

Human trafficking is the trade of humans for the purpose of forced labour, sexual slavery, or commercial sexual exploitation.

Human trafficking can occur within a country or trans-nationally. It is distinct from people smuggling, which is characterized by the consent of the person being smuggled.

Human trafficking is condemned as a violation of human rights by international conventions, but legal protection varies globally. The practice has millions of victims around the world.

The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, which has 117 signatories and 173 parties,^[2] defines human trafficking as:

(a) [...] the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal, manipulation or implantation of organs;

(b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph

(a) have been used;

(c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in persons" even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in sub-paragraph (a) of this article;

(d) "Child" shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.^[3]