

What is Human Trafficking?

Slated for the November 2012 ballot, Proposition 35 is an initiative that will fight back against human trafficking and the sexual exploitation of women and children.

“Children exploited through prostitution report they typically are given a quota by their trafficker/pimp of 10 to 15 buyers per night...Utilizing a conservative estimate, a domestic minor sex trafficking victim...would be raped by 6,000 buyers during the course of her victimization through prostitution”

[The National Report on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking: America’s Prostituted Children](#), Shared Hope International, May 2009, page 20.

Human trafficking is a criminal business that profits from *enslaving people* for sexual servitude and forced labor. It is the fastest growing and second largest criminal industry in the world today (second only to drug trafficking and tied with illegal arms), according to the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services](#).

Definitions

According to U.S. Federal law, human trafficking is defined as:

- Sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age; or
- The recruitment, harboring, transportation provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

According to the United Nations, human trafficking is defined as:

Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation

Modern Day Slavery:

Human trafficking is also known as modern day slavery. Human trafficking deviates from our historic view of slavery, making it hard to conceptualize. But ultimately, slavery today and 200 years ago share the same notion: It’s the notion that one person’s life, liberty and fortune can be under the absolute control of another, and be sold, bought, or used at the will of the owner.

Human Trafficking Statistics

Due to the covert nature of the crime and the lack of awareness of and funding for the issue, statistics can be difficult to obtain.

Global Statistics:

Estimates from the 2010 [Trafficking in Persons Report](#) by the U.S. Department of State

- Number of slaves around the world: 12.3 million
- Percentage of victims identified: 0.4% (*not even 1%*)
- Ratio of convicted offenders to victims identified: 8.5 to 100

U.S. Statistics:

Human trafficking exists all over the United States, but California is California is a hot spot for domestic and international human trafficking because of its large population, international borders, large economy, extensive ports, and metropolitan regions.

- The average entry age of American minors into the sex trade is 12-14 years old. [\[1\]](#)
- Many victims are runaway girls who have already suffered sexual abuse as children.
- California harbors 3 of FBI's 13 highest child sex trafficking areas in the nation: Los Angeles, San Francisco, and San Diego. [\[2\]](#)
- Foreign nationals are also brought into the U.S. as slaves for labor or commercial sex through force or fraud. [\[3\]](#)
- The prevalence and anonymity of the internet has fueled the rapid growth of sex trafficking, making the trade of women and children easier than ever before.

Human Trafficking is Not Human Smuggling

Human trafficking removes freedom of choice in contrast to cooperating into illegal entry into a country. Here are some of the differences:

Trafficking	Smuggling
Must contain an element of force, fraud, or coercion (actual, perceived or implied), unless the person is under 18 years of age involved in commercial sex acts.	The person being smuggled is generally cooperating.
Forced labor and/or exploitation.	There is no actual or implied coercion.
Persons trafficked are victims.	Persons smuggled are violating the law. They are not victims.
Enslaved, subjected to limited movement or isolation, or had documents confiscated.	Persons are free to leave, change jobs, etc.
Need not involve the actual movement of the victim.	Facilitates the illegal entry of person(s) from one country into another.
No requirement to cross an international border.	Smuggling always crosses an international border.
Person must be involved in labor/services or commercial sex acts, i.e., must be "working".	Person must only be in country or attempting entry illegally.

Table from U.S. DOJ's [FACT SHEET: Distinctions Between Human Smuggling and Human Trafficking](#)

[\[1\] The National Report on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking: America's Prostituted Children](#), Shared Hope International, May 2009.

[\[2\] The Federal Bureau of Investigation's Efforts to Combat Crimes Against Children, Audit Report 09-08](#), January 2009.

[\[3\] Trafficking in Persons Report](#), U.S. Department of State, June 2011.