



STOP

**SEX TRAFFICKING
OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE**



SEX TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

What is child trafficking?

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation.

UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

A child is anyone under the age of 18 years.

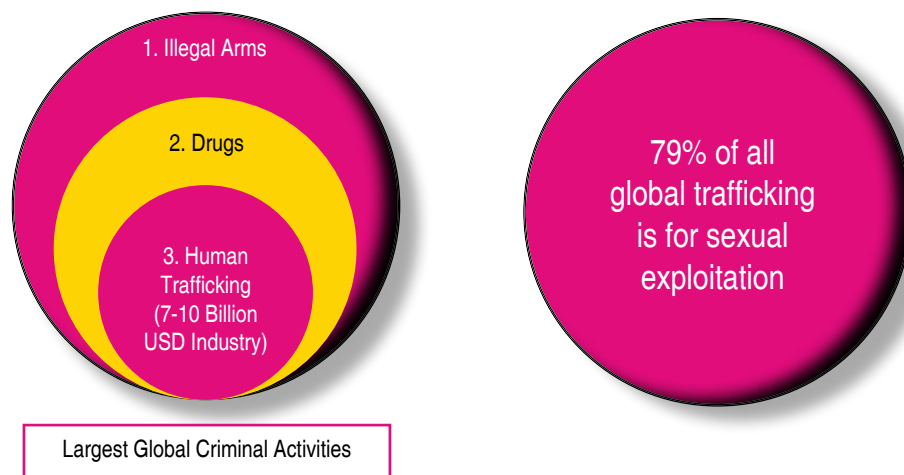
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

What's the problem?

GLOBAL SEX TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is a complex phenomenon fueled by the tremendous growth in the global sex market. Exploitation is driven by poverty, uneven development, official corruption, gender discrimination, harmful traditional and cultural practices, civil unrest, natural disasters and lack of political will to end it.

The number of child victims trafficked worldwide for sexual exploitation or cheap labour on an annual basis is 1.2 million.¹ Human trafficking, the third largest international crime, following illegal drugs and arms trafficking, is believed to be worth billions of dollars each year. Driving the trade is the demand for commercial sexual exploitation. Seventy-nine percent of all global trafficking is for sexual exploitation.²



SEX TRAFFICKING IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Reliable figures on child victims of trafficking for sexual purposes in the Czech Republic are difficult to obtain despite the fact that trafficking of children exists in the country and the specific offence of trafficking has existed in the Czech Republic since 2002.³ In 2007, police conducted 11 investigations and prosecuted 121 persons for trafficking offenses, compared to 16 investigations and 151 persons reportedly prosecuted in 2006.⁴ However, these statistics do not specify the number of child victims nor include cases that have not yet reached the criminal justice system.

In 2008, the Government increased the number of convicted traffickers serving time in prison and conducted aggressive trafficking investigations, leading to the arrest of dozens of suspected traffickers and rescuing more than 100 victims.⁵

The prostitution of children in the Czech Republic in general has reportedly decreased in the last few years, partly due to the strengthening of the social security system and protection measures. The problem appears to be more evident now and is concentrated in Prague, where the situation remains, particularly in and around railway stations.⁶ Furthermore, the prostitution of boys is increasing, apparently connected to a growing drug problem, as many boys become involved in prostitution or pornography to finance their addiction. The prostitution of children is particularly problematic in large urban centres, and in the border areas near Germany and Austria because of sex tourism, as clients can easily cross the border to exploit children sexually.⁷

Who gets trafficked?

Commercial sexual exploitation of children has increased substantially since the mid-1990s in the German-Czech border regions, fuelled by tourism development. A large percentage of these children come from disadvantaged families or have unemployed parents, and are made to contribute to their family's income. Many of them have previously been raped or sexually abused. At present, child-sex tourism seems to be more related to the prostitution of boys, as older men from Scandinavia, Britain, Germany and Austria are travelling to the Czech Republic with the intention of sexually exploiting boys in particular. In addition, many young boys travel abroad for short periods with, among others, tourists from Austria, Germany and Greece. A number of Czech children are also trafficked to the border regions for sexual purposes, and sometimes from there to Germany. Some girls may also cross the border with pimps in taxis, trains or buses for a weekend or longer periods.⁸

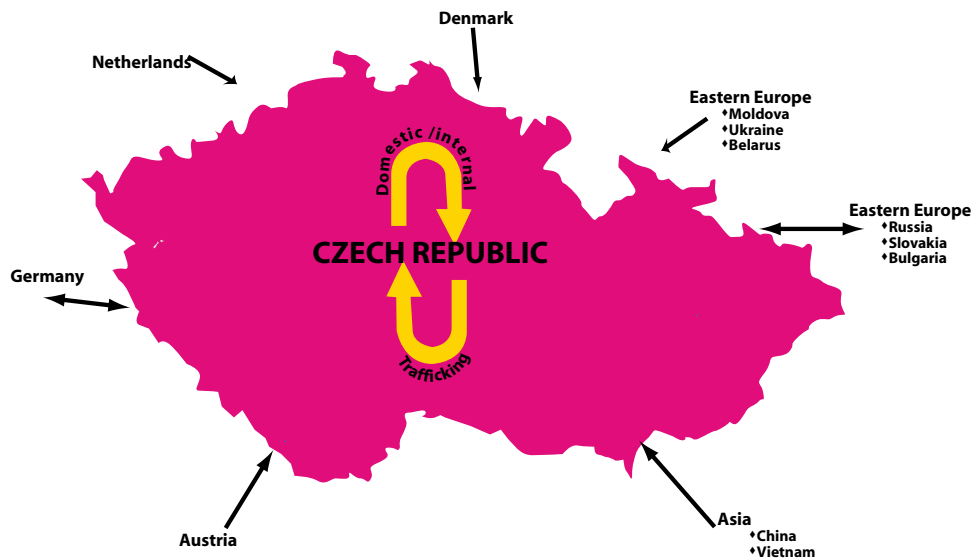
The demand for sex drives child sex trafficking globally, while poverty, domestic violence and abuse, discrimination and the desire for a better life makes children vulnerable. Children are especially vulnerable to being trafficked because they are often uneducated, easy to overpower and easy to convince that they must do what an adult tells them to do. Children may also be in a position where they believe they must help to support their families and may be sold or sent abroad by family members to do so. Street children, children in refugee camps, children whose family and community life has been disrupted and do not have someone to look out for them are all especially vulnerable to human trafficking.

Children may be at greater risk of trafficking from places where they are less protected. This may be because the law is weak or not properly enforced or because children are less aware of the risks of trafficking and are more easily deceived. Countries are considered:

- 'Sending' or 'origin' – from where children are sent;
- 'Transit' - where the children might be moved through and temporarily kept on the way to their final destination; and
- 'Receiving' or 'destination' - where the children finally end up.

Depending on the reason for trafficking, some countries might only be sending, while others might be both sending and transit. The Czech Republic is all three, plus, Czech children are trafficked within the Czech Republic.

In terms of trafficking in children, over the past decade the Czech Republic has gradually shifted from being primarily a sending country to a transit and destination country - a trend confirmed by the Ministry of the Interior.⁹ The Czech Republic is now considered a transit country for victims from Russia, Ukraine, Romania, Belarus, Moldova, Slovakia, Bulgaria, China, and Vietnam trafficked to Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, and Denmark for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation. The Czech Republic is a destination country for victims trafficked from Ukraine, China, Vietnam, Moldova, and Belarus for the purpose of labour exploitation. Roma women are trafficked within the country and abroad for sexual exploitation.¹⁰



For child trafficking, **Czech Republic** is primarily considered as a:

- ✓ origin country
- ✓ transit country
- ✓ destination country
- ✓ internal/domestic country

Who creates demand?

Traffickers prey on children and young people to meet the sexual demands of paedophiles and people who pay for sex. Any person who patronises the commercial sex market may end up sexually exploiting a child. There is no common profile of perpetrators who sexually exploit children – they may be young, old, married, single; they come from all types of socio-economic backgrounds and work in all kinds of professions.

In the Czech Republic, several transnational child pornography rings have been detected in the past years, suggesting the growing demand for pornographic images of children. Local organisations report that every two or three weeks there is news

about arrests or prosecutions of individuals engaged in child pornography, or of websites being closed down.¹¹ Moreover, the Czech Republic has a growing demand for male child prostitution, with international tourists entering the country for the specific purpose of sexually exploiting children.

Who are the traffickers?

Traffickers can be a stranger or someone the child knows, such as a relative or a friend. Traffickers are often part of an organised criminal network that ‘recruits’ children and supplies them with fake identification. They may also pose as boyfriends or girlfriends in order to convince children to leave for a new life.

In reported cases of prostitution in the Czech Republic, the pimps are often family members or acquaintances of the children, or their mothers are prostitutes themselves. Older children who have been involved in prostitution for quite some time are used as ‘chaperones’ to initiate the younger ones. Many children who are sold into prostitution come from the Roma community, and some large Roma family clans are often involved in trafficking operations; these include Slovakian Roma children who remain in the Czech Republic and are used in prostitution.¹²

CASE STUDIES

- In 2003, a Leipzig agency trading in pornographic images of young girls was discovered. It offered photographs over the Internet to paedophile members of a worldwide network. The owner confessed to undercover TV reporters that he had often taken photos of underage Czech girls (Leipzig being close to the border) and had also taken the girls for filming sessions over the border.¹³
- In June 2004, 10 men were detained, along with 15 people from Slovakia, accused of running a global prostitution ring. According to police, the gang lured in young women by pretending to be from a Prague branch of a Slovak modelling agency. The women were then sent abroad and forced into prostitution. According to police, Czech members of the procurers’ gang earned an equivalent of about 5 million USD through the trafficking of 70 women. The gangs forced the women to work as prostitutes for clients from all over the world either in Czech brothels or in other countries, for example, Austria, Germany, Italy, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates. The women’s photographs were released on the Internet, and customers would rent them for various sexual services for up to one week.¹⁴
- In 2007, a 24-year-old former sex worker revealed information about her time as a child involved in prostitution in the Czech Republic. “Helena” was forced into prostitution at the age of 16, when she was sold by her mother to a pimp. She was eventually passed through the hands of approximately 20 pimps and was forced to serve between 20 and 30 clients a day. Helena’s sister was also “led to a client” at the age of six and has not been seen since.¹⁵

How can we stop the trafficking of children?

LAW AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

- The Czech Republic must ratify the main international instruments relevant to the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC): the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Trafficking Protocol)*, the *Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (Optional Protocol)* and the *Convention on Cybercrime*. It should also sign and ratify the *Council of Europe's Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings*.
- Czech law should be amended to define child prostitution in light of the standards set forth in the *Optional Protocol*. In addition, children between 15 and 18 years of age must be better protected by law against commercial sexual exploitation.
- To ensure better enforcement of the law, mechanisms must be put in place to protect witnesses and victims in child trafficking cases. The existing legal provisions on child-friendly procedures must also be applied.
- At the regional level, judicial cooperation and the training of judicial personnel is necessary to help ensure convictions of child traffickers.

International Conventions/Laws	Date of Ratification by the Czech Republic	Date of Reports Submitted	UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Recommendations for the Czech Republic
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	22 February 1993	Initial report: 4 March 1996 3 March 2000 2 November 2008	The Committee is yet to make recommendations on the 2008 report. In response to the 2000 report, the Committee recommends that the State party establish or appoint a single permanent body that is adequately mandated and resourced, to coordinate implementation of the Convention at the national level, including by effectively coordinating activities between central and local authorities and cooperating with non governmental organisations (NGOs) and other sectors of civil society.
Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	Not yet ratified	N/A	N/A
The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress & Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women & Children	Not yet ratified	N/A	N/A

International Conventions/Laws	Date of Ratification by the Czech Republic	Date of Reports Submitted	UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Recommendations for the Czech Republic
ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour	19 June 2001	N/A	N/A
Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings	Not yet ratified	N/A	N/A

PREVENTION OF CHILD TRAFFICKING AND VICTIM PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE

- Establish a focal point on CSEC to strengthen the currently weak collaboration between NGOs and to support the partnership between important stakeholders, such as government ministries, social departments, law enforcement, etc.
- Establish an independent statutory body with a mandate to promote, protect and monitor the implementation of children's rights.
- Enhance the area of prevention of child trafficking through further research and awareness raising initiatives; in particular, prevention strategies must target the education system (especially teenagers), state child care institutions and Roma communities.
- Develop specific prevention and protection measures to protect boys from sexual exploitation considering the close connection between child trafficking, the prostitution of boys and child-sex tourism; and allocate appropriate support and resources to NGOs that are already working on this issue.
- Urgently develop rehabilitation programmes for child victims of trafficking and establish more care centres providing tailored support to children exploited in prostitution and pornography. Such centres should be staffed by professionals trained on how to properly assist victims and offer long-term support services, including alternative employment schemes.

TO REPORT A SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF CHILD TRAFFICKING, CONTACT:

- **La Strada Czech Republic** is a non-profit organisation that aims to tackle the issue of human trafficking by assisting its victims, influencing relevant legislation and providing information about the problem. See <http://www.strada.cz/en/>
To report a suspected incident of human trafficking or to contact the SOS helpline call: +420 222 71 71 71 or email: pomoc@strada.cz

MORE INFORMATION

- Ecumenical Network for Youth Action (ENYA)- ECPAT Group in Czech Republic. <http://www.enya.org.cz>
- ECPAT International: www.ecpat.net
- The Body Shop and ECPAT Stop Trafficking of Children and Young People Campaign : www.thebodyshop.com/stop

Endnotes

- ¹ UNICEF. *UNICEF calls for increased efforts to prevent trafficking of children*. 16 June 2007. http://www.unicef.org/media/media_40002.html
- ² UNODC. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*. 2009. <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html>
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ UNODC. 2008. <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html>
- ⁶ Information provided by the local NGO ENYA- Ecumenical Network for Youth Action, the ECPAT group in Czech Republic. Viewed at: www.ecpat.net/A4A_2005/PDF/Europe.html.
- ⁷ ECPAT International, "Global Monitoring Report: Czech Republic." 2006.
- ⁸ ECPAT International. *Global Monitoring Report on the Status of Action on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children - Czech Republic*. 2006. Available at: http://www.ecpat.net/A4A_2005/PDF/Europe/Global_Monitoring_Report-CZECH_REPUBLIC.pdf
- ⁹ M.O'Brian, A. van den Borne and T.Noten. *Joint East-West Research on Trafficking in Children for Sexual Purposes in Europe: the sending countries*. ECPAT Law Enforcement Group. Amsterdam. 2004. Viewed in: ECPAT International, "Global Monitoring Report: Czech Republic." 2006.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ ECPAT International. *Global Monitoring Report on the Status of Action on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children - Czech Republic*. 2006. Available at: http://www.ecpat.net/A4A_2005/PDF/Europe/Global_Monitoring_Report-CZECH_REPUBLIC.pdf
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ 'Attorney asks to remand alleged procurers' gang in custody,' Czech News Agency. 23 June 2004, viewed at http://www.childtrafficking.org/cgi-bin/ct/main.sql?ID=894&file=view_document.sql&TITLE=-1&AUTHOR=-1&THESAURO=-1&ORGANIZATION=-1&TYPE_DOC=-1&TOPIC=-1&GEOG=371&YEAR=-1&LISTA=No&COUNTRY=-1&FULL_DETAIL=Yes
- ¹⁵ "Child sex trade thrives in Czech Republic". EU Business. 3 January 2007, viewed at: http://www.eubusiness.com/news_live/1166932802.23/

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