is held as a common sentiment that “if you're not in Tallinn then you don't exist to the state”.

Many areas outside of Tallinn and other urban regions do not share in the same benefits of development which has lead to not only concentrated poverty in certain areas but also the social issues that accompany that.

Given the nature of Estonia's social issues and the country's attempts to brand itself as a Nordic nation, one would expect a more robust social welfare scheme however this is not the case. Participants noted that Estonia's weak welfare system contributed to trafficking as its measures were an inadequate safety net. For instance, despite high levels of poverty and unemployment, Estonia's monthly unemployment benefits amounted to a daily rate of 4.01 euros or roughly 120 euros a month (Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, 2015) in 2015. Participants noted that this was not enough for individuals to cover basic needs not to mention the process of securing the benefits were complicated and the stigma associated with receiving them often outweighs the benefits. With such a substantial portion of the population already struggling, Estonia's high rates of trafficking don't seem too unexpected. As there is already a large pool of marginalise individuals to draw from, it stands that Estonia would have an increase risk of trafficking. As has been previously stated, while poverty contributes to trafficking, trafficking does not occur everywhere where there is poverty. What is necessary is other contributing factors that intersect with poverty and in Estonia the social issues that stem from financial instability contribute to trafficking.

As Sirle B. stated, unemployment and poverty has effects on society, the family and the country. Many participants noted that often victims of trafficking were coming from broken home where violence and material deprivation were common. Pille K. and Roman K. noted how in some instances, criminal organisations and brothels were run on a family model, with pimps or other criminals serving as the “Papa” or head of these groups who despite exploitation individuals also provided them with some sort of family structure. Victims of trafficking, particularly those who had been sexually exploited often experience physical or sexual violence at home before fleeing and falling victim to prostitution or labour exploitation. A disruptive family life was noted by some participants as contributing to vulnerability. Often times pimps, recruiters and other traffickers target those who are socially isolated or have no family support. Participants noted that it was harder to attract

girls who came from supportive and stable families when it came to sexual exploitation. Many of these individuals were found to be cognitively impaired as well especially when it came to sexual exploitation, with many of the women not completing high school and others not even middle school. A bigger issue for Estonia in the past years has been the issue of violence in the country, especially domestic violence and violence against children. Many of the issues Estonia is actively dealing with now are rooted in changes that occurred during the post-Soviet transition period so it stands to reason that part of the reason trafficking is as much of a problem today as it was in the past is that the social issues underlying trafficking have yet to be solved entirely.

One participant mentioned as much. Pille K., in her work as a monitor at a shelter for trafficking victims, argued that much of the social issues in Estonia have a root in Soviet issues or issues related to transition. Prostitution among other sorts of crimes first appeared, or better yet, became highly visible to the public following the collapse of the USSR. Pille K. noted that family dynamics were already affected during the Soviet times and whatever semblance that was maintained went away following independence and she was correct. There was a rise in alcoholism and domestic violence following the end of the USSR. Drug abuse, homelessness and further rupturing of society began to occur and while Estonia has made strides to address some of these issues, the fact that things like poverty, unemployment, and domestic violence continue to be big issues lends support to the belief that part of the reason trafficking exists is because these issues have not been dealt with enough or at least to the point where substantial portions of the population are not affected.

It is not to say that Estonia has completely failed to act on these social issues however social issues are only part of the focus of Estonia's development and the State's present response to trafficking is emblematic of their response to similar issues in the past. Many participants noted that in Estonian culture, the approach in regards to social issues is one of ignoring the problem in hopes that it goes away. Estonia has cultivated an image of itself abroad as 'E-Estonia', digitally connected this country is great for business and has unshackled itself from its Soviet past. To accept that the country is still dealing with remnants of its Soviet legacy reinforces how recent this change was. It also is at odds with the "good boy" that Estonia would like to be seen as or thought of, comments Sirle B. She



also notes that part of the reason working on trafficking issues is so hard is the difficulty the country has accepting that it really is a problem. If Estonia is still struggling to come to terms with poverty, unemployment and gender inequality as major issues for the country in general then of course it would be difficult to accept trafficking as well especially since the issue is so related to these factors. Many participants found similarities between what is happening now and in Estonia's response to the HIV/AIDS crisis over a decade ago.

As previously mentioned, following the collapse of the USSR, drug abuse rose as porous borders and new social conditions made drugs more readily available to a population with little experience using and much reasons to abuse them. Intravenous drug use became an epidemic, seemingly unacknowledged, and combined with the increase in prostitution, HIV/AIDS rates began grow, a phenomenon that took hold in many parts of the post-Soviet union. By 2001, the yearly number of new HIV infections peaked in Estonia with 1,474 cases (WHO, 2014, p.3). In 2007, three years after joining the EU, Estonia had the highest rate of diagnosis of any member in the Union, with this year marking an increase in funding for HIV/AIDS issues and more aggressive attempts to address the drug epidemic as PWID, people who inject drugs, accounted for 90 per cent of new HIV diagnosis in 2001 and IV drug use was still a common method of infection. Officials were slow to acknowledge that drug abuse was rampant and that it was connected to HIV/AIDS. It was not until the crisis reached a critical point in external perceptions, so when the EU got involved, that Estonia began coordinating a strategy plan, for 2006-2015, and funding to combat the increase in HIV/AIDS. Over the years the rates of new HIV cases has declined substantially with the end of 2013 only seeing 325 new cases (WHO 2014, p.3) and a total 8,702 cases of people living with HIV/AIDS. This would indicate that measures undertaken by the government since they started recognising this as an issue have been successful. This is encouraging however given where the dialogue is now on trafficking, it might take a few years for this issue to see similar levels of coordination and support like that given for HIV/AIDS. What Estonia's past experience with HIV/AIDS has shown is that the country is hesitant to acknowledge the role of social issues in affecting the broader wellbeing of the nation however once issues have been acknowledged there is hope that effective measures will be taken.

### **The Special Case of the Russian-speaking Minority**

Of special mention were the questions raised by the high rate of appearance of Russian-speakers among trafficking victims. Participants acknowledged that Russian-speakers were disproportionately represented, as was to be expected based on both the theoretical and Estonia specific research on trafficking. The nationalist policies implemented in Estonia following independence such as the Citizenship Law and language policies did serve to marginalise segments of the Russian-speaking minority community from the broader population. The interviews confirmed that Russian-speakers were disproportionately represented among victims, especially when it came to labour exploitation. Statistics from Living for Tomorrow indicate that sixty-four per cent of calls in the past year were from Russian-speakers. Pille K. noted that in her work as monitor at the shelters, most of the people she interacts with are Russian-speakers. While other participants noted that trends between Estonians and Russian-speakers have shifted over the years, relative to their portion of the population, Russian-speakers were still highly present. That Russian-speakers were disproportionately affected by sexual and labour exploitation in a country where they are a minority would lead one to consider the effects of ethnic tension and discrimination in contributing to this. However, during interviews another narrative with less sinister implications emerged giving reasons why Russian-speakers are so affected by trafficking.

While acknowledging that some Estonians do associate the problem of trafficking almost exclusively with the Russian-speaking minority, KL noted that what appears to be discrimination is actually the end result of socio-economic changes and ethnicity intersecting in the post-Soviet world. During the Soviet era, Russian-speakers were taken from different parts of the Union and sent to Estonia, many coming by choice. They were settled in the north-east region of the country, which was also a heavily industrial area, where they were put to work in factories. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, many such factories closed as the economy in Estonia shifted and the Soviet market was no longer available. This economic shift, a natural result of transition took on even more significance as it tied impoverishment to ethnicity at least in the north-east region. At independence, more than a third of Estonia's population consisted of Russian-speakers

including those from the Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian nationalities. The Russian-speaking minority was concentrated in Narva and other areas of the northeast which became depressed and impoverished once factories closed. This contributed to the increase in poverty and the high unemployment that now characterises the region. Such an analysis of the issue leads one to believe that this misfortune that befell the Russian-speakers was more about geographic location and less about ethnic identity. Kristiina L. even said as much, noting that it was only due to historical events that Russian-speakers were concentrated in this region. Had the area been primarily inhabited by Estonian-speakers, she believes that this region would still be impoverished and it would be Estonian-speakers who migrate to Tallinn or other areas in search of jobs and better opportunities. This is not entirely far off. The urban rural divide in Estonia was and is a very real issue for the country. Rural areas account for much of the same areas where poverty is concentrated. During the transition period this was also the case with rural poverty not only were more of the rural population impoverished but they were poorer than the urban poor. Under-employment and underemployment were major issues as well during this time with many farmers in rural areas producing mainly for self-consumption. This experience of rural poverty adds credibility to the belief that the impoverished state of the north-east is more a product of transition and its unpredictable consequences and less of systemic or intentional discrimination or prejudice against Russian-speakers, although the latter certainly contributes to the increase marginalisation of the community.

Among other possible reasons for the disproportionate rate of Russian-speakers also builds on the collapse of the labour market in the region. Once the factories closed, in addition to removing jobs from the region, they also left a workforce that was ill suited to adapt. Kristiina noted that often times people who worked in their factories were tasked with one duty or motion, such as pulling a lever or switch, all of this part of the Soviet Union's plans to make sure there was always full employment. These jobs were no longer necessary in a free market and they left workers with little to no skills making it difficult for them to compete in the new labour market. Compounding their lack of skills was the changes in language policy following independence. Many Russian-speakers had never learned Estonian or another language as Russian was the de facto and de jure language of

communication, especially in the north-east during Soviet times. Sirle B. and Kristiina L. highlighted this monolingual nature of the Russian-speaking community as another reason it faces disproportionate levels of poverty, unemployment and ultimately trafficking. Most Estonians know at least two languages, Estonian and Russian or Estonian and Finnish, which allows for better employment opportunities both in Estonia and in the countries nearest to it. While it is clear that additional considerations need to be made when analysing why Russian-speakers appear to be disproportionately affected by trafficking, ethnic tension that gives way to further marginalisation of the minority community cannot be ignored. Despite strides made towards integration over the years, especially at the state level in the form of the Law on Cultural Autonomy that helps ensure minority rights, cultural changes are moving slower. A recent report looking at where and with whom people prefer to live was published reflecting a study conducted in Tartu from 1998, 2008, and 2013. Researchers found that Estonians prefer to live next to other Estonians and that Russian-speakers and Estonians living separately is becoming more and more the case (Leetma et al, 2015). This trend raises concerns that cultural shifts needed to help support integration and reduce the marginalisation of the Russian-speaking community might be slow in coming and despite the lack of more explicit instances of prejudice; ethnic tension is still an issue. Russian-speakers are disproportionately marginalised given historical and economic events that have affected the regions of Estonia that they inhabit. As a result of this increased marginalisation, they account for more trafficking victims because they are more vulnerable than some of their Estonian counterparts though this is not due exclusively or conclusively to their ethnicity.

### **Enforcement and Efficacy**

In this final section of the analysis, we look at the enforcement measures Estonia has implemented and how effective they have been in combatting trafficking. Looking at the legislation, funding and action plans around trafficking it is clear that this phenomenon is not being ignored, especially at the State level. However, like the TIP, the research wonders if Estonia has done enough to tackle not only trafficking but the accompanying issues that contribute to it? Estonia has made substantial changes in its approach to human trafficking including the addition of the offence of human trafficking to the penal code in

2012 as well as the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings this past year. The question here however is not if Estonia is responding but how? What was important to analyse about Estonia's response to trafficking was how the issues that contributed to trafficking helped shaped the response and how effective policy responses were in preventing trafficking and responding to the needs of victims.

One thing to highlight is that in coordinating its response to human trafficking, Estonia has acknowledged that social issues underline the causes of trafficking and as such, must be remedied as a means of combatting trafficking. To this effect, trafficking is addressed under the broader topic of violence in Estonia and the national action plans and strategies developed to combat different types of violence. Trafficking is only one of the four parts that make up the Violence Prevention Strategy, the five year action plan for combatting violence in Estonia. Domestic violence, gender based violence and violence against and committed by children are the other parts. That Estonia couches its response to trafficking as part of its response to a broader social issue is promising. As has already been mentioned, there is overlap between trafficking and domestic violence on the ground level so it stands that attempting to address domestic violence will have positive influence on rates of trafficking. One participant noted that for many years domestic violence was a very taboo issue. It was never spoken about publicly and despite what was known about high incidences of domestic violence, it was only once the government began working on initiatives to bring domestic violence conversations into the open that the narrative around it began to change. It was no longer just an issue for the victim or their family but framed as an issue affecting the broader well being of the nation. More and more people came forward. More victims received services and more cases of domestic violence were prosecuted. This is the hope for human trafficking, that in addressing the issue especially and connecting it to broader social issues, in a few years time more and more victims of trafficking and cases will be addressed. While this may ultimately be the case, as it stands now Estonia can still make a few improvements regarding combatting trafficking that see addressing social issues at the root of their response.

One of the reoccurring themes in the interviews as well as something noted in the 2014 TIP report was the need to increase public awareness regarding trafficking in Estonia. Participants mentioned that while the public was more aware of trafficking there needed to be on-going campaigns that highlight the various forms of trafficking that can occur. The inability of the wider public to recognise certain situations as trafficking was discussed earlier as contributing to the discrepancy in the rates of reported cases. In addition to being able to identify trafficking, participants also expressed the need to change the public's attitude about trafficking and related social issues. Already noted are the gender inequality issues contributing to human trafficking. Part of the issue with inequality in the country is the gender stereotypes that give way to certain types of thinking that facilitate trafficking. There are gendered assumptions made regarding trafficking that limit the public's ability to recognise one form of trafficking while encouraging another form. The rise of trafficking in Estonia was closely associated with the growth in prostitution. As a result, trafficking has become almost synonymous with prostitution to the point that trafficking is often only conceived in terms of sexual exploitation. As a result the public were less able to identify instances where labour exploitation was possible. They were able to recognise situations of prostitution and sexual exploitation but less able to recognise how taking a job without a contract or moving to another country for work without knowing the local language could leave them vulnerable to labour exploitation.

Trafficking is gendered in Estonia as its primarily associated with sexual exploitation, of which the majority of cases are female victims. As such, labour exploitation which is predominantly male is invisible. And since trafficking has come to be associated with prostitution, attitudes regarding the latter have become problematic. KL referenced a nationwide survey previously conducted on the public's attitude toward prostitution which found that they were quite tolerant. People did not really care and thought that there would always be people who want to do it. Such a relaxed attitude to prostitution is problematic for trafficking because the two, while often conflated, are not the same. Again the emphasis regarding the difference is the use of force or threat as well exploitation that amounts to trafficking. Not all instances of prostitution are trafficking. And such relaxed attitudes of prostitution when applied to trafficking serve to minimise the problem to one of choice and

moral differences and not a gross injustice as trafficking is. There are converse constructs of trafficking in force at different levels of the issue. Kristiina lamented that the public assumes that trafficking victims who are sexually exploited are not victims because like prostitution they have a choice. Despite tolerating prostitution there is a stigma around the issue and this same stigma is extended to victims of trafficking. Roman complained about the stigma facing victims that he encountered when trying to find services. In some instances, he was told there were no spaces for prostitutes at a certain shelter because it was for “normal women”. As a result of the stigma, victims are less likely to want to come forward, fearing they will be ridiculed or judged by others for being “tricked” in exploitation. Given the various intersecting issues that inform the public's awareness and perception of trafficking, a comprehensive approach that not only addresses the metrics of trafficking but educates on how social issues and social perceptions contribute to the phenomenon.

One of the major challenges to on-going prevention campaigns and anti-trafficking work overall is the limited funding available. The Trafficking in Human Beings report compiled by the Ministry of Justice report states the cost of activities to combat trafficking in human beings at almost 320,000 euros in 2013 (Leps, 2014, 30). The 2014 US Tip department disaggregates this amount showing that the Ministry of Social Affairs, the ministry tasked with organising victim services, provided approximately 100,000 Euros to two shelters for trafficking victims in 2013. The Social Security Board allotted over 80,000 Euros for medical expenses and substitute homes though it only disbursed approximately 5,000 Euros. The government also provided an NGO with approximately 75,000 Euros for operation of an anti-trafficking hotline though the report did not specify which NGO (USDOS, 2014). The least amount of funding is given to trafficking prevention which is not limited to only awareness campaigns. Various new initiatives such as the appointment of an Ombudsman who would also serve as an independent rapporteur on trafficking outside of the government, a special task force for trafficking as well as comprehensive training for all officials who work on trafficking issues have been debated but the resounding reason why many are stalled is the limited funds available for prevention, enforcement and victim services related to trafficking. Moving forward, Estonia should

increase funding for the Violence Prevention Plan overall given the intersection of the four issues the plan covers. Additionally, more social spending would help address some of the issues related to poverty and unemployment. In the national budget for 2014-2018, Estonia noted that in 2013 social expenditures accounted for only 17.7 per cent of the GDP, ranking Estonia third among the lowest in OECD countries (Estonian Ministry of Finance, 2014, p.85). The government intends to devote 48 per cent of the GDP to social and healthcare expenditure by 2016-2018. One can hope that the reinforcement of the social safety net in Estonia leads improves the lives of the country's most vulnerable residents.

Another matter regarding funding in Estonia that raises questions about the State's commitment to combatting trafficking is the approach taken to NGOs regarding funding and their role in trafficking prevention and victim services. The change in the Victim Support Act effectively reduced the power of NGOs to designate victims and in turn offer services. Many participants were frustrated as they felt the law actually prevented them from helping victims. It has been the source of much tension between NGO and state officials in what has otherwise been described as a very cooperative and meaningful partnership. Those who work in the NGOs feel that they were viewed as equal partners for the most part and that their expertise and knowledge are respected. Despite this on-going partnership and the work that has been over the years by Eluliin, under which is housed ATOLL and Living for Tomorrow, as the two major organisations working on trafficking prevention and services, neither organisation is funded on a permanent basis, instead operating on a project status and receiving state funds annually from the Ministry of Social Affairs. External funding has been possible, which is the case of Living for tomorrow for instance who receive funds from the Norway Financial Mechanism however these organisations still need State funding. Given the limiting powers of the VSA and the fact that these organisations are subject to yearly application cycles in order to renew funds for basic services one has to question the State's commitment to working with NGOs as equal partners. These two issues affect the NGOs ability to work with victims and provide services. NGOs are the first point of contact with victims. They know the people behind the trends. They know how to identify vulnerable people at risk for trafficking as well as vulnerable points in society that contribute to it and as such their value in the fight against



is crucial. Most participants agreed, noting that while the state coordinated and funded services, it was the NGOs who delivered. Moving forward, the current partnership between NGOs and the State looks to be strengthening as both parties understand the conditions the others are working under and the difficulty posed by things like the changes to the Victim Support Act as well as funding that limits the actions of both sides. The will of the individuals is there however as those who are members of the anti-trafficking roundtable expressed confidence in their colleagues as not only being knowledgeable on the matter but also genuinely committed to addressing the various issues that contribute to trafficking.

Such cooperative work will be necessary in the fight to combat trafficking. As difficult as it is to discern the amount of victims or if the rates are truly increasing, the underlying social issues are still at play leaving individuals vulnerable. Adding to this is the evolution of the forms of trafficking as well as changes made by criminals to adapt. Participants noted the changing forms of trafficking and exploitation they were seeing. Traffickers are finding new ways to exploit women including continuing sexual and labour exploitation but also using victims as mules for drug trafficking. There are also increasing numbers of migrants coming and being exploited in Estonia. Participants were not sure if Estonia was ready to handle the rise in migration from non-traditional countries. In addition to concerns about xenophobia was the fact that in some instances these migrants were being exploited in Estonia like Estonians were abroad. This is but a hint of some of the changes that could occur in the way human trafficking takes shape in the future. Among the more worrying trends that came up in interviews was the rise of fictitious marriages as well as self-prostitution. These issues bring to light the role of “choice” and how it complicates matters related to exploitation.

Estonia made pimping and aiding prostitution criminal offences effectively criminalising the buying of sex but leaving a grey area regarding the selling of sex. Roman notes that since the change in the law prostitution is now a social problem and not a criminal one. Radical feminist analyst advocates criminalising prostitution which is viewed as inherently linked to trafficking. The belief was that abolishing prostitution would lead to a decline in trafficking but this is not the case. In the particular manifestation of trafficking in Estonia, the radical feminist tendency to gender trafficking has in turn minimise the

inclusion of labour trafficking, especially when it affects males in the broader construct of trafficking. The same social issues contribute to both prostitution and trafficking but in banning prostitution only part of the problem was addressed. As these issues give way to more instances and newer forms of exploitation, rates of trafficking will increase. The complexities of trafficking in Estonia continue as the rise of fictive marriages and self-initiated prostitution raise questions similar to those considered in the feminist debates. One of the criticisms made by liberal feminist regarding early initiatives in the anti-trafficking movement was the conflation of sex work and trafficking. Radical feminists insist that all sex work is exploitation as no one willingly chooses to engage prostitution but changing trends in Estonia challenge this. More and more Estonian women are engaging in new types of behaviours that leave them vulnerable to exploitation. Among them are fictive or “sham” marriages wherein Estonian women marry third-country nationals in order for him to get EU citizenship through here. Another trend is the increase in women who willingly engage in prostitution and solicit clients on their own behalf. This usually takes the form of women posting something online or responding to similar ads. While the buying of sex is illegal in Estonia, selling of sex is still legal. While these activities may appear to present less of a risk than previous forms of prostitution, participants highlighted that risks were still inherent. Some countries have passed laws against fictive marriages meaning that should a woman get caught she is now a criminal. Additionally, these situations may change over time becoming more than victims anticipate or such were the concerns expressed by participants. A 2014 report featuring the annual statistics for Living for Tomorrow shows that they had two cases that year (Living for Tomorrow, 2014). Based on interviews, participants, especially those who work at NGOs think that this number will rise as time passes. Despite the appearance of choice and while these cases of willing engagement with risky situations is fairly recent, given the conditions outlined in this paper it can be assumed that those who do so are driven by the similar, if not the same, social and structural issues that lead others to activities more traditionally associated with trafficking. As Olena V. noted, NGOs and the state have a lot of catching up to do in regards to new trends; as the economic situation changes, people try to find new opportunities and criminals try to find more financially profitable methods. The social issues remain in the background setting

the context for these things to manifest as trafficking. Until social and structural issues are adequately addressed, trafficking will continue to be an issue and new forms will continue to emerge.

## CLOSING REMARKS

In conclusion, the interviews served to not only answer many of the research questions but also raised new issues to consider. While it is clear that Estonia has issues with human trafficking, questions around the metrics of trafficking in Estonia make it difficult to ascertain the degree of this trafficking problem. This in turn should urge caution in regard to accepting any measure of trafficking without further insight into methodology. It was also found that social and structural issues were contributing to rates of trafficking as they led to marginalisation of increasing portions of the population. While having some significance, issues of nationalism and ethnic tension between Russian-speaking Estonians and the broader society is not the most significant issue affecting human trafficking. Social and structural issues still contribute to current rates of trafficking in Estonia that while disproportionately affecting Russian-speaking Estonians, also makes many Estonians vulnerable as well. Further funding and work should be focused on victim identification services. This should include new methods to streamline the process of identification as well standardizing trainings on identification of trafficking victims and providing more of these trainings for relevant agencies. There should also be permanent funding for the NGOs that provide these services as well public education. Regarding public awareness, there should be more initiatives for more frequent campaigns and these campaigns should help the public connect trafficking to their daily lives. Estonia should also think critically before embarking on any economic measures that reduce public funding for social or welfare issues.

For a nation that counts itself among the Nordic nations, work and improvement on unemployment, poverty alleviation, and family and social services is needed. In the current economic climate it is clear that the country is still recovering from the recession though rates of unemployment have declined and stabilised. There are still factors pushing people to migrate or to turn to illicit means for survival which indicates that the Estonian

government as well as the society are not providing enough for all of its citizens. Only time will tell but in the meantime, Estonia is becoming more aware of the intersecting issues that contribute to the on going problem of human trafficking and the nation is taking steps to try to combat the problem. The researcher was impressed by not only the level of expertise of those interviewed but the personal motivation that seem to drive many of the participants. These participants seem to view the matter combatting trafficking and addressing broader social issues in Estonian society of similar importance to Estonia's development as economic or technologic progress. This is the type of attitude needed to tackle a problem as complex as human trafficking. It is this researchers hope that the country "marketed as the purveyor of innovative solutions' (Berg cited in Smith, 2008, p.424) can find one that works to address trafficking and the social ills that contribute to it.

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## APPENDIX A – PLAIN LANGUAGE FORM (ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN)



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### Plain Language Statement

Research Project: Identity and the Politics of Othering: Human Trafficking in Post-Soviet Estonia

You are invited to participate in the above research project, which is being conducted by Tiffany Richards (masters candidate) in the International Masters in Russian, Central, and East European Studies at University of Glasgow and the University of Tartu. This research is supervised by Dr. David Smith of the University of Glasgow and Dr. Anna Markina and researcher Aet Annist at the University of Tartu. Your name and contact details were provided by your organisation and colleagues working in the field of human trafficking in Estonia. This project will form part of Ms. Richards' masters dissertation, and has been approved by the University of Glasgow Ethics Committee.

The aim of this study to capture a more up-to-date picture of human trafficking in Estonia. In doing so, it is important to include the thoughts and perspectives of those closest to the issue. Should you agree to participate, you would be asked to complete an interview where you would be asked questions about your background, your work, and your thoughts on human trafficking and related issues. With your permission, the interview would be tape-recorded so that we can ensure that we have a record of what you say. When the transcription is completed, a copy of the transcript will be provided to you in order to verify what you have said or make any deletions. In addition to discursive analysis and statistical data, interviews will serve as empirical data, they may reflect themes that appear in literature on human trafficking and related issues. The interview should last between 60 but no longer than 90 minutes. The interview may end at the participants request.

Steps will be followed to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of your response should you request it. Pseudonyms will be used in the final report. Your contact details will be kept in a different password-protected computer file from any interview content. We will remove any references to personal information that might allow someone to guess your identity through . Additional measures can be undertaken at participants request.

Once the dissertation arising from this research has been completed, you will be sent a copy of the final manuscript should you request so. It is also possible that this dissertation, and thus research data, will be presented at academic conferences and similar venues. All personal data will be kept securely with the researcher and deleted following the notification of awarded status for dissertations in the fall of 2015. All electronic files will be permanently deleted and physical notes will be shredded.

Please be advised that your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Should you wish to withdraw at any stage, or withdraw a completed interview, you are free to do so without prejudice.

If you would like to participate, please indicate that you have read and understood this information by signing the accompanying consent form and returning it in the envelope provided. The research will then contact you to arrange a mutually convenient time for you to complete the interview.

Should you require any further information, or have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact either of the researchers; Ms. Richards: [2083792R@student.gla.ac.uk](mailto:2083792R@student.gla.ac.uk), Dr. Smith: [David.Smith@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:David.Smith@glasgow.ac.uk), Dr. Markina: [Anna.Markina@ehi.ee](mailto:Anna.Markina@ehi.ee), Ms. Annist: [Aet.Annist@ehi.ee](mailto:Aet.Annist@ehi.ee). Should you have any concerns about the conduct of this project, you are welcome to contact the College Research Ethics Committee, and Dr. Sharon Wright, who serves as the School of Social and Political Sciences Convenor on the College Research Ethics Committee.



## Форма Согласия Участия

Название Проекта: Идентичность и политика: Торговля Людьми В  
Постсоветской Эстонии

Приглашаем Вас принять участие в вышеназванном исследовательском проекте, который проводится Тиффани Ричардс (кандидат на звание магистра) в рамках программы Международной Магистратуры в Сфере Исследований России, Центральной и Восточной Европы в Университете Глазго и Университете Тарту. Это исследование проходит под руководством доктора Дэвида Смита из Университета Глазго, доктора Анны Маркиной и исследователя Аэт Аннист из Тартуского университета. Ваше имя и контактные данные были предоставлены вашей организацией и коллегами, работающими в области торговли людьми в Эстонии. Этот проект будет включен в диссертацию мисс Ричардс; также, он был одобрен Комитетом по Этике Университета Глазго.

Целью данного исследования является получение более свежей картины касательно торговли людьми в Эстонии. Особенно важно при этом включить мысли и взгляды людей, соприкасающихся чаще всего с этой проблемой. Если вы согласны участвовать, мы попросим вас пройти собеседование, где вам зададут вопросы о вашем опыте, вашей работе, и ваших мыслях по вопросам торговли людьми и всем, что с этим связано. С вашего позволения, интервью будет записано на магнитофон, так что мы можем гарантировать, что у нас будет запись о том, что вы говорите. Когда запись и расшифровка будут завершены, копия стенограммы может быть предоставлена Вам по Вашей просьбе с целью проверки или удаления какой-либо информации. В дополнение к тому, что респонденты станут объектами дискурсивного анализа и статистической обработки, они также будут служить источниками эмпирических данных; они могут дать информации касательно тем, которые появляются в литературе по проблеме торговли людьми и связанных с этим вопросов. Интервью должно продолжаться от 60, но не более чем 90 минут. Интервью может быть окончено по просьбе участников.

Будут предприняты все возможные шаги, чтобы защитить анонимность и конфиденциальность вашей деятельности в соответствии с вашим желанием. В окончательном докладе будут использоваться псевдонимы. Ваши контактные данные будут храниться в отдельном от интервью, защищенном паролем файле компьютера. Мы удалим все ссылки на личную информацию, которая может позволить кому-то угадать Вашу личность. Дополнительные меры могут быть предприняты по запросу участников.

После того, как диссертация, являющаяся результатом данного исследования, будет

завершена, вам будет выслана копия окончательного варианта рукописи, если Вы того пожелаете. Также возможно, что эта диссертация и, следовательно, данные исследования, будут представлены на научных конференциях и в других подобных местах. Все личные данные будут надежно храниться в тайне исследователем и будут удалены после уведомления о полученном статусе диссертации осенью 2015 года; все электронные файлы будут удалены и физические записи будут уничтожены.

Пожалуйста, обратите внимание, что Ваше участие в этом исследовании является полностью добровольным. Если вы хотите прекратить свое участие на любой стадии исследования, или изъять законченное интервью, вы можете сделать это безоговорочно.

Если вы хотели бы принять участие, пожалуйста, укажите, что вы прочитали и поняли данную информацию, подписав соответствующую форму согласия и возвратив ее в конверте. Мы свяжемся с Вами, чтобы договориться об обоюдно удобном времени интервью.

Если вам потребуется какая-либо дополнительная информация, или у вас возникнут проблемы, пожалуйста, обращайтесь к любому из исследователей; Г-жа Ричардс: 2083792R@student.gla.ac.uk, д-р Смит: David.Smith@glasgow.ac.uk, доктор Маркина: Anna.Markina@ehi.ee, г-жа Аннист: Aet.Annist@ehi.ee. Если у вас есть какие-либо опасения по поводу проведения этого проекта, вы можете связаться с комитетом колледжа по этике научных исследований, и с доктором Шэрон Райт, которая является руководителем секции высшей школы социальных и политических наук Комитете колледжа по этике исследований.

## APPENDIX B – CONSENT FORM (ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN)



University  
of Glasgow | College of  
Social Sciences

### Consent Form

**Title of Project:** Identity and the Politics of Othering: Human Trafficking in Post-Soviet Estonia

**Name of Researcher:** Tiffany Richards

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the Plain Language Statement for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
3. I agree to take part in the above study.
4. I consent to interviews being audio-taped.
5. I acknowledge that copies of transcripts can be returned to participants for verification.
6. The procedures regarding confidentiality have been clearly explained (e.g. use of names, pseudonyms, anonymisation of data, etc.) to me.
7. Select only one of the following:
  - I would like my name used and understand that what I have said as part of this project will be used in reports, publications and other research outputs so that anything I have contributed to this project may be recognised.
  - I do not want my name used in this project.
8. I understand that my anonymity and confidentiality will be preserved should I request this and that protective measures will be taken to make sure my information is secure.
9. I acknowledge that research data gathered for the study may be published provided identifying information is not disclosed.
10. I am aware that should I can contact the College Research Ethics Committee at University of Glasgow should I have any complaints about the conduct of this research.

_____ Name of Participant	_____ Date	_____ Signature
_____ Researcher	_____ Date	_____ Signature



## Форма Согласия

**Название Проекта: Идентичность и Политика: Секс-торговли на Постсоветском Эстонии**

**Имя исследователя: Tiffany Richards**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the Plain Language Statement for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.  
Я подтверждаю, что я прочитала и понимала “Простный языковый Заявление” для этого исследования и имела шанс чтобы дать вопросов.
11. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.  
  
Я понимаю что мое участие – добровольное и что я свободна снять участие в любое время, без причин.
12. I agree to take part in the above study. Я согласен участвовать в этом исследовании.
13. I consent to interviews being audio-taped. Я даю согласие на интервью записывается.
14. I acknowledge that copies of transcripts can be returned to participants for verification. Я признаю что копии транскриптов/стенограм могут быть возвращены (возвращать)к участникам для проверки.
15. The procedures regarding confidentiality have been clearly explained (e.g. use of names, pseudonyms, anonymisation of data, etc.) to me.
16. Select only one of the following: Выберите один из следующих,
  - I would like my name used and understand that what I have said as part of this project will be used in reports, publications and other research outputs so that anything I have contributed to this project may be recognised.
  - Я хотела бы использовать свое имя и понимаю то, что я сказала как часть проекта будет использоваться в докладах, публикациях и других результатов исследования и что-либо я сдала проект, он может быть заметно.
  - I do not want my name used in this project. Я не хочу использовать свое имя в етом проекте.
17. I understand that my anonymity and confidentiality will be preserved should I request this and that protective measures will be taken to make sure my information is secure.

18. I acknowledge that research data gathered for the study may be published provided identifying information is not disclosed.
19. I am aware that should I can contact the College Research Ethics Committee at University of Glasgow should I have any complaints about the conduct of this research.

_____ Name of Participant	_____ Date	_____ Signature
_____ Researcher	_____ Date	_____ Signature

## APPENDIX C – QUESTIONS (TEMPLATE)

1. What is the nature of your work and how long have you been involved? (title, organisation, what do you do?)
  2. Why did you go into this work?
  3. How would you evaluate the problem of trafficking in Estonia? Is THB a big problem? What are the main problem areas in relation to THB (sex, labour, child prostitution, forced marriages, something else)??
  4. What are the issues specific to THB in Estonia?
  5. What are your thoughts on the public's awareness of trafficking in Estonia?
  6. What issues specific to Estonia do you think influence trafficking?
- What shall be done in Estonia to combat THB?
7. What do you think is the role of NGOs and States in combating trafficking? Do they have different or similar roles?
  8. Describe the relationship between your org. and the government?
  9. In your experience, what is the typical victim like? Is there one? (Perpetrator as well)
  10. In your opinion, how has the situation changed over the last 10 years?(has it improved or worsen?, any legislative or social changes?)
  11. Any final thoughts on trafficking in Estonia?