

Human trafficking is a growing problem in the US – and around the world. As one of the largest border states, Texas has long been considered both a major destination and transit state for US human trafficking. According to Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott, almost 20% of all trafficking victims in the U.S. travel through Texas, usually on the Interstate 10 corridor. While Texas, along with the wider U.S., has made significant steps in the last decade to combat human trafficking, there is still much work that needs to be done to end modern day slavery. A report published by the Institute on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault at the University of Texas found that 77% of local, state, and national law enforcement nationwide perceive human trafficking as rare or non-existent in their communities. The same report found that almost 70% of state and local prosecutors did not see human trafficking as a problem in their jurisdictions, and only 7% of those surveyed had prosecuted a case since 2000.¹ These statistics point to a continued lack of awareness among key groups in the fight against human trafficking. One of the priorities for combating human trafficking in Texas identified by the Texas Human Trafficking Task Force includes expanded training for Texas judges on human trafficking.² This fact sheet, intended for Texas judges and court administrators, provides a basic overview of human trafficking numbers and demographics in Texas, the US and globally. While a variety of internationally recognized reports were consulted for the purposes of this fact sheet, accurate and uniform statistics for human trafficking victims remain a challenge due primarily to the hidden nature of the population.

International Human Trafficking Statistics:

- 10-30 million modern day slaves exist in the world today.³ The majority of the reports consulted for the purposes of this fact sheet estimate that the number is around 27 million people⁴ with several respected analysts estimating the number to be much higher.⁵
- After drug trafficking, human trafficking is tied with the illegal arms industry as the second largest criminal industry in the world today – and is considered the fastest growing – generating \$32 billion a year.⁶
- \$15.5 billion is generated in industrialized countries alone.⁷
- The estimated financial cost of forced labor (compared to free employment) is \$21 billion a year.⁸
- 12.3 million adults and children are in forced labor world wide.⁹
- The International Labour Organization estimates that for every 1 victim of sex trafficking there are 9 victims of labor trafficking worldwide. However, sexual exploitation (79%) is by far the most *commonly identified* form of trafficking in persons, followed by forced labor (18%).¹⁰
- In 2011, 42,291 victims of human trafficking were identified worldwide. Of that number only 7,909 cases were prosecuted and resulted in only 3,969 convictions.¹¹
- In 2011 there were 15,205 labor trafficking victims identified resulting in only 278 convictions.¹²
- In 2006 there were only 5,808 prosecutions and 3,160 convictions throughout the world, which means for every 800 people trafficked, only one person was convicted.¹³
- 600,000 - 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders each year.¹⁴
- 80% of transnational victims are women and girls.¹⁵
- 50% of transnational victims are minors. An estimated 2 million children are exploited by the global commercial sex trade, with 100,000 minors in the commercial sex trade in the U.S. alone.¹⁶
- The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that 20% of all trafficking victims are minors.¹⁷
- 161 countries are affected by human trafficking.¹⁸
- The majority of suspects involved in human trafficking are nationals of the country where the trafficking process is occurring.¹⁹
- The majority (56%) of trafficking victims are subjected to forced labor in their place of origin or residence, with only 44% who are considered transnational trafficking victims. The International Labour Organization found

that cross-border movement is closely linked to forced sexual exploitation.²⁰

- Only 54% of the recruiters are strangers, 46% are known to the victims.²¹

US-based human trafficking statistics:

- According to the Trafficking in Persons Report by the US State Department between 14,500 and 17,500 people are trafficked into the US annually (this is not the total number of trafficking victims in the US as it excludes US nationals who are victims of human trafficking within US borders).²²
- A Department of Justice report extrapolating from a San Diego county survey estimated the potential number of unauthorized immigrant labor trafficking victims in the U.S. at 2.47 million.²³
- In 2010, 449 certifications were given to adult victims of human trafficking and 92 issued to child victims.²⁴
- 82% adult victims and 56% child victims of trafficking in the US were labor trafficking victims.²⁵
- 53% of adult victims and 66% of child victims of trafficking were women.²⁶
- Victims came from 47 different countries. The top 5 host countries include: Thailand, Mexico, Philippines, Haiti and India, in that order.²⁷
- While the ILO estimates that the ratio between sex:labor trafficking is 1:9, In 2011, 83% of reported incidents in the US were sex trafficking and only 12% of reported incidents were labor trafficking, leaving 5% categorized as “other.”²⁸
- Between FY 200 and FY 2009 only 1,591 T visas were granted by the Department of Homeland Security. Approximately 1/5 of the annual cap for T-visas, which is 5,000.²⁹
- Types of labor trafficking in the US include: domestic servitude (nannies, housekeepers), small businesses (landscaping, nail salons, restaurants, industrial cleaning, construction, hospitality), Sale Crews (magazine, flower and candy sale crews) and large scale labor cases (agricultural, factory settings).³⁰
- Types of sex trafficking in the US include: Bar/Club operations (cantina bars, Stripping or exotic dancing clubs, salons, massage parlors, hostess clubs and karaoke clubs, domestic strip clubs and gentleman clubs); Residential brothel settings (homes, apartments, hotels, mobile trailers); Escort services (bar/hotel based, internet-based, private, boat cruises, chat lines); Pimp-controlled prostitution (hotel-based, internet-based, private parties, street-based, truck stops).³¹

Human trafficking and minors statistics³²:

- There are an estimated 100,000 - 300,000 prostituted children in the U.S.
- 244,000 American children and youth are estimated to be at risk of child sexual exploitation, including commercial sexual exploitation. Runaways and unaccompanied minors make up the majority of at-risk youth for both sexual and labor exploitation.
- 41.4% of suspected or confirmed child victims of domestic sex trafficking were repeat runaways.
- 46.7% of suspected or confirmed child victims of domestic sex trafficking ran from a group home, foster care, DCFS care or a shelter.
- 40-70% of all street youth engage, at least occasionally, in prostitution to meet their basic needs.
- The population of street youth engaging in prostitution is almost equally divided between boys and girls.

Texas-based human trafficking facts:

- In 2008, 38% of all calls to the National Trafficking Resource Center originated from Texas.³³
- During the 2006 Department of Justice National Conference, Texas interstate 1-10 was identified as one of the

- main routes for human traffickers, with El Paso and Houston identified as major human trafficking centers.³⁴
- Between January 2007 and September 2008, Texas task forces identified 1,229 alleged incidents of human trafficking.³⁵
 - A report from The Schapiro Group found that on a typical weekend night in the state of Texas, an estimated 188 girls under 18 are commercially sexually exploited through internet classified sex ads.³⁶
 - Of the 350 law enforcement agencies in Texas, only 4 have federally funded task forces devoted to human trafficking.³⁷
 - Under a federally-funded program, the Houston Task Force has investigated 68 cases of human trafficking and prosecuted 38 cases, resulting in 31 convictions since 2005.³⁸
 - Between 2007-2009, the Bexar County Task Force reported more than 100 cases of human trafficking.³⁹
 - In 2007 the Dallas Police Department identified 119 minors exploited for commercial sex.⁴⁰
 - In 2007, Dallas reported 55 domestic minor sex trafficking cases.⁴¹
 - In 2007, 33 people were charged with sex trafficking in Dallas.⁴²
 - The Dallas-Fort Worth region accounts for 35% of the state's commercial sexual exploitation cases even though they only have 26% of the state's entire population.⁴³
 - From 2000-2008, 35 juveniles were charged with prostitution-related offenses in Tarrant County.⁴⁴
 - Texas law does not require law enforcement to compile and report statistics specific to human trafficking cases, making statistical analysis extremely difficult. Traffickers may be charged with other violations like sexual assault in lieu of human trafficking and often accept plea bargains for lesser penalties, making accurate numbers of human trafficking cases in Texas challenging, though studies have shown that there has been a sharp increase in prosecution of human trafficking in Texas in locations where data is being reported.⁴⁵

Immigrant demographics in Texas:

- In 2010, 16.4% (4.1 million) of the total Texas population was foreign born. This percentage represents the 3rd highest number in the U.S.⁴⁶
- From 2000 to 2010 the foreign born population grew by 42.8% from 2.9 million to 4.1 million.⁴⁷
- Of the total foreign-born population in Texas 18.6% are from Asia and 72.8% are from Latin America.⁴⁸
- Of the total immigrant population in Texas 60% were born in Mexico, 4.1% were born in El Salvador and 4% in India.⁴⁹
- Of Texas' foreign-born population 32% were US citizens in 2010.⁵⁰
- Children with at least one foreign-born parent represented 33.7% of all children under 18 in Texas.⁵¹
- Hispanics make up 38% (9.5 million) of the total population of Texas, which is the second largest population in the U.S.⁵²
- 31% of Hispanics are foreign born.⁵³
- Hispanics of Mexican origin make up 88% (8.4 million) of Texas' Hispanic population, with 2.5 million born in Mexico.⁵⁴
- In 77% of Hispanic households a language other than English is spoken.⁵⁵
- Hispanics make up 49% of all births in Texas.⁵⁶
- There are 1.65 million (6.7% of the population) unauthorized immigrants living in Texas.⁵⁷
- Unauthorized immigrants in Texas make up 9% of the total workforce.⁵⁸
- 14% (102,000) of all immigrants of Honduran origin in the U.S. live in Texas.⁵⁹
- 13% (234,000) of immigrants of Salvadoran origin in the U.S. live in Texas.⁶⁰

Unaccompanied minors⁶¹:

- The U.S. Refugee Resettlement sees an estimated 2,100 unaccompanied children on any given day
- According to the Department of Health and Human Services, from October to March 2011, 5,252 kids landed in U.S. without a parent or guardian — a 93% increase from the same period the previous year. In March alone, 1,390 kids arrived.
- 80% of the children referred to the ORR end up in a shelter
- According to the Polaris project, unaccompanied minors are highly vulnerable to human trafficking

Common misconceptions:⁶²

- Human trafficking victims are largely foreign nationals
- Trafficking requires transportation or movement across state and national borders
- Human trafficking is another word for smuggling
- A foreign national who pays to be smuggled into the US cannot be a victim of human trafficking or eligible for the T-visa
- There must be elements of physical restraint, force or bondage when identifying a trafficking situation
- Victims of human trafficking self-identify as victims
- The majority of victims come from situations of poverty or small, rural villages
- Sex trafficking is more common than labor trafficking
- Trafficking only occurs in illegal industries (trafficking can occur in legal and legitimate business settings)
- If the trafficked person consented to be in their initial situation or was informed about what type of labor they would be doing or that commercial sex would be involved, then it cannot be trafficking or against their will because they “knew better.” (Initial consent to commercial sex or a labor setting prior to acts of force, fraud, or coercion (or if the victim is a minor in a sex trafficking situation) is not relevant to the crime, nor is payment.)
- Foreign national trafficking victims are undocumented immigrants

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