



STOP

**SEX TRAFFICKING
OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE**



SEX TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN IN TURKEY

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.

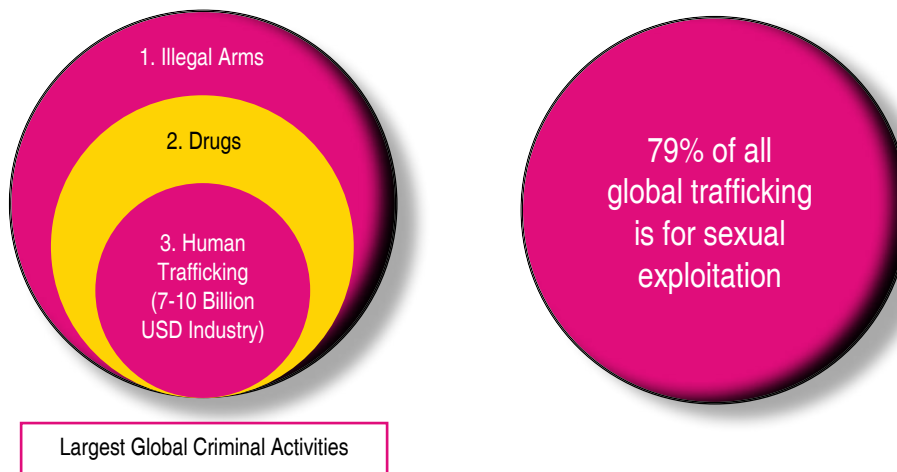
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

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 TURKEY

Turkey is considered a destination country for victims of trafficking, as well as – on a smaller scale – a place of transit for further destinations. According to the 2008 statistics from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Turkey, Istanbul is the main port of entry for victims who have entered the IOM's repatriation program (the majority of all identified victims), with 90% originating from there. To a lesser extent, Antalya, Trabzon and Diyarbakir were also reported to be major points of entry for

trafficking victims.³ Prostitution is legal in Turkey and as a result, contributes to the sexual exploitation of under age trafficking victims. Legalised prostitution also leads to a market where consumers of commercial sex include tourists (primarily in Istanbul and in the most popular Mediterranean resorts) and locals.⁴

Even though limited information is available, some NGOs report that children in Turkey are trafficked internally for early marriage. Vulnerable children, such as children sold for seasonal agricultural work or children living and working in the streets are also exposed to trafficking for sexual purposes.

Who gets trafficked?

Over the five-year period ranging from 2003 until the end of 2008, authorities in Turkey were able to identify 994 victims of trafficking, with 6% being children. The largest ethnic groups represented among trafficking victims were Moldovans (28%), Russians (15.8%), Ukrainians (15.3%), Kyrgyz (9.3%), Azeris (6.9%) and Uzbek (6.9%). Women (and girls) make up the large majority of trafficking victims in the country.⁵

In 2008, the International Office for Migration (IOM) provided assistance to 78 persons - Moldovans, Uzbeks and Turkmen being the largest groups among these. Four of these victims were minors and originated from Moldova (1), Kazakhstan (1) and Uzbekistan (2). All victims assisted in 2008 – both adults and children – were of female gender.⁶

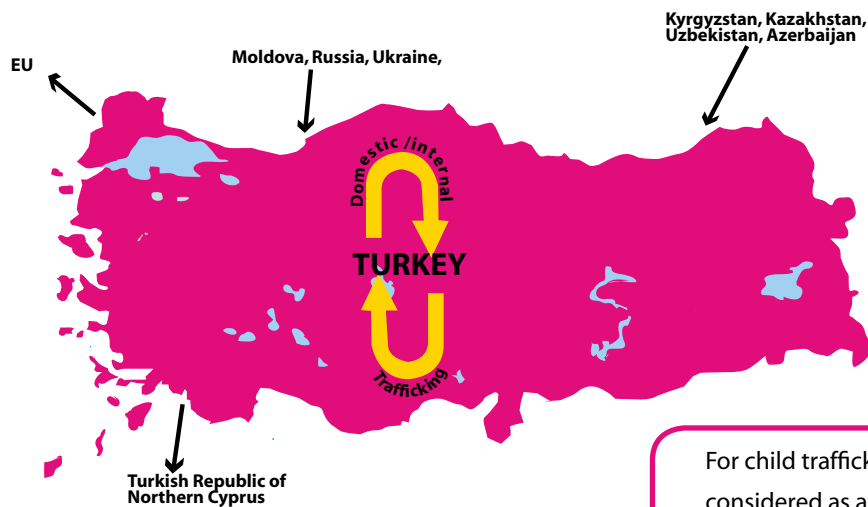
In 2007 and 2008, individual victims have also emerged from countries, such as Morocco, Sri Lanka and Tunisia, which are outside the traditional “catchment area” of trafficking into Turkey. In addition to sexual exploitation, victims are trafficked to Turkey for purposes of forced or domestic labour.⁷

Children are especially vulnerable to trafficking because they are often less educated, easy to overpower and easy to convince that they must do what an adult tells them to do. They are also in a position where they believe they must help 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 be only sending, while others might be both sending and transit. Some countries can be all three. Turkey is a destination and transit country and Turkish children are also trafficked within Turkey.



For child trafficking, **Turkey** 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 actually no common profile of perpetrators who sexually exploit children – they may be young, old, married, single; they come from all kinds of socio-economic backgrounds and work in all kinds of professions. Alongside Turkish men generating demand for sex with children and the resulting trafficking that fuels supply, tourism - a big currency earner for the Turkish economy with a substantial influx of foreigners during the summer months - attracts foreigners who also play a role in the sexual exploitation of trafficked children.⁸

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. As is the case with other countries where trafficking takes place, both local and foreign criminals are involved in this illegal activity, the latter usually broadly representing the nationalities of victims. Data from the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported 422 arrests for trafficking in 2006, 308 in 2007 and 225 in 2008 (up to November). However, there does not appear to be a break down according to nationality.⁹

CASE STUDIES

Traffickers Sentenced

A Turkish national was sentenced to 23 years imprisonment by the Cahul Court of Appeals in Moldova on charges of trafficking

in human beings, including children. Another member of the gang was sentenced to 21 years in jail on charges of trafficking, as well as fabrication, possession and sale or use of false seals and stamps. A third female member was sentenced to 21 years in prison. They were also ordered to pay high fines. The Supreme Court upheld the sentences. According to the prosecutors, between 2000 and 2004, the gang's chief set up and commanded a large-scale network of traffickers linking three countries – Moldova, Ukraine and Turkey. They gathered information about potential victims, recruited them, counterfeited papers and transported the victims from Moldova to Ukraine and Turkey. Upon reaching the destination, the victims were sold for sexual purposes. A total of 16 young women, eight of them underage, were sold abroad by the gang.¹⁰

Teenage girl trafficked from the CIS

“M” is a 16 year old girl trafficked to Turkey by a woman who promised her a job as a waitress. “M” was sexually exploited in prostitution in her country after she left home because her parents - who were separated and in difficult socio-economic situations - could not take care of her. One of her acquaintances offered to take her to Turkey for a job interview, only to sell her to a pimp when she arrived in Istanbul. She was then sold a second time to a different place, from where she was rescued in a police raid after four months of sexual exploitation. Some of her traffickers were arrested and she received medical and psychological care for two months in an Istanbul-based NGO before being repatriated to her mother after re-establishing contact with her.¹¹

How can we stop the trafficking of children?

LAW AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

- Turkey needs to ratify the Council of Europe *Convention against Trafficking in Human Beings* and integrate its provisions into its own legislation.
- The National Plan of Action to Combat Human Trafficking developed in 2003 fails to make a distinction for cases of child trafficking and the relevant support necessary in those cases.
- Article 80 of the Turkish Penal Code, addressing human trafficking, should be amended to include the specific manifestation of human trafficking for all forms of sexual exploitation.

International Conventions/Laws	Date of Ratification by Turkey	Date of Reports Submitted	UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Recommendations for Turkey
<i>Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)</i>	4 April 1995	Initial report: 2001	<p>The Committee recommends the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Need for an independent ombudsman for children's rights; b) Need for the collection of disaggregated data on all aspects of the CRC. <p>The Committee recommends the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Co-ordination and monitoring to be strengthened both centrally and locally; b) More awareness to be generated through campaigns; c) In-depth research is needed to collect and analyse disaggregated data;

International Conventions/Laws	Date of Ratification by Turkey	Date of Reports Submitted	UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Recommendations for Turkey
<i>Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography</i>	19 August 2002	2006	d) Expansion of the services provided by the national helpline.
<i>The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress & Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women & Children</i>	25 March 2003	N/A	N/A
<i>Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (no. 197)</i>	Signed on 19 March 2009. Not yet ratified	N/A	N/A
<i>ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour</i>	2 August 2001	N/A	N/A

PREVENTION OF CHILD TRAFFICKING AND VICTIM PROTECTION ASSISTANCE

- A national focal point for children's rights should be established to receive and process information regarding all forms of sexual exploitation of children, including those resulting from trafficking, while providing a mechanism for complaint and redress for victims of exploitation.
- A national database and a referral system for child victims of commercial sexual exploitation, including trafficking for sexual purposes, should be established as a step towards ensuring their rehabilitation and reintegration.
- Comprehensive training is necessary for care and support staff working in shelters for trafficked victims.
- Targeted campaigns must be developed and deployed nationwide to generate appropriate awareness of the issue of trafficking for sexual purposes and to adversely influence demand for illicit sexual contact with children.

TO REPORT A SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF CHILD TRAFFICKING, CONTACT:

- Human Trafficking Helpline can be contacted by calling: 157

MORE INFORMATION

- 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. Available at: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html>
- ³ ECPAT International and Yeniden, *Situational Analysis of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Turkey: Istanbul and Diyarbakir*, 2006.
- ⁴ ECPAT International. *Global Monitoring Report on the Status of Action against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: Turkey*. Bangkok. 2008. Available at: http://www.ecpat.net/A4A_2005/PDF/Europe/Global_Monitoring_Report-TURKEY_ENG.pdf
- ⁵ UNODC. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*. 2009. Available at: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html>
- ⁶ IOM data to be found on the Countertrafficking website at: <http://www.countertrafficking.org/2008.html>
- ⁷ US State Department. *Trafficking in Persons Report*. 2008. Accessible at: www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2008/
- ⁸ ECPAT International. *Global Monitoring Report on the Status of Action against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: Turkey*. Bangkok. 2008. Available at: http://www.ecpat.net/A4A_2005/PDF/Europe/Global_Monitoring_Report-TURKEY_ENG.pdf
- ⁹ UNODC. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*. 2009. Available at: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html>
- ¹⁰ Info-Prim News Agency. Moldova. 7 July 2008. Accessible at: <http://www.info-prim.md>
- ¹¹ Case provided by the NGO providing care to “M” in Istanbul.



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