



Human Trafficking Information and Resources

From the USCCB's "Human Trafficking" Website:

What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking is a horrific crime against the fundamental rights and dignity of the human person. The United Nations Protocol on Human Trafficking defines it as "the "recruitment, transportation, harboring or receipt of persons by means of force, fraud or coercion."

According to the U.S. State Department, every country in the world is affected by trafficking. The United States is no exception, serving as a source, transit and destination country for men, women and children - both U.S. citizens and foreign nationals. According to the State Department's 2012 annual Trafficking in Persons Report, federal and state human trafficking data indicate more investigations and prosecutions have taken place for sex trafficking than labor trafficking in the U.S.; however, victim service providers reported assisting significantly higher numbers of foreign national victims in cases of labor trafficking than in cases of sex trafficking. Non-governmental and religious organizations, such as the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, have noted increasing reports of children recruited into criminal activity, particularly at the U.S.-Mexico border, as well as traveling sales crews and peddling rings utilizing the forced labor of children and adults.

Human Trafficking: Key Statistics

The United Nation's International Labour Organization's 2012 Estimate on Forced Labor provides some shocking statistics on the prevalence of human trafficking worldwide:

- Of the 20.9 million victims of trafficking and human slavery worldwide, 9.1 million victims (44 percent) have been trafficked internally or internationally.
- 11.8 million are subjected to forms of modern slavery in their place of origin or residence within their own national borders.
- Nearly 1.5 million victims are currently laboring in conditions of forced labor, sexual exploitation and servitude in the United States, Canada and developed countries of the EU
- .55 percent of forced labor victims are women and girls, as are 98 percent of sex trafficking victims.
- Children aged 17 years and below represent 26 percent of total victims, representing a total of 5.5 million child victims worldwide.

Why is Human Trafficking So Prevalent?

Owing to the lack of anti-human trafficking laws, enforcement of such laws where they exist, along with the ease and ability to re-exploit individuals, human trafficking has become one of the fastest growing sources of profits for criminal enterprises worldwide. Though efforts to combat it have been increasing, human trafficking has been experiencing a dramatic resurgence in recent years according to the ILO.

Traffickers lure vulnerable men, women and children with false promises of good jobs, an education, economic security and even love. Once lured, the traffickers are able to keep their victims from seeking help by confiscating identification documents, using threats of violence against the victim or their family, as well as subjecting the victim to physical, psychological and/or sexual abuse.

No sector or industry is immune from human trafficking. Victims have been identified in factories, restaurants, construction work, agricultural fields, hotels, spas, nail salons, and even private residences.

Catholic Social Teaching and Human Trafficking

The Catholic Church's vehement opposition to human trafficking is rooted in principles of Catholic social teaching, central to which is the sacredness and dignity of human life, and in the Catechism of the Catholic Church which "forbids acts or enterprises that, for any reason, lead to the enslavement of human beings – to their being bought, sold, and exchanged like merchandise, in disregard for their personal dignity." The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Migration's Statement On Human Trafficking clearly outlines the Church's teaching on human trafficking, noting "Human trafficking is a horrific crime against the basic dignity and rights of the human person. All efforts must be expended to end it."

For over a decade the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has been a leader in the U.S. and global response to human trafficking, and has even established an Anti-Trafficking Program within the Migration and Refugee Services Department to coordinate the response of the U.S. Church. Explore the links below to learn more about the Church's effort and to find out how you can help.

Other Great Resources

- + **Slavery Footprint** (www.slaveryfootprint.org): An interactive survey that estimates how many enslaved people you depend on for the goods you possess.
- + **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Human Trafficking FAQs** (Google UNDOC Human Trafficking FAQ): Basic background information on global human trafficking.
- + **Free2Work** (<http://www.free2work.org/>): Learn about what brands rely on forced labor to produce their items.
- + **Not for Sale: The Return of the Global Slave Trade--and How We Can Fight It** (Book by David Batstone; <http://www.notforsalecampaign.org>): Human trafficking generates \$32 billion annually and enslaves over 30 million people, half of them children. Award-winning journalist David Batstone profiles the new generation of abolitionists who are leading the movement. This groundbreaking global report is now updated with the latest findings, new stories, and statistics that highlight what is being done to end this appalling epidemic—and how you can join the movement.