



LXIV  
SIXTY-FOURTH SESSION

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# Social Cultural and Humanitarian

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Berkeley Model United Nations



Dear Delegates,

Welcome to Berkeley Model United Nations 64th Session's Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural committee. My name is Isabel Hemerly Viegas de Lima and I will be your head chair for this committee. The topics chosen for SOCHUM this year--Sex Tourism and Migrant Worker Rights--are meant to challenge you to find solutions that consider the nuances of the topics and the array of positions in the international scene. Traditionally a committee that addresses topics that have little divergence in opinion, we truly hope that the selected topics will keep debate interesting at all times.

Sex tourism was chosen because of the increased complexity of the issue. The world is divided when it comes to the legality of prostitution, which leads to a split floor for debate. Yet sex tourism also involves another prevalent problem: human trafficking. Sex tourism does not exist without creating a demand for migrant sex workers and human trafficking, which in turn leads to the violation of numerous human rights. With that said, sex tourism is still a growing economy, and many livelihoods are dependent on the direct and indirect profits of the trade. While prostitution and human trafficking have been highly addressed by the international community, there is still a lot to be done when addressing the issues from the lens of sex tourism.

Migrant worker rights, on the other hand, has received large amounts of attention from the international community in the past decades. Yet, despite the efforts that are allocated to it, significant structures are missing to enforce transnational migrant worker rights. Furthermore, the nature of migrant workers is constantly changing, and international solutions must address these changes.

With that said, I wanted to introduce myself: I am a senior at UC Berkeley studying Civil Engineering and focusing on transportation systems. Originally from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, I love nature, the built environment, and how the two interact. In my free time, I enjoy cooking, baking, water coloring, listening to music, practicing yoga, reading, traveling, and spending time with friends. I am fortunate to be joined by my wonderful vice-chairs:

Sarah Yue is a junior at Cal studying Molecular and Cell Biology. She has been involved with BMUN throughout college and attended as a high schooler. Outside of BMUN, Sarah is involved in her sorority on campus, loves photography, food, crafting, and has a serious passion for colorful notebooks.

Octavio Garcia is a 19 year old sophomore from Central California studying Political Science at UC Berkeley. He enjoys watching listening to various genres of music, going on hikes, and looking for adventure. He is passionate about international relations and economics, especially issues involving his native country of Mexico.

Himaja Jangle is currently a first year with an intended major of Business Administration. In her free time she likes hanging out with friends and going on long walks or drives. She is an avid hiker and recently summited Mt. Whitney, one of her biggest accomplishments.



She also loves scouring news sites to find about any interesting events going on around the world.

Best of luck with your Position Papers and do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Cheers,

Isabel Hemerly Viegas de Lima  
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## Table of Contents

<b>Migrant Worker Rights .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Background .....	4
Introduction .....	4
History of Migrant Worker Rights .....	6
Migrant Worker Rights Today .....	8
Previous International Action .....	11
Case Studies .....	14
Qatar .....	14
Migrant Women Workers Rights .....	16
Questions to Consider .....	19
Bibliography .....	20
<b>Evaluating the Impacts of Sex Tourism .....</b>	<b>24</b>
Background .....	24
Introduction .....	24
Tourism and the Sex Tourism .....	25
Prostitution .....	26
Human Trafficking .....	27
Past International Action .....	29
Case Studies .....	32
The Netherlands .....	32
Cuba .....	33
Questions to Consider .....	36
Bibliography .....	37



# Migrant Worker Rights

*"Migration is the oldest action against poverty."*

– John Kenneth Galbraith

## Background

### Introduction

Migration today is considerably more widespread than meets the eye. According to the latest United Nations Population Fund report from 2013, there are over 232 million migrant people living outside of their country of origin, accounting for 3.2% of the global population. Overall, economic migration is the most prevalent form of migration (United Nations Population Fund). These are people who leave their counties of origin in search of better economic and social opportunities and attempt to contribute directly to the economy of their country of immigration.

Most migrants tend to be from the Global South, which include countries with low to medium human development indexes (HDI; <0.8). Figure 1 shows the flow between the Global South and the Global North, which is defined as countries with high HDI (>0.8) (“South-South Cooperation”).

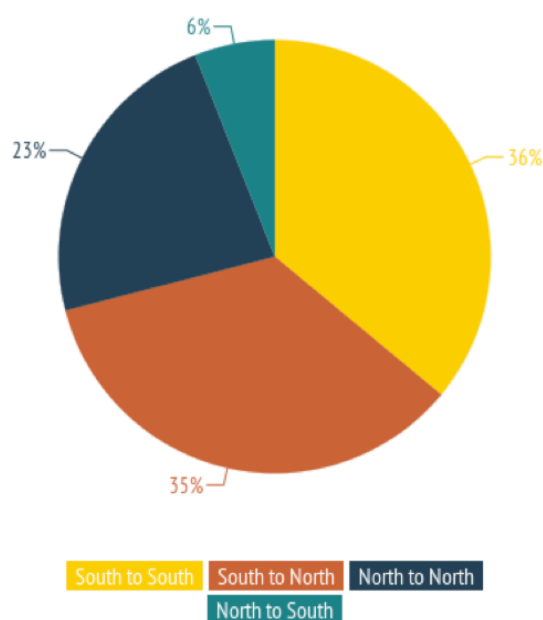


Figure 1: Migrant flow between the Global South and the Global North  
Source: United Nations Population Fund



50 percent of these migrants currently reside in highly urbanized cities in economically developed countries, such as Australia, Canada, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia (“2015 World Migrant Report”). However, specific urbanized cities in developing nations have become more a destinations for migrant workers. Figure 2 shows regions that have been taking in immigrant workers.

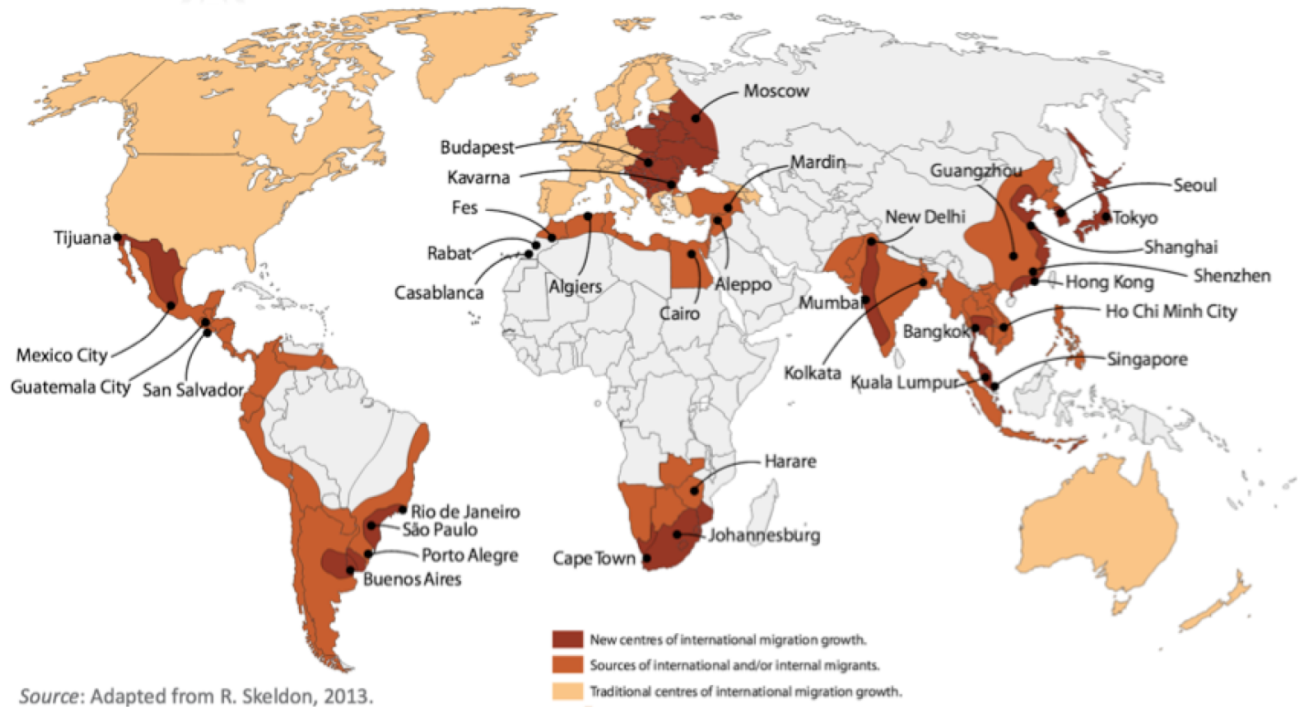


Figure 2: Destinations for Migrants  
Source: “2015 World Migrant Report”

Overall, the number of migrants is only expected to increase. The United Nations Population Funds predicts that the number of migrants will surpass 250 million in 2015 (United Nations Development Programme). In fact, the number of migrants is growing faster than the global population as a whole (Martin, 4). Furthermore, it is expected that 66 percent of the global population will be in urban regions by 2050 (“2015 World Migrant Report”). As more migrant workers flock to cities and into new countries at a whole, the question of their livelihood and the rights they will hold becomes paramount.

The topic of workers rights becomes especially pressing when we take into account the Syrian Refugee Crisis. As of November 2015, over 4.3 million Syrian Refugees have been displaced because of the Syrian Civil War (United Nations High



Commissioner for Refugees). In response, countries that have absorbed a large number of refugees—namely Turkey, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon—must eventually find ways to integrate these refugees into their economies (Amnesty International). Jordan, which has taken in 650,000 Syrians, does not recognize its refugees and has strict labor laws that limit employment to Jordanian citizens (ILO Regional Office for Arab States). With that in mind, it is important to address international frameworks for enforcing migrant worker rights worldwide.

Furthermore, migrant worker rights is a specially important topic for the vast majority of United Nations member states. By being part of the International Labour Organization (ILO), 186 of the member nations have committed to the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. The Declaration states that members must respect the rights of migrant workers in four categories: “freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of forced or compulsory labour, the abolition of child labour and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation” (“ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work”). This commitment stands independent of their ratification of any conventions and treaties. It is the role of the UN General Assembly (GA) to review existing GA resolutions regarding migrant worker rights and create frameworks through which they can be implemented, enforced, monitored, and improved.

### ***History of Migrant Worker Rights***

The International Association for Labour Legislation (IALL) was the first major Western labor organization. The IALL was founded in 1900 and aimed to create a channel between industrialized countries that wanted to protect the rights of workers. Through the creation of the International Labour Office, the IALL started publishing reports on labor legislation in different countries in English, French, and German (Davies). While these reports were supposed to make labor laws and statistics of different nations common knowledge, there was no attempt to create common international laws to



govern migrant workers rights. The IALL operated until 1925, when it had become obsolete due to the establishment of the International Labour Organization.

With the IALL as its forerunner, the International Labour Organization was established after World War I as a part of the Treaty of Versailles. The Labour Commission was set up by the Peace Conference in the spirit of creating international organizations to establish world peace. Through the lenses of security, humanitarian, political, and economic aspects, the Labour Commission was worried the exploitation of workers as countries continued to industrialize. Furthermore, the growing interdependence of world markets required countries to start considering the rights of immigrants. As early as 1919, the ILO was addressing issues that are still relevant today, such as work hours, prevention of unemployment, adequate living wages, protecting against sickness, disease, and injury on the site, special protection for children, youth, and women, freedom of association, equal pay, migrant workers rights (“ILO: Origins and History”).

The ILO had a very strong start. At the First International Labour Conference and Committee of Experts in October of 1919, they established 6 different international labor conventions. However, as time progressed, member countries felt like the regulations the ILO was imposing were too strict and decided to reduce the organization’s role.

In 1926, the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations was established. The Committee has been publishing yearly reports on individual states, international labor standards applications, and a general survey of country laws. Additionally, countries that are members of the ILO are obliged to submit biyearly reports of both the legal and practical steps they have taken to uphold any of the specific conventions they may have ratified (“Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations”).

The first convention directly addressing migrant worker rights was the Migration for Employment Convention of 1939. Passed during the 25th International Labour Conference, 28 June 1939, the Convention addressed the recruitment process, the arrival process, proper contracting, helping with failed employment, and legal rights—such as fair pay, taxes, and access to unions (“Migration for Employment Convention, 1939 (No. 66)”). The Convention had a very preventative nature and aimed to reduce improper





propaganda and regulate recruiting (Ghosh, 130). Proposed just before the beginning of World War II in an unproductive and tense international climate that was similar to that of the League of Nations, the Convention was never ratified by any ILO member nations and never came into force.

The end of World War II led to a shortage of workers and a drastic increase in migrant workers. On July 1, 1949, during the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Labour Convention, the Migration for Employment Convention (Revised) was drafted. The Revised Convention imposed stricter rules for supervising agencies and public services. Unlike the previous Convention of 1939, the 1949 Migration for Employment Convention came into force January 22, 1952.

The post-war years also changed the structure of the ILO. The number of member states doubled, the budget grew by 400 percent, and the number of officials quadrupled. More importantly, the organization began to take on a more international character. For the first time, an international body for worker rights had developing nations outnumbering industrialized nations.

By the 1970s, irregular migrant workers became more prevalent. Unlike migrant workers who were recruited to work outside of their countries of origin, irregular migrant workers are defined by their irregular residence status or their lack of working permit (“Irregular Migration: Definitions”). In response to the increase of irregular migrants, the ILO drafted the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention in 1975. The new provisions aimed to give more opportunities to regular migrants while punishing irregular migrants. The provisions came into force December 9, 1978.

### ***Migrant Worker Rights Today***

Today, Saudi Arabia, the United States, Germany, the Russian Federation, and the United Arab Emirates receive the majority of migrant workers. The corridor with the largest flow of people is between the United States and Mexico, reaching 13 million migrants in 2013. Russia and Ukraine is another large corridor, followed by Bangladesh and India (Ratha, 3).



As mentioned, the majority of migration today is classified as economic migration, which is split into three categories. Demand-pull in destination areas encompasses migration to countries that are in need of a work force for a specific task, such as American agriculture. Supply-push from origin areas is the opposite: people cannot find jobs in their countries of origin and leave in search of a better quality of life. Lastly, people find jobs in the network factors that link the two (Martin, 7).

Migrant workers contribute both to their country of origin and the countries they are working in. Remittances—or money migrant workers send to their home countries—to developing nations have surpassed \$436 billion in 2014, 4.4 percent more than in 2013. Moreover, the sum of remittances to developing and economically developed nations was \$583 billion and is expected to grow to \$636 billion by 2017. Remittances play a large role in migrant workers countries of origin. Their funds exceed both foreign direct investment—excluding China—and official development assistance. Moreover, they are less volatile than private debt, equity portfolios, and official aid (Ratha).

These workers also play important roles in the countries they work in. They take jobs in agriculture, domestic work, and tourism that many nationals are not interested in taking. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon remarked that, “Migrants make vast contributions to host countries. As workers, they bring skills. As entrepreneurs, they create jobs. As investors, they bring capital” (UN News Centre). Immigrants are especially important in developed countries with aging populations. They are a response to the demand-pull of those nations and crucial to sustaining the economic growth by providing the necessary workforce that is lacking.

Migrant workers, however, face a number of issues in the countries they reside. First off, despite existing conventions, many migrant workers are discriminated against both on and off their work sites. Because of cultural differences and language barriers, migrant workers and their families will tend to have a hard time integrating with local communities. In addition, the language barrier can make it considerably more difficult for migrant workers to navigate legal documents, leases, and tax forms (Sullivan).

Despite being entitled to equal pay and benefits, many migrant workers—be it in the United States, Germany, or Qatar—are struggling to stay above the poverty line. While irregular immigrants are coerced into deplorable conditions for low pay because of



the fear of being reported, regular immigrants are confined to worse jobs to provide for their families. Migrant workers are often placed in dangerous work conditions, are exposed to extreme weather, and have long hours (Sullivan). Many find themselves living in slums despite having fled their countries to avoid poverty, unemployment, and crime (Rombach).

This decreased standard of living has a large effect on the education their children have access to. While many migrants in nations with privatized education do not have the means to enroll their children in schools, those in countries with public education do not have access to the better institutions. Furthermore, the children themselves are discriminated against in the classroom (Sullivan). The lack of proper education perpetuates a cycle of socioeconomic stagnation.

With respect to each country's individual development, The Application of International Labour Standards 2015 I and II shows the most recent figures the International Labour Office has on different countries' standings on worker rights. As established by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, each country is supposed to submit biyearly reports on their progress with regards to ratified conventions ("Application of International Labour Standards 2015 (I)"). While the document shows a lot of progress on the part of many countries, it also points to the negligence a number of countries show with regards to worker rights.



## Previous International Action

The most comprehensive document on migrant workers rights is the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, established by General Assembly Resolution 45/158. Adopted December 18, 1990, the six-part Convention is the latest of the seven core international human rights treaties. Together they form the United Nations Human Rights Treaty System (Solomon, 12).

"The Convention works to clearly establish whom migrant workers are and delineate their rights. In Article 2 of the Convention, migrant workers are distinguished as:

- (a) The term "frontier worker" refers to a migrant worker who retains his or her habitual residence in a neighbouring State to which he or she normally returns every day or at least once a week;
- (b) The term "seasonal worker" refers to a migrant worker whose work by its character is dependent on seasonal conditions and is performed only during part of the year;
- (c) The term "seafarer", which includes a fisherman, refers to a migrant worker employed on board a vessel registered in a State of which he or she is not a national;
- (d) The term "worker on an offshore installation" refers to a migrant worker employed on an offshore installation that is under the jurisdiction of a State of which he or she is not a national;
- (e) The term "itinerant worker" refers to a migrant worker who, having his or her habitual residence in one State, has to travel to another State or States for short periods, owing to the nature of his or her occupation;
- (f) The term "project-tied worker" refers to a migrant worker admitted to a State of employment for a defined period to work solely on a specific project being carried out in that State by his or her employer; (General Assembly Resolution 45/158)



The Convention goes on to declare rights for these types of regular migrants. These rights include basic freedoms, such as: the freedom to leave and enter their state of origin; protection against inhumane treatment in the workplace, which includes both physical and sexual abuse and compulsory labor; the freedom to personal thought and religion; and the freedom to own property and not have it confiscated. Migrant workers also have the right to stand before court for due process, to privacy, to transfer their earnings, and to information. More importantly, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families establishes that migrant workers should have work conditions and compensation equal to that of nationals (Solomon).

As of October 2015, 48 nations have ratified the Convention since 1990. Additionally, 18 states have shown their support by becoming signatories to the Convention, yet have not ratified it. Figure 3 shows what countries have ratified and become signatories to the Convention.

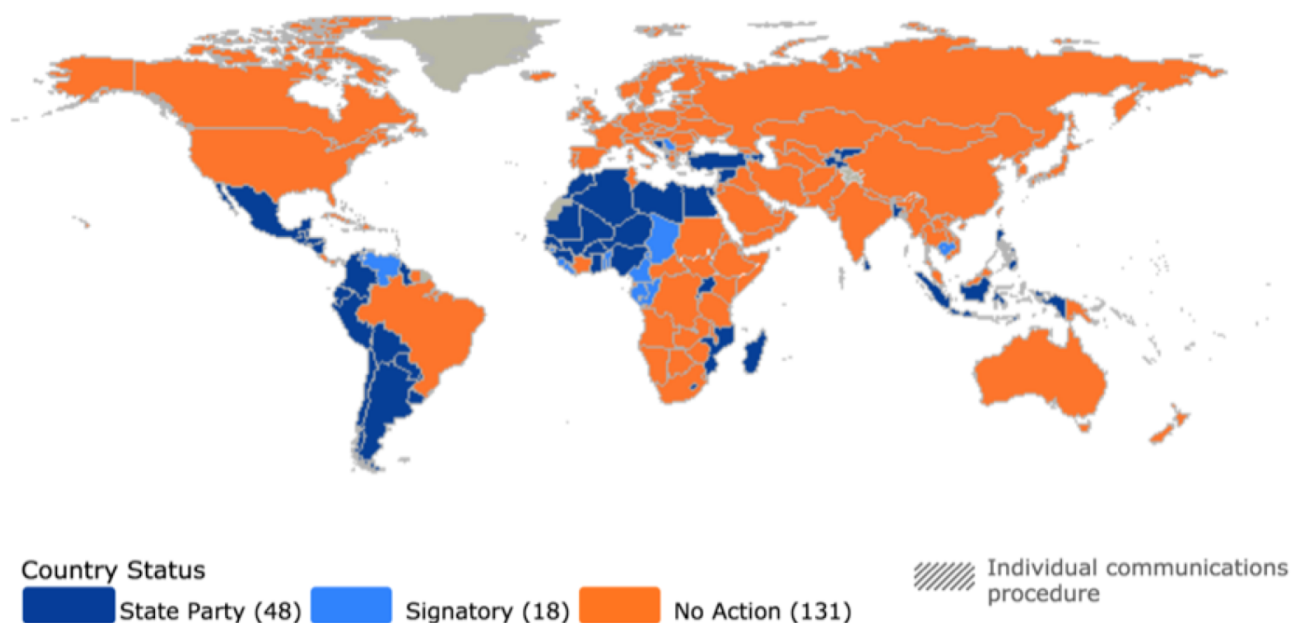


Figure 3: Country Positions on the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families  
Source: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

When compared to Figure 1, a trend is quite apparent: the countries that receive the most migrants –such as those in Western Europe and North America—have not



ratified the Convention. In fact, the countries that have either ratified or become signatories to the Convention tend to be the origin countries of the largest numbers of migrant workers (“International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families”). This is particularly problematic because, without ratification, developed nations with high numbers of migrant workers are not kept accountable for the way these workers are treated.

Therefore, the question of migrant worker rights becomes one of how to enforce the existing conventions—especially in nations that have large numbers of migrant workers, yet have not agreed to comply with international human rights treaties.



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## Case Studies

### ***Qatar***

Qatar has a fast growing economy with high demands in construction jobs, which tend to be filled by migrant workers. These workers come mainly from India, Pakistan, and Nepal. Because Qatar was selected to host the 2022 World Cup and is anticipated to continue growing economically, the demand for migrant workers will only increase in the coming years. Qatar is projected to have 2.5 million migrant workers by 2020 (“Still Slaving Away”), which is especially concerning because Qatar has not ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (“International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families”).

There are many questions surrounding the bidding process that allowed Qatar—a country with terrible conditions in many criteria—to host the colossal sporting event. However, one of the biggest concerns the international community and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) sponsors face is the history of deplorable working conditions for migrant workers and the continued violation of their rights. Visa, a major FIFA sponsor, has already expressed concern that FIFA is not doing enough to help alleviate the situation and improve working conditions for migrant workers (Sinnott).

Migrant workers are employed under Qatar’s Kafala System. This system perpetuates the oppression and mistreatment that workers suffer by tying migrant’s legal status to their employer or sponsor, which in turn gives their employers great control over their lives. They can lose their legal status if an employer reports them as “runaways” or if they fail to pay for the renewal of their annual ID. Furthermore, this means that workers cannot change jobs without their employer or sponsor’s consent. The system also puts major restrictions on their rights of free movement. Qatar Law Number 4 of 2009 says that migrant workers are not allowed to leave the country without an exit permit, which essentially bars them from leaving the country without their employer’s approval (“World Report 2014: Qatar”).



Workers not only suffer from systematic oppression, but also have to deal with deplorable working conditions. The BBC recently published a piece with first hand accounts of the subhuman conditions some of these workers are subject to. One worker from Kenya said that he spent \$1000 to get Qatar and was only getting paid \$350 a month, a lot less than what he had been promised. He had been put to work in electrician work, something he had no experience with, thus putting his life in danger. He reported that many of the workers were uneducated and employers took advantage of them. In addition, he said that employees can barely afford anything outside of what their employers provide them because their salary scarcely covered the cost-of-living in Qatar (Fottrell). Employers also take advantage of their employees by not withholding their salaries. Many workers report not being paid—yet because many are paid in cash, the authorities will not help them go against their employer (Sinnott).

Similarly, a more high-skilled worker from the United Kingdom reported his unpleasant experience. Stephen Ellis worked as a pipefitter and supervisor at a World Cup site, but left his job after only two weeks, as he could not take the sub-par working conditions and the abuse he witnessed. He described the circumstance as “an absolute disgrace,” highlighting how employers failed to provide adequate water and air conditioning—which are essential supplies for an environment where temperatures average 40-50 degrees Celsius (104-122 degrees Fahrenheit) during the day. He also said that the food was “dished out” like in “the Oliver Twist movie.” He fared much better than others when it comes to wages as he was earning about \$33 an hour, compared to the \$50 a week that unskilled workers get paid. However, he felt like that was even not enough to stay and stand witness to the horrible working conditions other faced (Fottrell).

Numbers tell a similar story to the qualitative accounts. Data from the International Trade Unions Confederation shows that at least 1,200 migrant workers had died in preparations for the World Cup. While shocking, this figure is highly inaccurate. The ITUC obtained the figure by asking the Indian and Nepali embassies how many foreign workers had died between 2010 and 2013. Not only do these numbers include figures of people who are not associated with the World Cup constructions, they also include people who died of natural causes or unrelated accidents. However, the number may also be an underestimate because it only looks at Indian and Nepali deaths, thereby





completely excluding the other two major migrant origin nations: Bangladesh and Pakistan. A study commissioned by Qatar's government and conducted by Law Firm DLA, looks at Bangladeshi workers as well and arrives at a figure of approximately 1,800 deaths. This indicates that the total number of migrant deaths is certainly larger. Although these studies do not tell us about the specific impact of the World Cup on migrant workers, it does provide us with more information of how many migrant workers die in Qatar (Stephenson).

Qatar has been very apprehensive about these claims and is constantly denying their validity. The government has tried to prevent information about working conditions from being reported, recently arresting an unsupervised BBC News team for exploring the places where workers live (Stephenson). However, they have been quick to highlight their efforts to address these problems. The Minister of Labor recently said he is confident the Kafala System will be gone by the end of the 2015 and it will be replaced by a new system with 5-year employment contracts. Under this new system, migrant workers would have more freedom to leave and return to the country and would be able to change jobs more easily. The system would also introduce a much needed wage reform; wages would be paid to employee's bank accounts, thus preventing them from getting cheated ("Still Slaving Away"). However, organizations like Amnesty International have pointed out that the government has been very slow to actually work out these reforms and predicts that implementation will not follow the anticipated timeline (Sinnott).

On the other hand, Qatar's government has done well in one area: housing. Qatar is currently building seven new "cities" to house 258,000 workers, with Labour City being the largest one ("Still Slaving Away"). However, much work still needs to be done to ensure that migrant workers have their rights from the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work guaranteed.

### ***Migrant Women Workers Rights***

Identifying the differences between male and female migration trumps the traditional view of migrants being males and the wives being included in the family of



the migrants, instead of individuals (Boyd). Women can be identified as either dependents associated with being a wife in a family or independents who are unattached (Thadani). Migration stems from a multitude of reasons, but the main ones are rural to urban for increased job opportunities and fleeing from a high conflict area to safety. When addressing the former, the family centric view of migrants assumes the male is the breadwinner leading the family toward better opportunities while the female assumes the role of homemaker and guardian of the family. Thus, men and women are not unified and equal in the decision making and process, which leads to inequality in the way women are treated as migrants because they assume a secondary place to their spouses. In this role, women's status compared to their male counterparts is the cause for discrimination in their prospective outcomes (Boyd).

The demand for workers abroad has an impact on the dynamics between male and female interactions within a family and household. In North America, the Middle East, and Europe, the demand for labor is gender specific for men (Boyd). Older men are mostly driven by work migration in regions like Kenya, Costa Rica, the Caribbean, and Indonesia where demand for male centric labor is present. Attached women travel in conjunction with their male counterparts; whereas the independent, unattached women arrive in geographically distinct areas like large cities and areas where agricultural work is available (Chant).

However, women's role in most of society is still in a private place at home while men take the roles in the public through labor and politics (Lawson). This dynamic not only has profound impact on the families migrating out of regions, but also creates an imbalance on the communities the men leave behind.

Essentially the effects of male outmigration are felt by the community as a whole, rather than the migrants' wives, it postpones initiatives to improve agriculture in the village, remittances are not usually invested in agriculture, and the effects of male outmigration on women's natural resource improvement activities are diverse and in each case depend on the gender division of labour, land tenure, women's decision-making power and women's workloads (David)

Thus, women are left with a disadvantage because there is little emphasis on their role outside of the family. Within intrahousehold developments, the income earning



potential and work responsibilities changes a family's decision on when and where to migrate to, and eventually on the communities they leave from and arrive to. Men are viewed as the primary source of income for families and thus they have the most influence in where to migrate to for their own labor potential. From the original region to the final destination, women are viewed as secondary and arrive with the assumption they will continue to maintain their homemaker status instead of pursuing labor. Thus, the inequality of home life is a production of a cycle between male dominated migration and a lack of analysis on viewing migration as having varying factors between genders. While there are no explicit regulations on female migration as a discriminatory factor, the ones in place uphold the stereotypes of a male centric view of society, such that previously in European countries, women who were declared as dependents to their husbands could not work (Zlotnik). Thus, with these *de facto* ideals in mind, it is up to the committee to address not only legislation that promotes equality of every individual, but drive to change the stigma's engrained in cultures.

The General Assembly has begun addressing gender-specific rights through General Assembly Resolution 68/137. Passed on December 18, 2013, the resolution aims to uphold the rights of migrant women in domestic work. More specifically, it calls upon member states to create mechanisms for these women to bring forward complaints against their employers. These complaints, in turn, may cover cases of economic exploitation, unlawful termination, and sexual harassment, abuse, and violence (Santos).



### Questions to Consider

1. While the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families is comprehensive, it does not address particular human rights issues faced by minorities. What issues do specific minorities face? What has been done to address those concerns and how can these initiatives be built upon?
2. How can trade treaties address human rights violations for migrant workers?



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# Evaluating the Impacts of Sex Tourism

## Background

### *Introduction*

Sex tourism is a bigger and more complex industry than most people know or experience. While it can be defined as travel that has the purchase of sexual services as one of its purposes, sex tourism has a number of implications and stakeholders. More importantly, because it involves people crossing state borders to either offer or consume sexual services, it is an issue of international scope. Therefore, it is the role of international agencies to address the concerns that stem from sex tourism.

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines sex tourism as “trips organized from within the tourism sector, or from outside this sector but using its structures and networks, with the primary purpose of effecting a commercial sexual relationship by the tourist with residents at the destination” (“Statements & Policy Documents on Child Protection”). Sex tourism has been on a steady growth for the last four decades because it has been made easier through globalization. As tourism and migration increase because of interconnected markets, a world with “[mobile] sex workers and mobile sex consumers” emerges (Wonders 549). Specifically, the growth of capitalism has led to new forms of consumption, which in turn leads to the commodification of people's sexual desire and bodies. People migrate to countries—especially from developed nations to developing nations—in search for employment opportunities. Many times, these people will find themselves involved with sexual services to sustain their livelihood. This is particularly true for women (550). On the other hand, people from more economically developed nations will travel to developing nations to purchase sexual experiences.

One of the major questions surrounding sex tourism is where to place the blame. Different national laws and international treaties approach the legality of sex tourism differently. Should prostitution itself be criminalized, thereby making the sex workers the perpetrators of the crime? Should middlemen—such as pimps, hotels, and agencies that organize sex vacations—or consumers be held accountable? Alternatively, should



prostitution in all of its forms be decriminalized? Furthermore, how should those responsible for the trafficking of people into prostitution be seen under the law?

### ***Tourism and the Sex Tourism***

Sex tourism has two major aspects: prostitution and tourism. Tourism in itself is a booming industry. According to the UNWTO, tourism grew by 4.3% in 2014 and is expected to continue growing in the coming years. Today, tourism generates approximately \$1.5 trillion worldwide, which corresponds to 10% of the world gross domestic product. Furthermore, one-eleventh of jobs are directly or indirectly linked to tourism (“Why Tourism?”).

Tourism oriented around sexual services is also a growing economy. According to an International Labour Organization report, the sex tourism industry reports approximately \$30 billion in earnings (“Global Sex Trafficking Fact Sheet”). This number, in turn, is believed to be an underrepresentation. Not only does it not include the profit other businesses enjoy from the clientele generated by sex tourism, but prostitution is illegal in a number of nations and is thus under-reported. In his essays on the role markets have played in changing human interactions, Edward Herman notes that sex tourism is "one of the booming markets in the New World Order—a multi-billion dollar industry with finders, brokers, syndicate operations and pimp 'managers' at the scene of action" (5). When combined with the human trafficking it generates, sex tourism is the third largest criminal or illegal industry worldwide, following only drug and arms trades (“Global Sex Trafficking Fact Sheet”).

Sex tourism can be divided into two different structures. The first of the two is classified as “casual supply.” As indicated by its name, “casual supply” means that tourists directly arrange services with sex workers for themselves. On the other hand, certain sex tourism destinations have “packaged supply.” In this structure, other businesses also benefit directly by being intermediary agents between the tourist and the sex workers (Ryan and Hall). Understanding the different structures is empirical to addressing sex tourism effectively.



## **Prostitution**

With roots tracing back to Mesopotamia, prostitution is considered one of the oldest jobs in humanity (Ringdal). Furthermore, the majority of cultures have the commercialization of sexual acts in some form or another—yet what exactly is prostitution? The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs explains that there are differing definitions. While some scholars limit prostitution to the explicit exchange of money for sex, others include other sexual acts within the definition of prostitution. Alternatively, some classify those who perform sexual acts *for* clients and not *with* clients as sex workers and not prostitutes. In committee, we will be using the terms interchangeably to describe anyone who exchanges money for sex—yet keep in mind that that the exchange of money for sexual acts also leads to a number of problems that can be addressed. While statistics on prostitution vary, there are an estimated 40 to 42 million people working in prostitution worldwide. Of these, 80 percent are female in the range of 13 to 25 years old (“Prostitution Statistics”).

The legality of prostitution varies from country to country. Figure 1 shows a world map that displays every country’s stance on prostitution. In the graph, red stands for “illegal,” green stands for “legal,” yellow stand for “limited legality,” and grey stands for “no laws [pertaining to prostitution legality].”

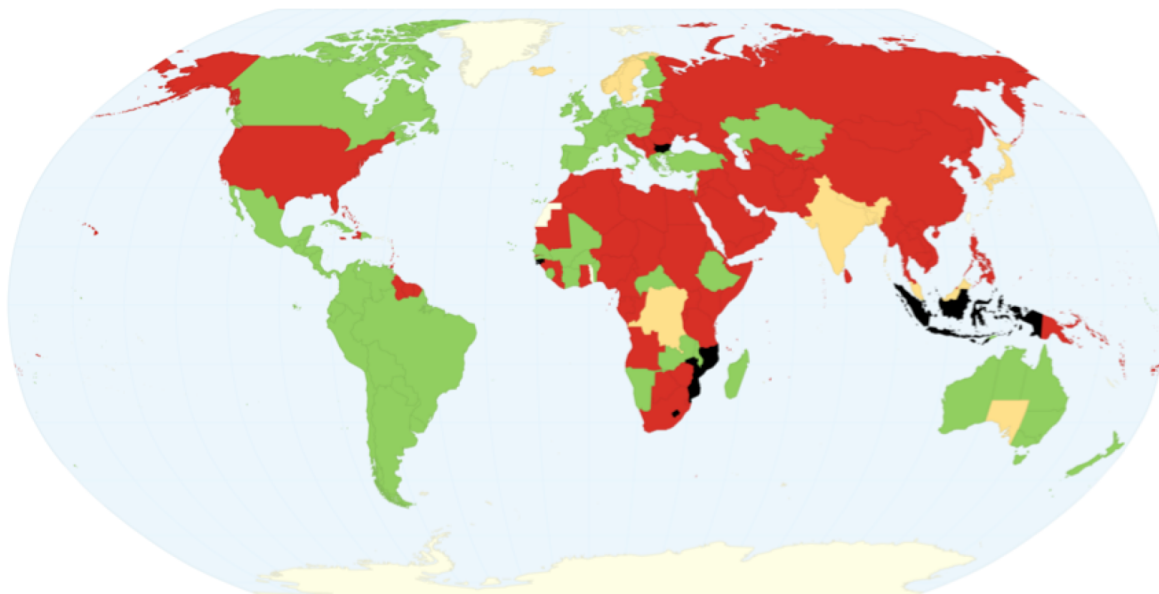


Figure 1: Legality of Prostitution Woldwide  
Source: “The Legal Status of Prostitution by Country”



Overall, prostitution is illegal in 109 countries, restricted in 11, and legal in 77. Five countries do not have any laws on prostitution. These countries are Mozambique, Lesotho, Guinea-Bissau, Indonesia, and Bulgaria.

To better understand prostitution, we must understand how it is provided. Generally speaking, there are two types of sex workers: procurer-controlled and non-procurer-controlled. Procurers—often referred to as pimps—and procuresses are in charge of arranging the exchange between the client and the sex worker, often times collecting money from each exchange or a flat rate. Furthermore, according to Norton-Hawk, “[a] pimp is one who controls the actions and lives off the proceeds of one or more women who work the street.” This may take the formal form of a brothel or a more informal form on the streets. Approximately 80 percent of female sex workers are procurer-controlled worldwide (“Global Sex Trafficking Fact Sheet”). The percentage goes up to 90 percent when considering all sex workers (“Prostitution Statistics”).

Prostitutes face many issues with being both procurer controlled and non-procurer controlled. While many defend that procurer controlled women are more likely to be protected by their pimp, recent research has pointed out that as many as 50 percent of sex workers are physically harassed by their procurer. Procurers often use violence as a means to control the sex workers. Additionally, scholars in the area defend that non-procurer-controlled women are more likely to be drug addicts and an easier target for violence, thus eliminating the bias towards the protection of procurers (Norton-Hawk).

### ***Human Trafficking***

Human trafficking is one of the most widely criticized effects of sex tourism and prostitution in general. The US Department of State broadly defines human sex trafficking victim as “an adult [engaging] in a commercial sex act, such as prostitution, as the result of force, threats of force, fraud, coercion or any combination of such means,” and a perpetrator of human sex trafficking as one who is responsible for “recruiting, harboring, enticing, transporting, providing, obtaining, or maintaining [such] person.” With regards to children trafficking, the definition stricter: “no cultural or socioeconomic



rationalizations alter the fact that children who are prostituted are trafficking victims” (“Trafficking in Persons Report 2015”). Despite being prohibited by law in 134 countries, human trafficking—specifically of women and children for sexual purposes—is the largest growing criminal enterprise worldwide.

Many consider human trafficking modern-day slavery. The practice treats people as commodities to be traded, used, and abused for profit (Bernat). The exploitation of trafficked persons usually takes the form of a system of debt bondage. In this system, a person’s physical labor is used to repay a debt that he, she, or the person’s family may have. Often times, the exploited person will accumulate more debt at a larger rate than they are able to pay off, thus trapping them. Researcher Kabance notes that “[while] traditional slavery put the cost of enslavement on the slave-holder, human trafficking shifts the cost of enslavement to the trafficked person.” Figure 2, from the United Nations Trafficking in Persons 2014 report, shows the observed forms of exploitation of human trafficking victims. Sexual exploitation is a major cause for human trafficking in the majority of regions in the world.

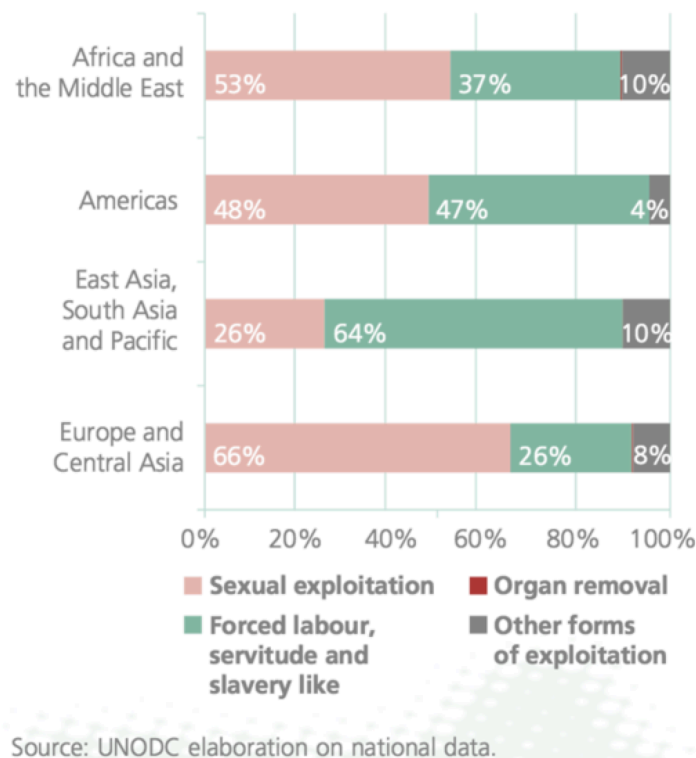


Figure 2: Forms of Exploitation of Trafficked Victims (2010-present)  
Source: *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*



## Past International Action

The international community has attempted to address sex tourism through the lenses of human trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children. The most prominent convention on human trafficking today is the United Nations' Palermo Protocols. The Palermo Protocols were developed to supplement Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Adopted in 2000 by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, three distinct protocols make up the Palermo Protocols: the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children; the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air; and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking in Firearm, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition. The former defines:

Trafficking in persons' shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the 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 of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs (Kabance)

Furthermore, the Protocol aims to protect victims through an international approach looking at the country of origin, the countries of transit, and the country of destination. The major accomplishment of the Palermo Protocols is to recognize that not all victims of trafficking are physically forced into the situation; many may have been economically coerced into it. This opens a channel to target more forms on human trafficking.

The first of the Palermo Protocols, however, is only as strong as the countries that ratify it. As an international document that recognizes the need to address human trafficking and sexual exploitation, it is up to national legislation to address the issues at hand. As of November 2015, 169 parties have ratified the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children. However, many East



Asian nations—which are deeply involved in human trafficking—have signed but not ratified the protocol (Shoaps).

To take a more proactive approach to addressing human trafficking, the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, or UN.GIFT, was established in 2007. UN.GIFT was an alliance between six different organizations: the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Other than encouraging the ratification of pertinent protocols and conventions, UN.GIFT aimed to tackle human trafficking from both the supply and demand sides. It provided protection and support for those who fell victim to trafficking and exploitation and tried to reduce the vulnerability of potential victims. Furthermore, it tried to efficiently prosecute involved criminals to curb the demand. To do so, UN.GIFT worked with state and non-state actors to increase awareness about human rights and human trafficking by collecting, analyzing, and presenting data more effectively (“UN.GIFT Strategy”).

As an organization with a finite mandate, UN.GIFT was finalized on December 21, 2014. During its operations, it was able to create partnerships with state and non-state actors, gather technical tools to address human trafficking data, and create influential publications, such as the first Global Report on Trafficking in Persons. More importantly, it highlighted the role of the private sector and of the civil society in assisting victims and decreasing demand.

With regards to prostitution, the international community has taken action to address the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents. The Rio de Janeiro Declaration and Call for Action to Prevent and Stop Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents was published in November of 2008. It reviewed the accomplishments of the international community, such as the ongoing increase in national legislations and growing support of the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism from travel and tourism organizations. However, the document also highlights major issues with the current international approach to addressing the issue, many of which persist to today. Those range from the identification



of vulnerable children and the protection of those children to the development of mechanisms to empower children's voice on the matter. In its call to action, the Rio de Janeiro Declaration encourages the ratification of both international and regional instruments to address human trafficking and urges the development of national policies to protect child exploitation. Amongst those policies, the Rio de Janeiro Declaration recommends that the law treat these children as victims and not perpetrators of a crime and that special police and health units be dedicated to help them.

On the other hand, Amnesty International has taken a different approach to sexual exploitation. On August 11, 2015, Amnesty International authorized their International Board to adopt policies that protect the rights of sexual workers. Recognizing that "[sex] workers are one of the most marginalized groups in the world who in most instances face constant risk of discrimination, violence and abuse," the policy aims to make all forms of consensual adult sex work legal ("Global movement votes to adopt policy to protect human rights of sex workers"). Decriminalized prostitution will allow the organization to better address the rights of prostitutes and protect them against exploitation, violence, and trafficking, argues the Secretary General of Amnesty International, Salil Shetty. As a policy that is currently being implemented, the effects of it are still unknown.

As shown, there are many angles to address sex exploitation and human trafficking, especially of children. While most aim to create international legislation, others aim to inform the general public, and others to protect the rights of sex workers. Different angles have different effects on sex tourism as a practice. It is up to the committee to use the addressed international actions and further research to come up with resolutions that tackle human trafficking and sex commercialization from a sex tourism perspective.





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## Case Studies

### ***The Netherlands***

In 2000, the Netherlands removed the ban on brothels. Under current law, sex work is allowed to function in brothels as legal, licensed businesses regulated by local municipalities rather than the central government. There is a generally accepted tolerance for prostitution and most of the Dutch believe that prostitution and brothels should be minimized but not criminalized, which is a reason that there is no official national policy on sex work (Wonders). Sex workers are allowed to sue in a court of law, which allows migrant sex workers who were the victims of trafficking to be granted a three-month temporary visa. In the event that they choose to testify, they can be granted a limited residency permit for the duration of the trial, after which they are deported (Halley).

The Netherlands' Red Light District is a popular tourist site and attracts many foreigners as a destination. Despite not having any distinct physical attraction, it remains one of the top ten tourist locations in all of Europe (Pinder 307). There is an incredibly global interest to the sex industry in Amsterdam. Foreigners who frequent the Red Light District fuel the local economies that keep the brothels and city alive (Wonders). Therefore, the economic incentive to keep the Red Light District legal makes it especially hard to focus on the human right violations regarding sex trafficking.

On the side of the provider of these services, there is a duality between protection and worker's rights as a legality issue, and reluctance from the government to give prostitutes and the business owners full employment protection due to the high level of substance abuse, migrant workers, and link to organized crime. Associations to protect sex workers and their employer's rights have been established such as the Association of Operators of Relaxation Businesses and Prostitution Information Centre. The latter of which supplies information to sex workers and tourists about STD prevention, prices to expect, and where newcomers can sell sexual work (Wonders).

Sex trafficking in the Netherlands is a particularly evasive issue because it is one of the only member states of the EU that allows legal prostitution. The ease of immigration across state lines allows more young girls to be trafficked to brothels with little legal regulation of their whereabouts (McGivering). Each year about 3,500 women



are trafficked to the Netherlands to work in brothels or illegal escort agencies even though the Dutch have thousands of self-employed prostitutes and some of the most liberal sex laws in the world, research shows (Reuters). There is a constant push and pull between combatting supply and demand of sex workers, whether officials should bar the red light district or to decrease the demand for prostitution. Additionally, there are polarizing forces on whether the red light district is a sustainable and safe place for people to work while also being one of the main tourist attractions in the Netherlands (Reuters). However, it is important not to lose sight on the public health policies that the Netherlands has been able to sustain. The Netherlands has had significantly low HIV rates among prostitutes and they do have many rights as legal employees (Wonders). Thus, the issue of balance lies whether the improvements that the Red Light District has had counteracts the migrant workers and sex trafficking that still exists within the city's borders.

## **Cuba**

The tourist industry is one of the biggest economic activities in Cuba. After the fall of communist powerhouses—such as the Soviet Union—Cuba turned to tourism as a source of economic stability. Stay-over visits increased from 300,000 in 1989 to 1.7 million in the year 2000. The Cuban government has invested in hotels, doubling their capacity and revenue from tourism has increased from 243 million in 1990 to 1.8 billion, accounting for 6.9% of GDP (Wonders).

Before the communist revolution, Cuba was known as “Pleasure Island,” being a popular destination for tourists that sought a good time in Cuban casinos. The market for prostitution was beginning to flourish during these times, yet after the revolution the government closed all casinos and banned prostitution. Tourism was also limited, and it was greatly affected by the revolution and American embargo. However, as socialism fell around the world, Cuba was forced to liberalize its policies and allow more tourism, creating a foundation for sex tourism (Simoni).

Growth in tourism has brought globalization to Cuba. Globalization is one of the main factors that have helped built this culture of “sex tourism,” which “highlights the



convergence between prostitution and tourism” (Wonders, 545). The other factor that has contributed to this phenomenon is the movement of bodies across borders. Sex tourism is now greatly helped by the improvements in travel technology and the popularity of tourism, which have made the tourist industry the largest employer in the world (Wonders).

In order to keep up with a globalizing world, the Cuban government introduced various reforms in the 90s that helped create a foundation for sex tourism. Initially, the government allowed the private rental of rooms and housing, giving prostitution a place to flourish, especially with the expanded self-employment liberties. The government also allowed the establishment of private restaurants that served as hotspots for connecting prostitutes with tourists. Furthermore, it allowed the use of private vehicles as taxis, allowing prostitutes to have more mobility. Finally, the opening of “dollar stores” that sold a wide range of products popularized the use of U.S. currency, creating a desire for dollars that tourists had (Wonders).

The dollar has played a big role in prostitution in Cuba. In earlier years when tourism was more restricted to certain areas, the Cuban population desired many of the products that were meant for tourists. This gave way to the creation of a black market in which the US dollar ruled and the Cuban peso had no power. Many Cuban women and men were willing to sell their bodies to tourists for US dollars (Davidson).

Cuban prostitutes are known as “Jinetas,” which translates to “jockeys” because they are “ride” to tourists. They are mostly young and are willing to sell their bodies for cash, goods, and even just for a nice night out in a restaurant (Davidson). The latter is one of the major attractions for foreign tourists: that Cuban prostitutes act like “pseudo-girlfriends,” giving the men that seek them a nice time, not just quick sex (Wonders). Another important feature of prostitution in Cuba is that most prostitutes are “autonomous,” meaning that there is no third party involved in their business (such as pimps) and that their transactions are direct (Davidson).

There is evidence that pedophiles travel to Cuba to gain access to young girls. Young, inexperienced girls many times are easily convinced by small gifts or even a nice night out in a restaurant or nightclub. However, most of the prostitution does not fall in this category; most young women are seeking luxuries and gifts that foreigners can



provide. Another characteristic of Cuban prostitutes that tourists seek is their ethnicity. Cuban women are seen as exotic, fetishized by European white males. Most sex tourists come from countries like Italy, Spain, England, and Canada (Simoni). Wealthy foreigners take advantage of their positions of power to obtain sex from Cuban women. But Cuban women are not necessarily physically forced. Many of them are coerced by circumstances such as poverty. One tourist reports that he has had sex with some in exchange for just “a bar of soap” (Davidson, 44). But many of the women actually like to be treated nicely and spoiled by European men in exchange for money, luxuries, and a good time (Davidson). As one paper puts it, Cuban women and some men turn to prostitution when “faced with declining returns from routine labor and rising material desires” (Wonders, 562).

Globalization and the expansion of tourism has created an environment in Cuba where women can earn a lot more dollars than they would working a normal job while enjoying the luxuries that are easily accessible to European tourists, but not to them. When faced with this choice, many women choose to sell their bodies (Wonders).



## Questions to Consider

1. What are the different structures to make sex for money illegal? How do the different structures affect prostitutes, procurers, and clients? Consider who is being blamed under the law.
2. How do extractive industries affect sex trafficking?
3. What role should the private businesses play in addressing human trafficking?
4. What responsibilities should travel and tourism organizations have with regards to sex tourism? Consider the economic impact of sex tourism and existing conventions, such as the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism.



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