
Trafficking in Person Report by the US Department of State Launch (<https://www.activelink.ie/node/109164>)

Ireland continues to fail in meeting the minimum standards for supporting survivors of human trafficking, despite some progress made. Today saw the launch of the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report by the US Department of State, keeping Ireland at Tier 2 status, a position that has remained for the third year in a row. The report which ranks governments worldwide on their perceived efforts to acknowledge and combat human trafficking has outlined that while there has been some progress in Ireland in the past year, a lot more is still left to be done, especially in supporting survivors of human trafficking.

Ireland has been on a Tier 2 or lower status since 2018, as it has been failing to meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking.

Speaking today about the US TIP Report, Brian Killoran, CEO, Immigrant Council of Ireland, said “It is unfortunate to note that though there were 53 investigations into trafficking taking place in the year, only 2 prosecutions were initiated in 2023. Of crucial importance today, as an organisation that supports the survivors of this heinous crime, we echo the findings of the U.S. State Department regarding the critical need to ensure that survivors of trafficking for sexual and labour exploitation are protected and that a victim-centred and trauma informed approach is taken.

While the government have published a National Action Plan in 2023 which describes many of the advancements needed to secure recovery and integration for trafficked persons, little progress has been made in implementing these actions, as reflected by the 2024 Trafficking in Persons Report. We must bear in mind that in all instances, the individual in question is a victim of crime and, all too frequently, has endured months or years of the most horrific exploitation. Their progress to regain the life they once had should be our primary concern and should imbue a critical sense of urgency to all actions taken by the State and support organisations”.

The Report has noted that there was progress made in 2023 with the first specialized shelter for victims of trafficking being opened, however this is still not widespread enough and victims of trafficking are still being housed in Direct Provision Centres. Speaking about this issues Jennifer Okeke, Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, Immigrant Council of Ireland said “The reality for most victims of trafficking is that they are still being housed in Direct Provision, a system we all know has come under severe pressure in the past 24 months leading to an extremely diverse network of locations with varying standards and levels of safety. This issue, while exacerbated by current pressures, is not new. Organisations such as the Immigrant Council as well as international experts such as the United Nations Special Rapporteur and the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action Against Trafficking (GRETA) at the international level have repeatedly criticised the State on this deficiency. It is of extreme importance that priority be given to expanding upon the current small pilot model of dedicated shelter accommodation so that it can grow to meet the needs of survivors”.

Speaking about the Report, Mary Henderson, Solicitor, Immigrant Council of Ireland noted that “The Immigrant Council of Ireland believes that victims of human trafficking should have meaningful access to compensation. The report correctly highlights that no victim of human trafficking for sexual exploitation has received any compensation for the crimes committed against them and that Ireland must seek to remedy this failure to provide a suitable route for them to do so. The process to access compensation is incredibly onerous and next to impossible to navigate without legal representation – this must change so that survivors may fully access justice”.

The full TIP Report can be accessed here. (<https://www.state.gov/reports/2024-trafficking-in-persons-report/ireland/>)

Region

Nationwide

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