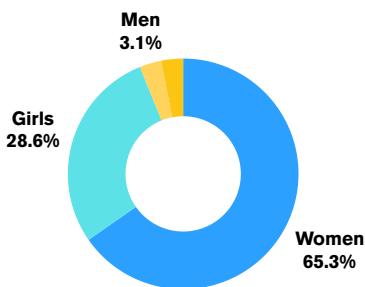


# What is Sex Trafficking?

Sex trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act, through the use of force, threats, deception, abuse of power, or other forms of coercion. If the person is under 18, it is considered sex trafficking even if no force, fraud, or coercion is involved.

## Who is Affected?



These are only the identified victims reported by the UNODC Global Report on Trafficking 2024 and do not reflect the actual number of people trafficked for sex.

## Common Types of Sex Trafficking

### Forced Prostitution

An individual is compelled to engage in commercial sex acts through the use of force, fraud, or coercion.

### Pornography and Performance in Sexual Venues

Forced participation in the creation of pornographic material or performances in strip clubs and other sexual entertainment venues.

### Cybersex Trafficking

People are trafficked and forced to perform in live-streamed shows involving coerced sex acts or rape. Others are compelled to engage in commercial sex acts facilitated online, such as the creation and sale of illicit sexual content or streaming of sexual abuse.

### Child Sex Trafficking

This includes trafficking for a commercial sexual exploitation of children, child prostitution, child pornography, child sex tourism, or online sexual exploitation, and child sexual abuse material (CSAM).

### Sexual Slavery

It is often the end state or condition of sex trafficking, when a person is trafficked and then kept in slavery-like conditions for sexual exploitation. Particularly in conflict zones, where armed state, or non-state, terrorist groups may force or coerce people into sexual abuse. Other form of sex slavery could be through forced marriage.

### Forced Marriages

A person is made to marry without their free and full consent, through threats, pressure, deception, or coercion, and the marriage is then used to exploit them — for example, for labor, sex, or control.

## Prevalent Industries

- Hospitality & Tourism
- Transportation Hubs
- Bars, Clubs, and Adult Entertainment
- Online Platforms & Technology Industry
- Residential Settings
- Events & Seasonal Venues
- Agricultural or Remote Work Camps

### Definition



Sex trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act, in which the 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 (22 USC § 7102).

As defined in the United States Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000

### Facts and Trends

While forced labor now accounts for the largest share of trafficking victims globally, most criminal convictions still focus on sex trafficking. Victims are coerced into commercial sex in private homes, massage parlors, hotels, brothels, and online spaces.

UNODC (2024), Trafficking in Persons Report of US Department of State (2024)

- **Women and girls** represent 90% of sex trafficking survivors identified.
- **Men and boys**, as well as members of the LGBTQIA+ community, have increasingly been identified as sex trafficking victims.
- Victims are primarily women and girls. In some countries, women even make up the majority of traffickers, **reported in 30% of countries that track trafficker gender**.
- There was a **25% increase in the number of trafficking victims** identified globally in 2022 compared to pre-pandemic figures in 2019. Child trafficking identifications rose by 31%, with children comprising 38% of all victims detected. Girls are disproportionately trafficked for sexual exploitation.

UNODC (2024)



Learn more at  
[www.antitraffickingresponse.org](http://www.antitraffickingresponse.org)