

Human Trafficking

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Human trafficking is the act of transporting people from one country or area to another for purposes of exploiting them for forced labor or as sex workers. Human trafficking can be equated to slave trade. The victims of human trafficking are usually lured out of their home with force promises of high paying jobs. Once they fall victim to the lies, they are transported and find themselves working for little or no pay. They can also be kidnapped from their homes and taken to other areas or countries forcefully. The human trafficking industry is a multimillion dollar franchise. There is a chain of people involved in making human trafficking possible. From the victim's country of origin to the country they are trafficked into.

Victims of human trafficking are sometimes transported so crudely that the government never finds out that they are in the country. One of the ways that people are trafficked is by using small boats. The boats are hard to locate on radar and they go undetected. An example of accounts of human trafficking via boats is *The Boat People*. It is an account of Vietnamese refugees who fled from Vietnam at the height of the war. Some of them fall victim to human trafficking as they ran from the war. In the year 1975-1977, [Vietnamese authorities tried to stop the boats carrying the refugees](#)<sup>1</sup>. These led to the start of the trafficking business. Wealthy Chinese businessmen would finance the boats and Vietnamese who wanted to use the boats had to repay with unpaid labor when they got to China. Some of the Vietnamese had to result to being commercial sex workers in order to repay the debt incurred during their entrance to China. The Chinese businessmen used a lot of money to get them to China, including bribes for corrupt government officials and they had every intention of getting their money's worth.

Figure 1

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<sup>1</sup> Grant, Bruce, ed. *The Boat People: An Age Investigation with Bruce Grant*. Harmondworth, Middlesex; Markham, Ontario: Penguin Books, 1979.



Vietnamese boat people: they were refugees during the Vietnamese war (1965-78)

The issue of human trafficking is of grave concern, considering the continuous increase in human trafficking all over the world. In addition, it is astonishing that the average cost of a slave is only \$90 on a global level, which is one of the primary reasons behind the facilitation of human trafficking<sup>1</sup>. In addition, it has been observed that 80% of the human trafficking involves sexual exploitation whereas there are approximately 20 million to 30 million individuals still owned as slaves all around the world. Accordingly, the notion that slavery has been abolished is not applicable in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, considering 600,000 to 800,000 individuals who are trafficked every year across international borders<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, it has been revealed that a significant percentage of the revenue generated from human trafficking is associated with industrialized countries, which identifies the United States and various European States as major partners of the global human trafficking industry. Though human trafficking has targeted Africans and Asians, in

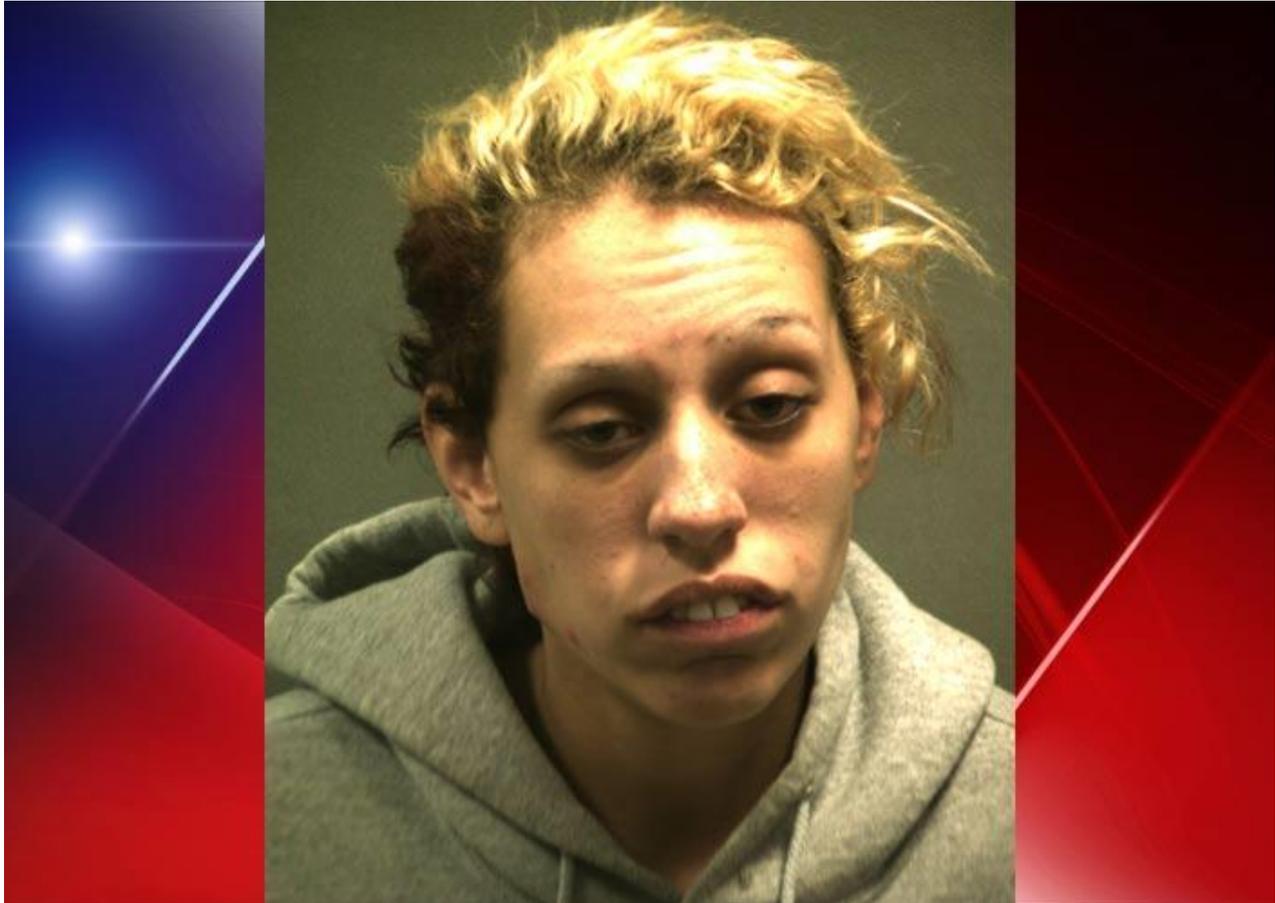
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<sup>1</sup> Greenbaum, Jordan, James E. Crawford-Jakubiak, and Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect. "Child sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation: health care needs of victims." *Pediatrics* 135, no. 3 (2015): 566-574.

<sup>2</sup> Hodge, David R. "Assisting victims of human trafficking: Strategies to facilitate identification, exit from trafficking, and the restoration of wellness." *Social work* (2014): swu002.

times, whites have been victims of human trafficking. This has happened especially to women who are trafficked to be sex workers. It is referred to as [white slavery](#).

Figure 2



A victim of white slavery, they are lured into becoming commercial sex workers.

To begin with, the concept of human trafficking, if viewed as a modern form of slavery, roots as far behind as to the Ancient Greece and Roman Empire. People could be bought and sold, borrowed and presented, exploited and killed because they were not treated as human beings. The forced labor of captives used to be as common as, for example, military service nowadays, and it flourished throughout the entire course of history. This is in line with the fact that child labor presents as one of the major reasons for human trafficking. In furtherance to this, majority of the young girls and boys, who are kidnapped or are entered into the global human trafficking industry through other means, are between the age of 12 years and 14 years<sup>3</sup>. Such young age reflects the innocence of the individuals as well as their limited resources, which

restrict them from helping themselves or acquiring help.

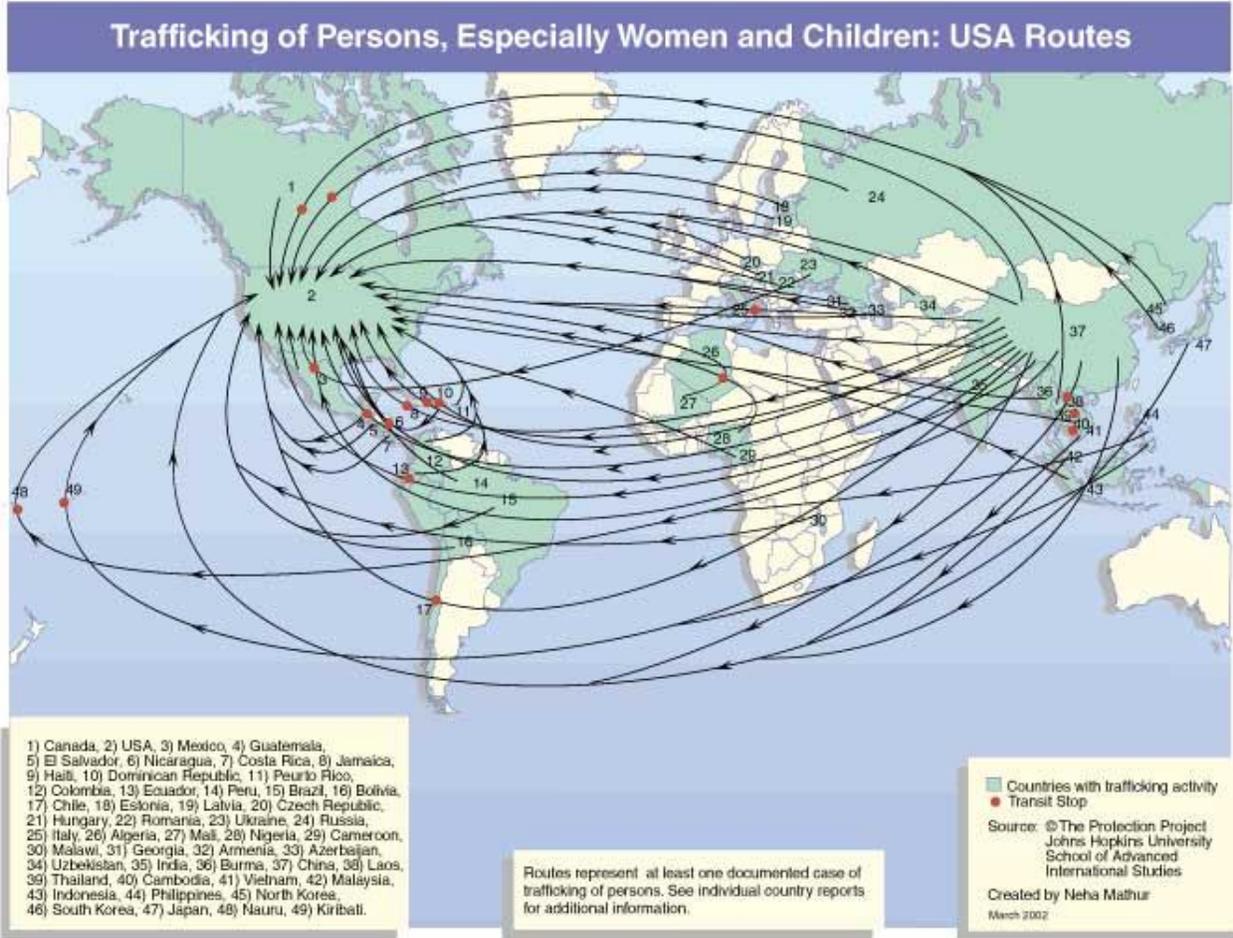
It would not be fair to consider human trafficking to be completely tantamount to slavery. “Although the forms are similar such as the involvement of some form of social relationship between the exploiter and the exploited in the old form of slavery, this relationship is often marked by violence, the use of force or threat of the use of force in order to maintain and subjugate the victim”<sup>4</sup>. Basically, human trafficking in its modern understanding originated “[around the year 1400](#), which is when the Portuguese began the slave trade from Africa to Portugal”<sup>5</sup>. Shortly after, the issue was disseminated to the American and Australian continents and reached the global scope. Besides, if by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, slavery had been abolished in most of the regions all over the world, human trafficking continues existing and thriving till the modern times although the establishment of the League of Nations at the

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<sup>3</sup> Hodge, David R. "Assisting victims of human trafficking: Strategies to facilitate identification, exit from trafficking, and the restoration of wellness." *Social work* (2014): swu002.

<sup>4</sup> Rahman, Majeed A., "Human Trafficking in the Era of Globalization: The Case of Trafficking in the Global Market Economy" in *Transcience Journal* 2 (1), 2011.

<sup>5</sup> Whitman, Amy, "Transnational Human Trafficking" in *Global Security Studies* 6 (3), 2015, 11-18.



The human trafficking map: thousands of people are trafficked through several countries every year.

beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century became a promising event, which raised a sincere hope for the problem to be eliminated.

Nowadays, human trafficking is facilitated and catalyzed by the process of economic and information globalization because it became easier to arrange and commit such a crime. This is the reason that human trafficking has emerged as the third largest crime industry in the world after illegal drugs smuggling and arms trafficking. On a global level, human trafficking is able to generate more than \$150 billion each year, from labor-based human trafficking alone, for its different stakeholders, of which half of the revenues are generated in industrialized countries<sup>6</sup>.

There are quite a few types of trafficking; in particular, cultural, religious, sexual, labor, pawning, and military one. All of them to a different extent are common in the modern world, which shows the inefficiency of law enforcement agencies and poor government approach towards resolving the issue of human trafficking.

The most rapidly growing form of human trafficking is certainly a sexual and a labor one, and the statistics say that their rates are not even likely to slow down. Human trafficking for sexual slavery or sexual exploitation on a commercial level represents 80% of human trafficking cases. This is also the reason that majority of the individual trafficked on a global level are females, as they are more profitable for the criminals due to their greater use as sex slaves and prostitutes. Among identified victims worldwide, 55 percent to 60 percent are women, and approximately 75 percent are women and girls<sup>7</sup>. Nonetheless, together with the growth of human trafficking frequency, the prevention strategies are also massively developed. Still, it has been observed that

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<sup>6</sup> Greenbaum, Jordan, James E. Crawford-Jakubiak, and Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect. "Child sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation: health care needs of victims." *Pediatrics* 135, no. 3 (2015): 566-574.

<sup>7</sup> Muftić, Lisa R., and Mary A. Finn. "Health outcomes among women trafficked for sex in the United States: a closer look." *Journal of interpersonal violence* 28, no. 9 (2013): 1859- 1885.

the growth of human trafficking on a global scale is dependent on the commercialization of all types of government institutions, which help different stakeholders of the global human trafficking industry to intervene in law enforcement and implementation procedures.

There are quite a few global organizations that are aimed at fighting against human trafficking and helping such victims to rehabilitate. “International Institutions such as Interpol, the U.N., and a host of NGOs are teaming up to combat human trafficking. Following the adoption of the Palermo Protocol initiated by the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, many states have enacted new antitrafficking laws”<sup>8</sup>. Those favorable tendencies show that the society is well aware of the existing problem and attempts to actively fight against it. This is crucial, as negative health outcomes have been observed for individuals who are trafficked across borders<sup>9</sup>. On the other hand, the rehabilitation of trafficked individuals in the civil society is a difficult task. “Restoration of wellness is usually a long and complex journey. Initially, the victims’ immediate needs for safety, shelter, and medical care must be addressed”<sup>10</sup>. In addition there are various psychological and psychosocial issues that are being faced by trafficked individuals, which restrict them from leading a normal life.

Accordingly, it is observed that the primary focus of law enforcement agencies and global organizations to stop human trafficking should be inclined towards controlling the issue by abolishing human trafficking as opposed to focusing on rehabilitation of trafficked individuals. [The CNN freedom project](#) is one of the organizations that have been geared towards ending slavery. Though it is a process that may take a while, it is safe to say that the strides being taken towards awareness have helped in ending human trafficking. More should be done and everyone should be involved in ending human trafficking.

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<sup>8</sup> Brewer, Devin, "Globalization and Human Trafficking" in *Topical Research Digest: Human Rights and Human Trafficking*, 2008, 46-48.

- <sup>9</sup> Greenbaum, Jordan, James E. Crawford-Jakubiak, and Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect. "Child sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation: health care needs of victims." *Pediatrics* 135, no. 3 (2015): 566-574.
- <sup>10</sup> Muftić, Lisa R., and Mary A. Finn. "Health outcomes among women trafficked for sex in the United States: a closer look." *Journal of interpersonal violence* 28, no. 9 (2013): 1859-1885

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