

Appendix II

Estonia

The Government is requested to include in the reports due

between 1 June and 1 September 2024

replies to the points raised in the following comments made by the
Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations

Forced labour

C029 - Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)

P029 - Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930

Estonia

Direct Request, 2022

The Committee welcomes the ratification by Estonia of the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930. Noting that the first report of the Government on the application of the Protocol has not been received, the Committee hopes that the Government will provide detailed information on its application, in accordance with the report form adopted by the Governing Body.

Articles 1(1), 2(1) and 25 of the Convention. Trafficking in persons. 1. Programme of Action. In relation to the measures taken to continue to combat trafficking in persons, the Committee notes that the Government refers to the adoption of the Violence Prevention Agreement for 2021-2025. The Committee further notes that Part VII of this Agreement aims at the prevention and better detection of crimes, improvement of the national legislation and increasing cooperation among the relevant actors in the field of trafficking in persons. **The Committee requests the Government to provide information on the concrete measures taken to meet the objectives set out in Part VII of the Violence Prevention Agreement for 2021-2025 relating to trafficking, and to indicate whether an evaluation has been undertaken in order to assess the impact of these measures. The Committee also requests the Government to indicate how it is ensured that the measures taken are part of a coordinated and systematic strategy.**

2. Law enforcement and penalties applied. The Committee notes the information provided by the Government that the number of prosecutions carried out under section 133 “trafficking in persons” of the Penal Code was 16 in 2017, two in 2018, four in 2019, and 11 in 2020. The Committee further notes that the number of persons convicted to imprisonment (ranging from one to six years) was 15 in 2017, five in 2018, 12 in 2019, and eight in 2020. The Committee also observes from the information provided by the Government in its 2022 reply to the questionnaire for the evaluation of the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings that different training activities on trafficking in persons and related crimes were undertaken for law enforcement bodies, including police officers, prosecutors, judges, labour inspectors and inspectors of the tax and customs board. **The Committee requests the Government to continue to provide information on the measures taken to strengthen the capacities of the law enforcement bodies to ensure a better identification of cases of trafficking, both for labour and sexual exploitation, and effective investigations that could lead to prosecutions and the punishment of the perpetrators. The Committee further requests the Government to continue to provide data on the application of section 133 of the Penal Code in practice, including the number of investigations, prosecutions, convictions as well as the specific penalties applied.**

3. Protection of victims. The Committee notes the Government’s indication that as from 2021, the Social Insurance Board is in charge of providing support services to victims of trafficking, in line with the Victim Support Act of 2004. In particular, support services include counselling of victims; assisting victims in communicating with state and local government authorities; translation and interpretation services; safe accommodation; vocational training; catering; psychological assistance; and other services necessary for physical and psycho-social rehabilitation of victims. The Government also indicates that the guidelines for identifying and supporting victims of trafficking were renewed in 2019, in cooperation with all the relevant counterparts, including state and local bodies and the non-governmental organizations. The Government further indicates that a new Victim Support Act is currently being drafted. The draft act specifies principles in relation to the treatment of victims, cooperation, and data exchange in the field of trafficking in persons. It also defines the requirements for specialists working with victims of trafficking. **The Committee encourages the Government to continue to take measures to ensure that victims of trafficking are provided with appropriate protection and assistance for their recovery and rehabilitation and to facilitate their access to justice and reparation. The Committee requests the Government to provide detailed information on the number of victims identified and the number of victims who benefited from support services and the types of services provided.**