

SHADOW VICTIMS

THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE OF HUMAN BEINGS

VOLUME 1

Human Trafficking - A Global Perspective	2
The Modern World of Slavery	3
Evolution of Evil	4
Who Are The Players	5
Customers or Consumers of Human Trafficking	6
The Art of Control: Force, Fraud and Coercion	7
Indicators of Human Trafficking / How Can You Help?	8

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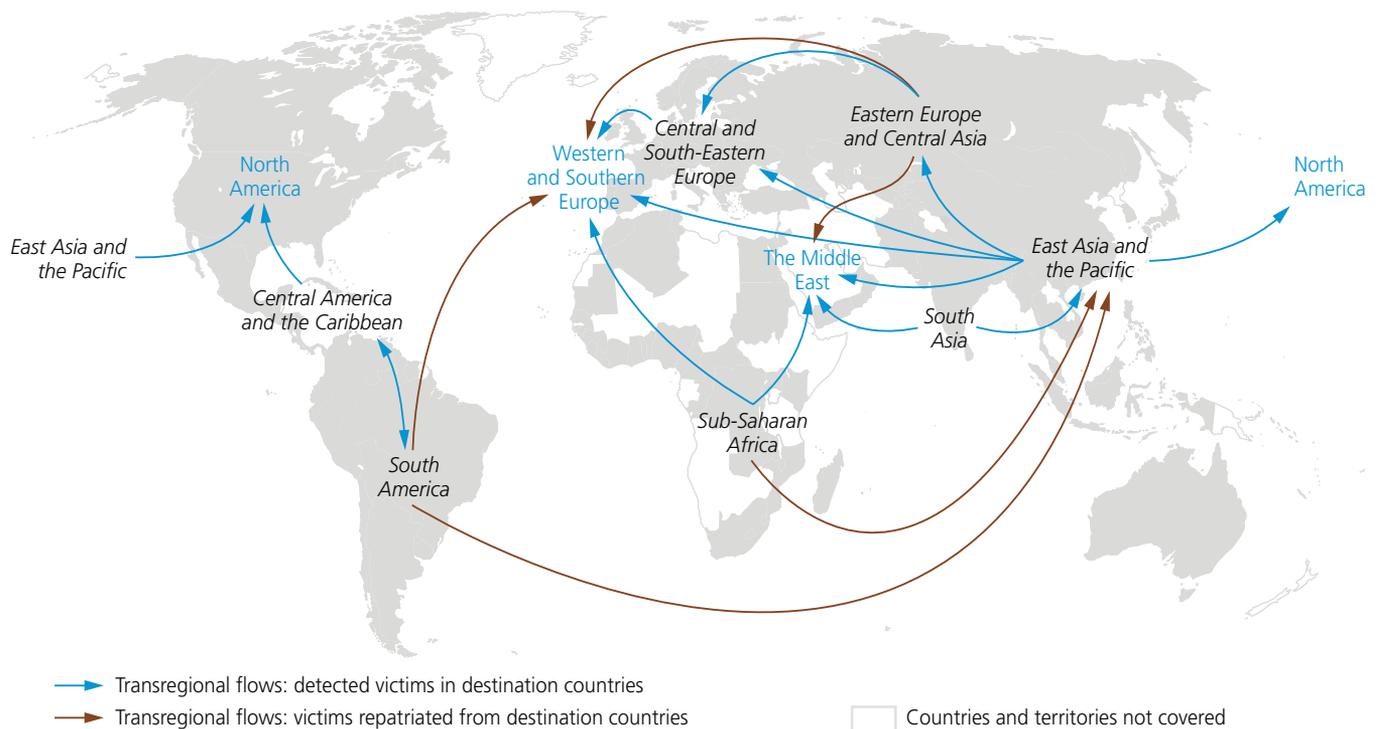


THE MODERN WORLD OF SLAVERY

The enslavement and exploitation of human beings has an extensive history dating to the earliest civilizations. Today, trafficking of humans is believed to occur on every continent and *it's believed that more people are enslaved now than in any other time in human history.*

Countries in Asia, such as Thailand and China, have been identified to be major focal points for international trafficking operations as are some countries in Africa.

The U.S. is not immune from international or domestic trafficking. According to a report issued by the University of Pennsylvania in 2001, as many as **300,000 children in the U.S. are at risk for commercial sexual exploitation, including trafficking, at any given time.** Runaway and homeless children in the U.S. are particularly susceptible to being domestically trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation.



**Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
2016 Trafficking in Persons: Global Patterns Map**

WHO ARE THE PLAYERS

Traffickers

Most traffickers live and/or operate from the following countries: Russian Federation, Nigeria, Ukraine, Albania, Thailand, Turkey, China, Poland, Bulgaria, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Mexico and Romania.

Human trafficking operations are operated by both men and women. There are also men-only and women-only operations. Sometimes a husband and wife team may run an operation. Traffickers are many times associated with the victim in some way. It is not unusual for traffickers to recruit acquaintances, neighbors and even family members to be sold into slavery.

The ages of traffickers can vary greatly as can their educational and occupational backgrounds; ***individuals as young as 19 have been involved in human trafficking schemes, some even have advanced educational degrees.*** It is most common, however, that traffickers have a criminal history. For instance, traffickers operating in the United States also actively participate in immigration fraud, money laundering, extortion, gambling, check forgery, child pornography and drug trafficking. Traffickers may also be involved in legitimate business, often as a cover for their illegitimate activities.

Traffickers are usually involved in a criminal network. Collaboration is critically important to maximizing profits. There are some experts who believe that human trafficking is a crime committed primarily by established criminal organizations such as the Russian Mafia and the Chinese Triads. These organizations have established networks of members who have ***(1) the skills required to commit the crime, (2) the capacity to use violence, which is used to dominate the criminal underworld and (3) the resources and political connections to bribe professionals in the criminal justice system.***

Profile of a Victim

The primary source countries for victims of human trafficking in the United States are Thailand, China, Mexico, Russia, Ukraine, and the Czech Republic.

It is believed that most victims are adult women and children. ***The most common forms of trafficking involve women being forced to work in the sex industry as prostitutes, exotic dancers or exotic entertainers.***

The children are primarily girls younger than 17 years of age and are most often victims of sex tourism operations. Sex tourism or child tourism occurs when people who live in one country travel to another country for sexual gratification. Mexico and Latin America have been locations where child tourism has been thriving.

Although most victims of trafficking are women and children, men are also victims. ***Men are most often forced to labor in agricultural fields to harvest crops, but they can also be made to work in construction, restaurants or even forced to work in the sex industry.***

Men comprise the smallest category. It is important to note however that much ***less is known about male victims of human trafficking. Because trafficking is underreported*** and because labor trafficking is not perceived to be a grave offense when compared to sex trafficking, male victims are often a forgotten population.



INDICATORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Source: Dept. of Homeland Security

Human trafficking is often “hidden in plain sight.” There are a number of red flags or indicators, which can help alert you to human trafficking. Recognizing the signs is the first step in identifying victims. The indicators listed are just a few that may alert you to a potential human trafficking situation.

Behavior or Physical State:

- Does the victim act fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense or nervous/paranoid?
- Does the victim defer to another person to speak for him or her?
- Does the victim show signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement or torture?
- Has the victim been harmed or deprived of food, water, sleep, medical care or other life necessities?
- Does the victim have few or no personal possessions?

Social Behavior:

- Can the victim freely contact friends or family?
- Is the victim allowed to socialize or attend religious services?
- Does the victim have freedom of movement?
- Has the victim or family been threatened with harm if the victim attempts to escape?

Work Conditions and Immigration Status:

- Does the victim work excessively long and/or unusual hours?
- Was the victim recruited for one purpose and forced to engage in some other job?
- Is the victim’s salary being garnished to pay off a smuggling fee? (Paying off a smuggling fee alone is not considered trafficking.)

- Has the victim been forced to perform sexual acts?
- Has the victim been threatened with deportation or law enforcement action?
- Is the victim in possession of identification and travel documents; if not, who has control of the documents?

Minor Victims:

- Is the victim a juvenile engaged in commercial sex?

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Getting involved with your local police department’s crime prevention efforts is a great start. Interacting with officers and requesting training and education on issues that affect your community is paramount in combating all types of crime, especially crimes as evil as human trafficking.

- Report suspicious activity to the police even if you think it doesn’t matter.
- Be on the lookout for people who appear to be under guard.
- Report children with unidentified or unexplained injuries to your police department or child services.
- Be involved with your police department and community. Only through partnership can we eradicate the shadow world of human trafficking.



If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, please call 911.

To report suspected human trafficking: 1-866-347-2423

To get help from the National Human Trafficking Hotline: 1-888-373-7888 or text HELP or INFO to BeFree (23733)