



STOP

**SEX TRAFFICKING
OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE**



SEX TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN IN FRANCE

What is child trafficking?

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

UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime

A child is anyone under the age of 18 years.

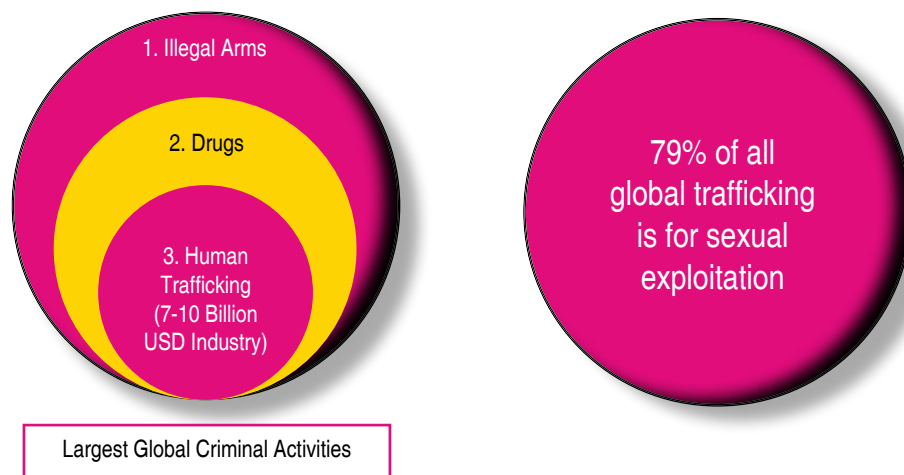
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

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



CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING IN FRANCE

Reliable figures on child victims of trafficking for sexual purposes are not available for France. According to various NGOs, between 5,000 and 8,000 minors were being exploited in commercial sex in 2002.³ However, because of a lack of appropriate monitoring and data collection mechanisms, evidence of the involvement of foreign minors in prostitution remains anecdotal. In Paris, estimates vary between 150 to 500 children involved in prostitution.⁴ While some NGOs and the Children Commissioner's office argue that child trafficking is an underreported phenomenon, the police, notably the Central Office for the Repression

of Human Trafficking (Office Central de la Repression de la Traite des Etres Humains (OCRTEH)) and the Youth Protection Brigade (Brigade de Protection des Mineurs), do not believe that this is the case.⁵ According to OCRTEH, which is in charge of trafficking cases for sexual exploitation and prostitution, there was a total of 1,218 victims of “soliciting prostitution” (the provision which usually applies to sex trafficking cases) identified between 2003 and 2006, 27 of these were girls under the age of 18.⁶

Who gets trafficked?

Children exploited in prostitution are both girls and boys, often trafficked from Eastern Europe, especially from Romania and West Africa (particularly Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana and Nigeria).⁷ Boys crossing from Northern Africa, especially Morocco, often end up as street children in Marseille in southern France, where some become victims of sexual exploitation. Girls from Angola, Cameroon and Congo have also allegedly been trafficked to France for prostitution.⁸ There are also reports that French Guiana is a destination for women and children trafficked from Brazil for sexual exploitation.⁹ Trafficked children are generally brought to Paris and then sent to other cities such as Bordeaux and Marseille.¹⁰ A group particularly vulnerable to trafficking for sexual purposes is unaccompanied minors. It is estimated that approximately 4,000-5,000 minors enter France unaccompanied every year. As of 2005, approximately 3,500 unaccompanied children were in the care of local authorities’ children’s services.

Children are mainly trafficked to France for sexual exploitation, but some are also trafficked for domestic servitude, sweatshop work and other exploitative uses. Because of the vulnerability of children, however, children trafficked for other uses are usually sexually exploited and abused as well.

As in other countries around the world, children are being trafficked to France because they often lack proper livelihood opportunities, are uneducated, easy to overpower and easy to manipulate and control. They are also in a position where they believe they must help to support the family and may even 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. Some countries can be all three. France is primarily considered as a destination country for child trafficking, with the majority of children trafficked into the country. While there have been reported cases of children trafficked within France and through France to the United Kingdom and Scandinavian countries, the scale is much less than the trafficking of children into France.

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. French men also sexually exploit children abroad, traveling to traditional destinations of child-sex tourism such as Bali, Cambodia, Philippines or Thailand, but also to Africa, Morocco, Madagascar and other destinations worldwide.¹¹

CASE STUDY

French man solicits sex with a Romanian boy

In December 2002, the Brigade de Protection des Mineurs investigated the case of a French citizen who was arrested in Paris for soliciting sexual relations with a Romanian boy aged 17, in exchange for 80 Euros. According to the investigating police officer, the ‘physical appearance of the boy clearly showed he was a minor’. However, the accused was acquitted. The grounds for discharge were that the client could have been misled on the age of the victim. As this case shows, there is a need for additional training of law enforcement, prosecutors and judiciary officials to increase understanding of commercial sexual exploitation of children and sensitivity towards the child victims.¹²

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. Members of trafficking networks within France have moved outside of the country due to increasing prosecution of traffickers and operate from Belgium and Germany.¹³

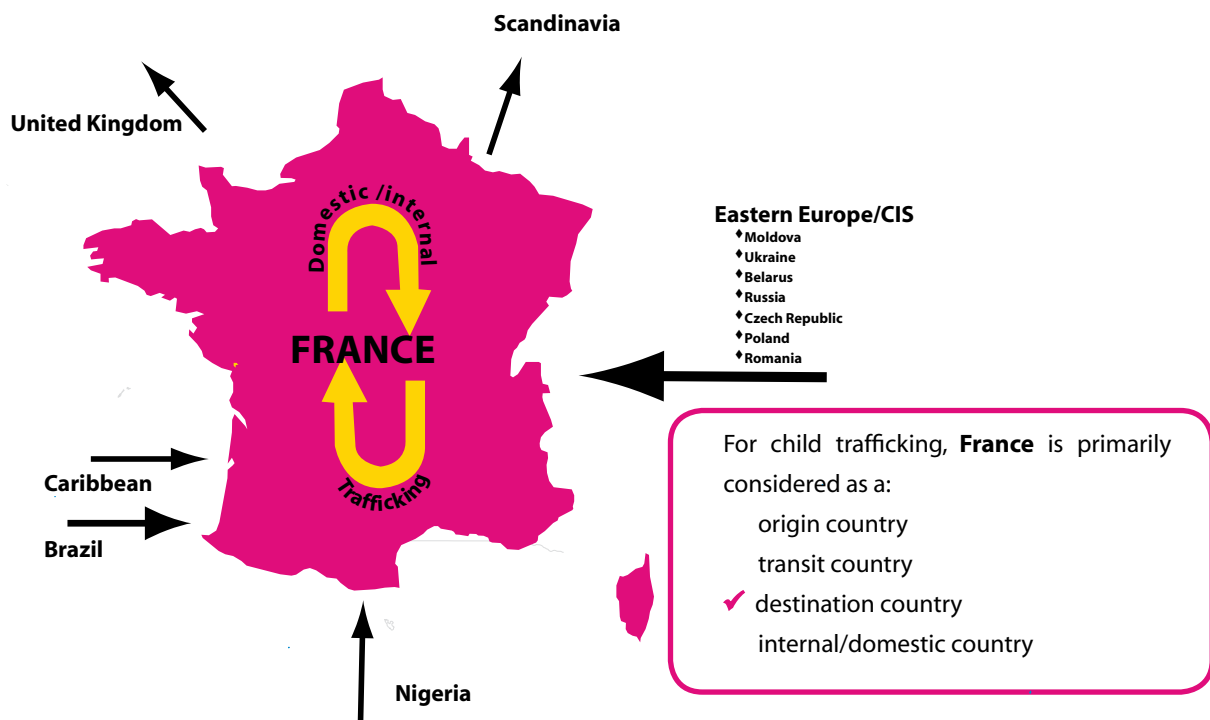
The numbers of traffickers prosecuted and convicted in France are unavailable. The National Trafficking in Persons Unit reported that France convicted two individuals for sex trafficking in 2007 – this was the first time anti-trafficking laws were used.¹⁴ Instead, prosecutors prefer to apply anti-pimping laws in lieu of the anti-trafficking provision in sex trafficking cases, partially because the penalties for both trafficking and pimping – including cases involving aggravating circumstances, for instance, when the victim is a minor or especially vulnerable – are basically identical.¹⁵ The Government reported that there were 745 persons prosecuted for soliciting prostitution in 2006, 283 of whom were females. However, it is unclear how many of these are trafficking cases involving sexually exploited minors, since the Government does not disaggregate sentencing data by crime.¹⁶

CASE STUDY

Trafficked by her aunt

Marie from Cameroon was told by her aunt that she would have an opportunity to work and study in France. Seeing it as a way to improve her life and to financially support her family, she believed her aunt. When she got to France, her aunt forced her into prostitution. In 2004, a man finally helped her escape to England but by then due to the trauma and physical abuse

experienced, she needed medical and physiological care and was admitted to the hospital. Within two months, Marie passed away. She was 16 years old.¹⁷



How can we stop the trafficking of children?

LAW AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

- Due to the large gap between child victims identified by law enforcement and estimates of children being trafficked or forced into prostitution, there is a need to strengthen child victim identification through trainings for law enforcement and other relevant agencies.
- France should strengthen its bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation with law enforcement agencies in countries of origin on the prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution and punishment of those responsible for acts involving the trafficking of children. Collaboration with NGOs and other relevant stakeholders to implement the multi-disciplinary approach (where representatives from all relevant stakeholders work together) to combat child trafficking should be enhanced to ensure better prosecution and more effective assistance to victims.
- France has ratified the main international conventions related to the trafficking of children. It must now properly report on and comply with the recommendations of the governing bodies as it agreed to do as a signatory to the relevant conventions.

International Conventions/Laws	Date of Ratification by France	Date of Reports Submitted	UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Recommendations for France
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	1990	Initial Report: 1994 2002	The Committee is concerned about the occurrence of trafficking of children, prostitution and related issues, as noted in the Report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	Feb 2003	2006	The Committee recommends that France systematically collect disaggregated data, including by sex, age and geographical location (including the Overseas Departments and Territories), on the number of victims provided with recovery assistance and compensation and to collaborate with NGOs to ensure that adequate services are available for child victims, including physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration.
The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress & Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women & Children	October 2002	N/A	N/A
ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour	2001	N/A	N/A

PREVENTION OF CHILD TRAFFICKING AND VICTIM PROTECTION ASSISTANCE

- Effective information campaigns and measures to protect target groups that are particularly at risk, such as unaccompanied minors, should be carried out.
- Protection of child victims, the implementation of child-friendly legal procedures and the provision of care and assistance must be ensured, taking into account the specific needs that child victims of trafficking may have, particularly isolated foreign children, with respect to security, language and culture, and opportunities for rehabilitation and reintegration.
- Care and protection measures for child victims of sexual exploitation throughout France should be developed to meet the needs of all the various types of trafficked children. A formal national referral mechanism (designation of responsibilities among relevant authorities and stakeholders) and procedures to identify and provide assistance to trafficking victims, including children in prostitution, must be set up.
- France must take all adequate measures to ensure that children in need of international protection and who are at risk of being re-trafficked are not returned to the country where this danger exists.

- Legislation must be created that enables the appointment of an ad hoc administrator for unaccompanied minors that ensures adequate psychological assistance to these minors in order to reduce their vulnerability to trafficking and sexual exploitation.

TO REPORT A SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF CHILD TRAFFICKING, CONTACT:

Allô Enfance en Danger – 119 is a telephone line for child victims of abuse and all persons confronted by situations of abuse, which transmits such information to the services of the General Councils or the Public Prosecutor, depending on the situation. The service is free and available 24 hours a day. (See <http://www.allo119.gouv.fr/119/index.html>)

Fondation Pour l'Enfance established the *SOS enfants disparus service* (see <http://www.sosenfantsdisparus.fr/Presentation-du-dispositif.html>), which includes a blue line for cases of missing children (tel. 0810 012 014). The line is available Monday to Saturday, from 9 am - 9 pm.

Equipes d'Action Contre le Proxénétisme runs an SOS prostitution helpline targeting sexually exploited children (tel. 01/42.72.71.10). (See <http://www.eacp-asso.fr/> and <http://www.childscope.net/2006/httpdocs/index.php?sw=2>)

Enfance et Partage runs a green number (0 800 05 1234) that receives calls related to maltreatment, physical and psychological abuse, negligence and sexual abuse (See <http://www.enfance-et-partage.org/>)

MORE INFORMATION

- ECPAT France: <http://www.ecpat-france.org/>
- 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. Accessed from: http://www.unicef.org/media/media_40002.html
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- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ UNODC. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*. 2009. <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html>
- ⁷ ECPAT International. *Global Monitoring Report on the Status of Action against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: France*. Bangkok. 2006. http://www.ecpat.net/A4A_2005/PDF/Europe/Global_Monitoring_Report-FRANCE.pdf
- ⁸ ECPAT France. *Trafficking in Children for Sexual Purposes: Update Country Report—France*. Joint East-West Project on Trafficking in Children for Sexual Purposes in Europe. September 2003.
- ⁹ US State Department. *Trafficking in Persons Report*. 2008. Accessed from: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/105656.pdf>
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- ¹¹ ECPAT International. *Global Monitoring Report on the Status of Action against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children – France*. Bangkok. 2006
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- ¹³ ECPAT International. *Global Monitoring Report on the Status of Action against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children – France*. Bangkok. 2006
- ¹⁴ US State Department. *Trafficking in Persons Report*. 2008. Accessed from: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/105656.pdf>
- ¹⁵ Daguerre, Anne. *Whose problem? Addressing child trafficking in France and Britain*. Paper prepared for delivery at the 2008 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association. Available at: http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/2/8/0/3/5/p280351_index.html
- ¹⁶ UNODC. *Global Report on Trafficking in Children*. 2009. <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html>
- ¹⁷ McGregor, Mark. “Britain’s hidden children”. BBC News. 19 March 2007. Accessed from: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/manchester/6451353.stm

NOTES



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