



Graduate Women
International (GWI)

Policy Position

Human Trafficking

The Issue

Human trafficking is defined as "the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation".¹ This illegal movement of people is most commonly for the purpose of forced labour or commercial sexual exploitation. Trafficking is a global phenomenon which affects every country in the world. It is a ruthless and serious crime and a grave violation of human rights. Statistics show that women and girls make up approximately 70% of the detected victims of trafficking in persons.² The movement of people against their will can occur within national borders or between countries or regions. Trafficking is the fastest growing, multimillion-dollar form of international organised crime. It escapes notice in many countries because exploiters keep their victims on the move continually especially in areas where border security is lax or non-existent. There is an absence of qualitative and quantitative data.

Barriers to elimination of trafficking

- Extreme poverty and the exploitation of gaps in wealth between and within countries facilitating the exploitation of economically vulnerable people;
- Globalisation and professionalization of crime and criminal networks;
- Ignorance or limited understanding of human rights and individual rights;
- A demand for prostitution and sex tourism which incentivises traffickers;
- Prevalence of gender inequalities and discrimination including gender-based violence;
- Acquiescence or corruption of officials at border crossings or poor monitoring;
- Market for illegal adoptions; and
- Insufficient bilateral legal co-operation.

GWI's position

Human trafficking is a violation of human rights where victims are treated as commodities that can simply be bought and sold.

In order to address the main barriers to the elimination of trafficking in persons, GWI urges states to:

1. Support and implement the declaration and actions of the [World Declaration Against Commercial Exploitation of Children, Stockholm, 1996](#);
2. Sign and ratify the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (2003);

¹ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2003)

² https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/GLOTIP_2014_full_report.pdf



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3. Implement and enforce laws prohibiting the exploitation of children and women, especially in trafficking and prostitution;
4. Develop and support education and training programmes to raise the awareness of children and women as to how they can identify warnings or potential threats;
5. Develop and support education and training programmes to raise public awareness of the social, cultural and financial implications of sex trafficking and other forms of sexual exploitation;
6. Implement and enforce laws prohibiting the purchase of sexual services;
7. Provide safeguards to prevent work permits being granted to foreign workers where they act as a “shield” for the exploitation of children and women;
8. Assist victims of trafficking and exploitation through programmes designed to provide alternative ways to provide income generation and safe places to live, as well as through other practical means of assistance such as education and counselling;
9. Apply a gender lens to the area of human trafficking and make sure this concept is understood, especially by migration, police, border, social and health authorities;
10. Implement and enforce effective border security, in cooperation with other states, to assist in the identification and eradication of trafficking;
11. Provide basic vocational training to young women as part of the national education system so they can sustain themselves adequately without being vulnerable to trafficking; and
12. Implement and enforce laws ensuring added protection and well-being of adopted children.