

TEMPLATE POLICY PAGE

Category:	Prostitution and Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation
Country:	Finland
Year:	/

Main policy page:	<p>Prostitution</p> <p>In 1998, the Social and Health Ministry set up a five-year project for the prevention of violence against women and prostitution. In this project prostitution was seen as a question of power relations between the sexes and as a form of violence. The project found demand of sexual services as a main cause of prostitution and proposed a general criminalisation of customers.</p> <p>Prostitution became a much discussed social problem in the 1990s. It is problematic to draw up a reliable estimation on the number of prostitutes operating in Finland. The same difficulties apply to estimates of the number of prostitutes working independently or for a procurer as well as the number of foreign prostitutes. Depending on the source, it is estimated that there are 8,000 to 15,000 prostitutes operating in Finland. Street prostitution has become next exceptional and markets are mainly in the Internet. A current problem to be solved is prostitution in Thai massage parlours.</p> <p>Trafficking</p> <p>The plan of action is based on three main dimensions that are mainstreamed throughout the text: a human rights and victim-based approach, the gender aspect, and a comprehensive and multidimensional approach.</p> <p>The plan of action includes a wide range of measures promoting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- identification of the victims of trafficking in human beings,- prevention of trafficking in human beings,- assistance to the victims of trafficking in human beings,- bringing traffickers to justice and- dissemination of information and awareness-raising. <p>http://formin.finland.fi/public/download.aspx?ID=14308&GUID={5B2E4E0E-3A5C-4DAE-B5F0-0FB794184D21}</p> <p>So far, there have been only a couple of court convictions for trafficking in Finland. The police have investigated some other cases without sufficient evidence for prosecution.</p>
Relevant legislation:	<p>Prostitution</p> <p>Prostitution is not a criminal act in Finland. However, selling or buying of sexual services on public places is criminalised in the public order law</p>

(612/2003). Buying sexual services from a minor or from a victim of sex business (trafficking in human beings or pandering/procuring) is also criminalised, as well as pandering (pimping).

The Penal Code of Finland: Chapter 20 - Sex offences (563/1998) Section 8 - *Buying sexual services from a young person* (650/2004): A person buying sexual services from person younger than 18 years of age shall be sentenced to a fine or imprisonment for a maximum of one year. An attempt shall be punished. Section 9 - *Pandering* (563/1998): fine or imprisonment for a maximum of three years. (650/2004) An attempt shall be punished. Section 9a - *Aggravated pandering* (650/2004): If, in pandering, considerable financial gain is pursued, the offence is committed in a particularly methodical manner, grievous bodily harm, a serious illness or a state of mortal danger or comparable particularly grave suffering is deliberately or through gross negligence inflicted on another person or the object is a child younger than 18 years of age and the offence is aggravated also when assessed as a whole, the offender shall be sentenced for aggravated pandering to imprisonment for a minimum of four months and a maximum of six years. An attempt shall be punished.

Trafficking

The Penal Code of Finland: Chapter 25 - Offences against personal liberty (578/1995).

Section 3 - *Trafficking in human beings* (650/2004)

Section 3a - *Aggravated trafficking in human beings* (650/2004)

Law relating to trafficking in human beings entered into force on 1 August 2004. Before this similar criminal acts were punished under different sections of the Penal Code, e.g., pandering. Sections 3 and 3a of the chapter 25 of the Penal Code state that person(s) who are found guilty of trafficking in human beings or of aggravated trafficking in human beings are sentenced for trafficking in human beings to imprisonment for a minimum of four months and a maximum of six years. An attempt shall be punished.

Link to an English translation of the Penal Code of Finland
(<http://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/1889/en18890039.pdf>)

Trends:

Pandering: The number of people convicted for pandering has increased significantly in recent years. A total of 128 persons were convicted for pandering between 2001 and 2004. The increase is significant, for during the preceding 15 years a total of 55 persons were convicted for pandering. This can partly be explained with increased police control.

Prostitution: There have been fluctuations in the Finnish prostitution. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union prostitution was rather limited. Present prostitution is dominated by persons from ex-Soviet countries, and it is supposed to be partly organised from abroad. Estimates of prostitutes vary between 8,000 and 15,000 depending on the source. At present street prostitution is exceptional. Markets have moved to the Internet.

However, it is clear that at the present foreign prostitution in Finland is remarkable both for its volume and in regards to the social problems related to it, and that basic research on the topic has so far remained insignificant. The areas in which the prostitutes are recruited are known, as are the general forms of the business, but there is practically no solid information available on the general organisation of the trade.

A topical problems is prostitution in Thai massage parlours. Almost every one of the 200 operating parlours offers sexual services. The state government seeks to find ways to integrate the Thai women to the Finnish society and to offer them alternative occupations.

Trafficking in human beings

It has been difficult to apply a quantitative research method in the gathering of information on trafficking in human beings, and trafficking in women in particular. Trafficking in women is connected on one hand to illegal immigration, and on the other to the general supply of commercial sexual services. In the case of Finland, it is possible to find a large number of instances of illegal immigration as well as of prostitution involving foreigners. A considerably lesser amount of data are to be found on organised trafficking in human beings and on procuring. However, in regards to the intersection of illegal immigration and procuring, i.e., trafficking in women, neither the authorities nor NGOs have been able to point to clear examples. This does not mean that trafficking in women would be absent in Finland. However, it has not been possible to approach the phenomenon by means of quantitative research methods, since the necessary information sources do not exist.

Contacts:

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