

Human trafficking: the facts

Human trafficking is a crime that shames us all. It involves the act of recruiting, transporting, transferring, harbouring or receiving a person through use of force, coercion, deception or other means, for the purpose of exploiting them. Every year, thousands of men, women and children fall into the hands of traffickers, in their own countries and abroad. Every country in the world is affected by trafficking, whether as a country of origin, transit or destination for victims. UNODC, as guardian of the United Nations Conventions against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons has human trafficking as one of its priority areas of work.

The facts

- ♥ It is estimated that 2.4 million people throughout the world are lured into forced labour as a result of human trafficking at any given time. (ILO, 2005)
- ♥ Women and girls account for about 80% of the detected victims. Child trafficking accounts for about 15-20% of the victims. Child trafficking has been detected in all regions of the world, and in some countries is the major form of trafficking detected. (UNODC, 2009)
- ♥ Sexual exploitation accounts for about 80% of the detected cases. Experts believe trafficking in persons for forced labour is greatly under-detected or that it is mostly prosecuted under other offences. (UNODC, 2009)
- ♥ In 30% of the countries where the gender of the offender was known, more women were convicted for human trafficking related offences than men. (UNODC, 2009)
- ♥ The United Nations estimates the total market value of illicit human trafficking at US\$32 billion. (ILO, 2005)
- ♥ The data on detected cases show that intra-regional trafficking in persons (within a region) was predominant in most countries and that trans-regional (across regions), though still significant, was relatively less frequent. (UNODC, 2008)
- ♥ Domestic trafficking was detected in at least 32 countries among those where information was available, and in some countries, it is a major issue. (UNODC, 2008)

The Blue Heart Campaign

The Blue Heart Campaign's goal is to inspire people and mobilize support for action against human trafficking by international organizations, governments, civil society, the private sector and ultimately by individuals. The Blue Heart also aims to enable citizens to show their support to the cause and to increase understanding of, and create urgency around the issue of human trafficking in order to spur coordinated actions to fight the crime. The intention is that the Blue Heart becomes the symbol for human trafficking as the red ribbon is the symbol for HIV/AIDS.