



Fact Sheet

Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons
Washington, DC
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U.S. Government Efforts to Fight Demand Fueling Human Trafficking

Human trafficking, a dehumanizing crime turning people into mere commodities, includes both supply and demand-side factors. On the supply side, criminal networks, corruption, lack of education and reliable information about employment opportunities, and poverty make people vulnerable to the lures of trafficking. Significant efforts are being made to address these "push" factors.

At the same time, the demand side of the equation cannot be ignored. While no precise definition of demand for human trafficking exists, for the purposes of this fact sheet, demand can take two forms: 1) that of the trafficker or "wholesaler" whose greed motivates the victimization of vulnerable individuals; and 2) that of the consumer whose demand determines profitability. Market demand for commercial sex acts and cheap labor create a profit-incentive for traffickers to entrap more victims, fueling the growth of trafficking in persons.

Countering Demand-Side Factors that Fuel Sex and Labor Trafficking

Law enforcement action against those who use force, fraud, or coercion to exploit individuals into labor or commercial sex acts (i.e., the traffickers) is an effective means of reducing demand. Similarly, demand is lowered through initiatives that discourage and educate consumers of products or services rendered from trafficked individuals. The U.S. *Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000* recognized all aspects of human trafficking as a crime and dramatically increased the penalties for trafficking offenses. Since 2001, the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division and U.S. Attorneys' Offices have seen a 600 percent increase in prosecutions and four straight years of record-high convictions.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recently created regional programs that will raise public awareness about reducing the demand that contributes to trafficking exploitation. HHS is galvanizing local communities and providing victim services, while focusing on consumer demand reduction. HHS operates a public awareness campaign, distributes a wide-range of educational *Rescue & Restore* materials, and provides training and technical assistance through its National Human Trafficking Resource Center.

Reducing the Demand for Trafficking for Commercial Sexual Exploitation

Commercial sexual exploitation exists within the commercial sex trade, including prostitution. Prostitution is a contributing factor to trafficking in persons. People who buy sex acts, usually men, fuel the demand for sex trafficking. They need to know that they are feeding a demand for sexual slavery.

Engaging in prostitution is illegal in most of the United States, so state and local authorities have a range of options available to deter buyers:

- Several cities, such as San Francisco, Brooklyn, and Tacoma, operate a "john school" that provides educational programs for first offenders arrested for buying sex. These programs inform men on the legal, health, and other risks and effects of prostitution, and reinforce the message that prostitution is not a victimless crime.
- The city of Atlanta launched, in November 2006, a "Dear John" public education campaign to educate potential sex buyers about their role in fueling the commercial sexual exploitation of children.
- The city of Portland, Oregon pioneered the use of vehicle forfeiture laws to seize the cars of offenders who use their cars to find persons in prostitution and engage in sexual activity in their cars. Other jurisdictions provide for courts to suspend or revoke an offender's drivers license.
- In San Diego, men charged with soliciting are required to appear before a panel consisting of community members, prosecutors, public health workers, social service staff who work with prostituted people, and police.
- Men charged with soliciting in Indianapolis, Indiana, are required to return to the community in which the offense occurred to publicly face area residents and perform community service work there.
- Police agencies and local governments have publicized the names and photographs of sex buyers arrested and/or convicted in local media outlets and on the Internet. In 2003 in Omaha, Nebraska, billboards with the slogan "If you are convicted of soliciting a prostitute, you will see your name here" publicized the names of 6-12 offenders at a time. In Akron, Ohio, the "Operation John Be Gone" Web site, which posted the photographs of men charged with soliciting persons in prostitution, drew more than 100,000 hits in its first year online.

Reducing the Demand and Raising Awareness on Goods or Services Produced by Forced or Child Labor in Violation of International Standards

With unprecedented globalization, products made by new sources of labor—including those which are highly exploitative such as forced child labor, debt bondage, and other forms of forced labor—enter the global trade through exported products. Denying forced labor-made products access to foreign markets will reduce the incentive to exploit slave labor and encourage ethical business behavior. However, this can only be achieved through governments sharing information on export products and production chains.

U.S. Government efforts are aimed at denying specific items produced, in part or wholly, by forced labor access to the U.S. market. The Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement produced awareness materials on U.S. law prohibiting the importation of merchandise produced with prison labor, forced labor, or indentured labor. As required by the 2005 *Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act*, the Department of Labor's (DOL's) Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) will develop and make available to the public a list of goods from countries that ILAB has reason to believe are produced by forced labor and child labor in violation of international standards. DOL is gathering information on forced labor and child labor worldwide and aims to publish an initial list by 2009.

International Program Funded by the United States to Reduce Demand

The U.S. Government funds international programs to fight human trafficking overseas. These programs may focus on supporting efforts to reduce demand, for example:

- The Department of State funded an international project by a non-governmental organization to highlight the links between violence against women and the normalization of sexual exploitation through the sex industry, encourage alternatives to the legalization of prostitution, and reduce the demand that fosters exploitation of women and children as described in the Palermo Protocol.
- The U.S. Agency for International Development partnered with the MTV Europe Foundation and MTV Networks Asia Pacific to launch an Asia-wide anti-trafficking campaign which includes television specials, public service announcements, a multilingual internet presence, and MTV events. One of the activity's objectives was to reduce the demand for sex and labor exploitation that fuels human trafficking.

Combating Global Sex Tourism

In 2003, the United States strengthened its ability to fight child sex tourism by passing the *Prosecutorial Remedies and other Tools to end the Exploitation of Children Today (PROTECT) Act* and the 2003 *Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act*. The PROTECT Act increased penalties to a maximum of 30 years in prison for engaging in child sex tourism. Since the passage of the PROTECT Act, there have been approximately 64 convictions of child sex tourists. The Department of Homeland Security has developed the "Operation Predator" initiative to combat child exploitation, child pornography, and child sex tourism. The U.S. Government also funded organizations to conduct public awareness and deterrence campaigns overseas, targeting U.S. sex tourists abroad, that include public service announcements, internet messages, brochures, posters, and billboards. The Departments of State and Transportation engaged the Air Transport Association of America and the International Air Transport Association to raise awareness of child sex tourism among airlines. The Department of State also funded research on child sex tourism and compiled reference materials on a CD-ROM.

Preventing the U.S. Military and Civilian Police from Contributing to Trafficking

The Department of Defense (DoD) has taken an aggressive stand against sex trafficking and related activities that may contribute to the phenomenon of trafficking in persons. DoD's "zero tolerance" policy opposes prostitution, recognizing it as a contributing factor to sex trafficking. Since late 2005, patronizing prostitution is a specific, chargeable offense for service members under Article 134 of the U.S. military's statutory criminal law, the Uniform Code of Military Justice. DoD is also working to prevent labor trafficking in U.S. military contracts. Anti-trafficking training is now mandatory for all U.S. service members. The Department of State has taken measures to prevent its civilian police contractors from engaging in sex trafficking and related activities while deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan, Haiti and other countries. As part of the training program, civilian police candidates receive information about human trafficking, the local situation, and U.S. anti-trafficking laws and policies. U.S. police contractors are required to sign a certificate stating that they are aware of U.S. law and possible consequences for engaging in or facilitating sex trafficking and will refrain from such activities.

See also: *Ambassador Lagon's speech at the Hudson Institute, "[Fighting Demand for Sex Trafficking](#)"*



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