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# HUMAN SMUGGLING AND TRAFFICKING INTO EUROPE A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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By Louise Shelley

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# Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>I. Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Definitions .....	3
<b>II. Smuggling and Trafficking: Models, Trends, and Routes</b> .....	<b>4</b>
A. Source Countries: East vs. South .....	5
B. Routes .....	6
<b>III. Profile of Facilitators</b> .....	<b>7</b>
A. Criminal Groups from Turkey and the Balkans .....	9
B. The Role of Corruption .....	10
<b>IV. Profile of Trafficked and Smuggled Persons</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>V. Impacts of Smuggling and Trafficking</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>VI. Policy Response: Looking Forward</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Works Cited</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>About the Author</b> .....	<b>23</b>



## Executive Summary

Human smuggling and trafficking are rapidly growing transnational criminal activities that involve the recruitment, movement, and delivery of migrants from a sending region to a destination. The two activities are differentiated as follows: smuggled migrants have a consensual relationship with their smugglers and are free at the end of their journey, while trafficked persons are enslaved and exploited by their traffickers.

Smuggling and trafficking activities are on the rise in Europe, which accepted 1.7 million legal migrants from outside the European Union in 2011<sup>1</sup>—far below the numbers of those seeking entry. During the same year, the EU border management agency Frontex detected 141,000 illegal crossings.<sup>2</sup> Given the demand to enter Europe due to work opportunities, perceived economic advantages, and dire political and economic conditions in many sending countries, it is unsurprising that human smuggling in particular is on the rise. The problem has become a high priority for EU Member States, and is especially challenging given Europe's relatively porous borders. Trafficking, too, is a large-scale problem. In 2010, there were an estimated 140,000 trafficking victims in Europe, generating \$3 billion annually for their exploiters.<sup>3</sup>

Five countries—Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy, and the Netherlands—have recorded the highest number of trafficking victims in Europe. These countries are also principal destinations for individuals who enlist the services of human smugglers. Trafficked or smuggled migrants come from all regions of the world, and the primary transit routes are across the Mediterranean, and through the Balkans, Eastern Europe, and Turkey. Many of these are the same routes that are used for traded goods.

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### *Policy solutions that are likely to reduce trafficking and smuggling flows need to be multifaceted.*

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Trafficking and smuggling are logistically complicated, and the barriers to entry into these activities have created an enormous variety of facilitators who assist those seeking illegal entry into the European Union, ranging from small groups to complex international organizations. Other facilitators are not part of criminal networks, but instead either knowingly or unknowingly aid the process. For example, employment agencies are often used to facilitate the movement of victims, apartment owners may rent apartments to smuggled and trafficked individuals, and businesses—particularly in the travel and entertainment industries—may employ smuggled or trafficked workers.

Corruption is also deeply connected to the problem, as travel agencies, border guards, customs officials, consular officers, and other diplomatic personnel must be bribed or extorted for trafficking to be successful. This corruption reduces the quality of governance, and enables an activity that fuels violence against individual victims as well as increased anti-immigrant sentiment across Europe.

Policy solutions that are likely to reduce trafficking and smuggling flows need to be multifaceted, addressing a variety of contributing factors simultaneously. Primarily, policymakers must address the demand for the migrants through education, prevention efforts, and prosecution; harmonize policy efforts both within and across countries so that smugglers and traffickers do not just move to take advantage of the most permissive regulatory environment; decrease the profits of smugglers and traffickers; and improve labor laws so that legal immigrants may fill the demand for the work that currently employs smuggled migrants.

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1 Eurostat, "Migration and Migrant Population Statistics," [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/Migration\\_and\\_migrant\\_population\\_statistics](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Migration_and_migrant_population_statistics).

2 Frontex, *Annual Risk Analysis 2012* (Warsaw: Frontex, 2012), [http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Attachment\\_Featured/Annual\\_Risk\\_Analysis\\_2012.pdf](http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Attachment_Featured/Annual_Risk_Analysis_2012.pdf).

3 United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *The Globalization of Crime: A Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment* (Vienna: UNODC, 2010), [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/tocta-2010.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/tocta-2010.html).



## I. Introduction

Human smuggling and trafficking are two of the fastest growing transnational criminal activities, and are thought to be the most lucrative forms of organized crime after the drug trade.<sup>4</sup> While most victims are located in Asia, Western Europe has become a major destination point. Smugglers and traffickers make substantial profits from the thousands of people who seek to enter Europe illicitly. While it is difficult to know the exact numbers—there is a lack of research and a paucity of data, particularly on trafficking—the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimates that in 2010 there were 140,000 trafficking victims in Europe, generating \$3 billion annually for their exploiters.<sup>5</sup> The most comprehensive study, conducted in 2005 by the International Labor Organization (ILO), estimated the global profits of commercial sex trafficking and forced labor at that time as \$33.9 billion annually, based on approximately 1.4 million trafficked people engaged in commercial sexual exploitation and millions more in forced labor.<sup>6</sup> Almost half of these profits came from industrialized nations, a significant number of them in Europe.<sup>7</sup>

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*Human smuggling and trafficking are two of the fastest growing transnational criminal activities.*

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Human trafficking and smuggling into Europe have grown since the 1980s. Emigrants are attracted by generous welfare support and perceived economic advantages, as well as the demand in Western Europe for “three-d” workers—those willing to take dirty, dangerous, and/or degrading jobs that national citizens are unwilling to do. The increase can also be attributed to a number of converging global factors in the past few decades: economic crises in Asia; the conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan; and poverty in the global south have all encouraged emigration. Finally, options for legal entry to Europe are limited. In 2011, Europe accepted approximately 1.7 million legal migrants—a small percentage of those seeking entry—from outside the European Union.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, Frontex detected 141,000 illegal border crossings during the same year.<sup>9</sup> In 2008 an estimated 1.9 million to 3.8 million unauthorized migrants resided in the European Union.<sup>10</sup> Given the numbers of people who wish to travel to the European Union, it is no surprise that the problem of human smuggling has grown relative to that of human trafficking.<sup>11</sup>

European policymakers have made great efforts to restrict illegal immigration. This is an enormous challenge given the nature of EU borders—the Mediterranean coast is lightly guarded, and the long border that many Eastern European countries share with the former Soviet Union is notorious for its

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4 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *2007 UN World Drug Report* (Vienna: UNODC, 2007), [www.unodc.org/pdf/research/wdr07/WDR\\_2007.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/pdf/research/wdr07/WDR_2007.pdf).

5 UNODC, *The Globalization of Crime: A Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment* (Vienna: UNODC, 2010), [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/tocta-2010.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/tocta-2010.html).

6 Patrick Belsler, “Forced Labor and Human Trafficking, Estimating the Profits” (working paper, International Labor Organization, Geneva, March 2005): 5, 14. [www.ilo.org/sapfl/Informationresources/ILOPublications/WCMS\\_081971/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/sapfl/Informationresources/ILOPublications/WCMS_081971/lang-en/index.htm).

7 According to UNODC there are 1.4 million trafficked migrants in Asia and the Pacific; 270,000 in industrialized countries; 250,000 in Latin America; and 230,000 in the Middle East and North Africa; UNODC, *Human Trafficking: An Overview* (Vienna: UNODC, 2008): 6, [www.ungift.org/docs/ungift/pdf/knowledge/ebook.pdf](http://www.ungift.org/docs/ungift/pdf/knowledge/ebook.pdf).

8 Eurostat, “Migration and Migrant Population Statistics,” [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/Migration\\_and\\_migrant\\_population\\_statistics](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Migration_and_migrant_population_statistics); Kristiina Kangaspunta, “Mapping the Inhuman Trade: Preliminary Findings of the Human Trafficking Database,” *Forum on Crime and Society* 3, no. 1 (2003): 81, [www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/forum/forum3\\_note1.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/forum/forum3_note1.pdf).

9 Frontex, *Annual Risk Analysis 2012* (Warsaw: Frontex, 2012), [http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Attachment\\_Featured/Annual\\_Risk\\_Analysis\\_2012.pdf](http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Attachment_Featured/Annual_Risk_Analysis_2012.pdf).

10 Clandestino Project, *Policy Brief: Size and Development of Irregular Migration to the EU* (Athens: Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, 2009): 4, [http://irregular-migration.net/tyto3\\_upload/groups/31/4.Background\\_Information/4.2.Policy\\_Briefs\\_EN/ComparativePolicyBrief\\_SizeOfIrregularMigration\\_Clandestino\\_Nov09\\_2.pdf](http://irregular-migration.net/tyto3_upload/groups/31/4.Background_Information/4.2.Policy_Briefs_EN/ComparativePolicyBrief_SizeOfIrregularMigration_Clandestino_Nov09_2.pdf).

11 John Salt and Jennifer Hogarth, *Migrant Trafficking and Human Smuggling in Europe: A Review of the Evidence* (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2000), chapter 8.



often-corrupt border patrol personnel.<sup>12</sup> Given that Eastern Europe includes porous, lawless regions through which many migrants and trafficked people from other regions transit, the lack of control along this eastern border is especially significant.<sup>13</sup>

Combating the transnational criminal groups that facilitate trade in humans has become a high priority for the Member States of the European Union. Policymakers have allocated significant resources to Europol, the European police agency, and established Frontex, a European agency devoted to border control.<sup>14</sup> Despite such steps, and mass media coverage of the issue, human smuggling and trafficking continue unabated. The financial crisis in 2008 only exacerbated the situation by increasing economic hardship in source countries and placing businesses in Europe under severe pressure to cut costs. According to Europol, this has increased demand for unauthorized migrants and trafficked victims in the economy as companies under financial pressure struggle to survive.<sup>15</sup>

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This report reviews national reports and research conducted in diverse countries of the European Union to paint a better picture of what is taking place on the ground. It also reviews reports and analyses of cases that have been investigated by Europol, ILO, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Finally, it draws on the scholarly literature on smuggling and trafficking. The report has two goals: to outline the effects of smuggling/trafficking and to discuss policy options for limiting the phenomenon.

### Definitions

Both human smuggling and trafficking involve the recruitment, movement, and delivery of migrants from a host to a destination state. What differentiates the two activities is whether the migrants are willing participants or not: traffickers enslave and exploit trafficked persons, while smuggled migrants have a consensual relationship with their smugglers and are free at the end of their journey.

The United Nations has adopted a legislative framework to define human smuggling and trafficking. Distinct protocols were adopted on the two crimes in 2000 in conjunction with the United Nations *Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*.<sup>16</sup> The adoption of these protocols in tandem with the convention reflects the international understanding that human smuggling and trafficking are part of organized crime.<sup>17</sup>

12 Human Rights Watch, "Hopes Betrayed: Trafficking of Women and Girls to Post-Conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina for Forced Prostitution," *Human Rights Watch* 14, no. 9 (2002): 26–34, [www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3e31416f0.html](http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3e31416f0.html).

13 Frank Laczko, Irene Stacher, and Amanda Klekowski von Koppenfels, *New Challenges for Migration Policy in Central and Eastern Europe* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

14 Letizia Paoli and Cyrille Fijnaut, "General Introduction," in *Organised Crime in Europe: Concepts, Patterns and Control Policies in the European Union and Beyond*, eds. Cyrille Fijnaut and Letizia Paoli (Dordrecht: Springer, 2004): 1. Frontex is a specialized and independent body based in Warsaw to provide operational cooperation on border issues; see Frontex, "Origin," [www.frontex.europa.eu](http://www.frontex.europa.eu).

15 Europol, *Trafficking in Human Beings in the European Union* (The Hague: Europol, 2011), [www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/trafficking\\_in\\_human\\_beings\\_in\\_the\\_european\\_union\\_2011.pdf](http://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/trafficking_in_human_beings_in_the_european_union_2011.pdf).

16 Kara Abramson, "Beyond Consent, Toward Safeguarding Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations Trafficking Protocol," *Harvard International Law Journal* 44, no. 2 (2003): 473–502; Janice G. Raymond, "The New UN Trafficking Protocol," *Women's Studies International Forum* 25, no. 5 (2002): 491–502.

17 Phil Williams and Ernesto Savona, eds., *The United Nations and Transnational Organized Crime* (London and Portland, OR: Cass, 1996).



The definition of trafficking in Article 3a of the anti-trafficking protocol defines the problem in the following way:

*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, or fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or 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 of organs.<sup>18</sup>*

*This broad definition of trafficking includes sex trafficking as well as trafficking into exploitative work situations such as domestic help, agricultural work, and work in dangerous industries. It also includes the trafficking of child soldiers, of children put up for adoption or forced into begging, and the less well-known and analyzed problem of organ trafficking. Most of these types of trafficking are present in Europe, though there is no evidence of child soldiers since the wars in the Balkans.*

The *Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air* defines the problem in the following way:

*“Smuggling of Migrants” shall mean the procurement, in order to obtain directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident.<sup>19</sup>*

Although human smuggling and trafficking have different definitions, the demarcation is not so clear in real life.<sup>20</sup> Because smuggling often occurs within the context of large-scale migration, there are numerous possibilities for abuse. Individuals, most often women and children, may start off as paying clients of human smugglers but end up as trafficking victims.<sup>21</sup>

## II. Smuggling and Trafficking: Models, Trends, and Routes

Human smuggling and trafficking are not evenly distributed across Europe. According to the United Nations, five countries of Western Europe—Belgium,<sup>22</sup> Germany, Greece, Italy, and the Netherlands—have recorded the highest number of trafficking victims. These same countries are also principal destinations for individuals who enlist the services of human smugglers.<sup>23</sup> The next-largest hubs of human trafficking

18 UNODC, *United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and the 2 Protocols Thereto*, [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CTOC/index.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CTOC/index.html).

19 United Nations, *Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime* (2000), [www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final\\_documents\\_2/convention\\_smug\\_eng.pdf](http://www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final_documents_2/convention_smug_eng.pdf).

20 For a discussion of this, see Bridget Anderson and Julia O’Connell Davidson, *Is Trafficking in Human Beings Demand Driven? A Multi-Country Pilot Study* 9 (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2003), [www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/published\\_docs/serial\\_publications/mrs15b.pdf](http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/published_docs/serial_publications/mrs15b.pdf).

21 Benjamin S. Buckland, “Smuggling and Trafficking: Crossover and Overlap,” in *Strategies Against Human Trafficking: the Role of the Security Sector*, ed. Cornelius Friesendorf (Vienna and Geneva: National Defense Academy and Austrian Ministry of Defense and Sports, 2009): 146, 151, <http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/download.action?nodePath=%2FPublications%2FStrategies+Against+Human+Trafficking+The+Role+of+the+Security+Sector.pdf&fileName=Strategies+Against+Human+Trafficking+The+Role+of+the+Security+Sector.pdf>.

22 Stef Janssens, Patricia Le Cocq, and Koen Dewulf, *La Traite et Le Trafic des être\$ humain\$: Lutter avec des personnes. Et des ressources Rapport Annuel 2008* (Brussels: Centre pour l’égalité des chances et la lutte contre racisme, 2009).

23 Khalid Koser, “Why Migrant Smuggling Pays,” *International Migration* 46, no. 2 (2008): 3–26; Gao Yun and Véronique Poisson, “Le trafic et l’exploitation des immigrants chinois en France” (Geneva: Organisation International du Travail, 2005): 70–2, [www.ilo.org/sapfl/Informationresources/ILOPublications/WCMS\\_082332/lang--fr/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/sapfl/Informationresources/ILOPublications/WCMS_082332/lang--fr/index.htm).



are Austria, Denmark, France, Spain, and Switzerland.<sup>24</sup> Greece and Spain are not only recipient countries for unauthorized migrants but also have been exploited by transnational smuggling organizations because of their key geographic locations on the periphery of Europe.<sup>25</sup>

These destination countries are among the most affluent and populous countries in Europe. They also have large sex markets, either due to domestic demand or tourism industries (such as in the south of Spain).<sup>26</sup> Moreover, many have large immigrant populations, ports, and extensive coastlines that facilitate the entry of both trafficking victims and smuggled migrants.

The trafficking landscape within the European Union is diverse (as it is in other developed countries). While most of the attention has been focused on sex trafficking of women from Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union (particularly after the fall of the Berlin Wall), and Africa, victims come from all regions of the world. UNODC reports a greater variety in the national origins of human-trafficking victims in Europe than in any other part of the world.<sup>27</sup>

### A. Source Countries: East vs. South

Different regions of Europe receive victims from different source countries. In its 2012 assessment, Europol identified five major hubs of organized crime. Each is connected to particular source countries, and specializes in certain types of labor placement. The five hubs are: in the northwest, the Netherlands and Belgium; in the northeast, the Baltic states and Kaliningrad; in the southeast, Bulgaria, Romania, and Greece; in the south, southern Italy; and in the southwest, Spain and Portugal.<sup>28</sup>

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*Identified source countries include some of the poorest nations in Europe.*

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The southwest hub (Spain and Portugal) receives victims from the Iberian Peninsula and redistributes them throughout Europe according to market demand. Chinese victims often work in textile sweatshops, Eastern Europeans in agriculture, South Americans in the sex industry, while Roma children are forced to beg and commit thefts.<sup>29</sup> The southern criminal hub (southern Italy) is a transit and destination area for individuals who come from North and West Africa, Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and China.<sup>30</sup> They work in the textile industry, entertainment sector, elder and child care, and construction.<sup>31</sup>

The major source countries of smuggling and trafficking victims were identified by Europol in 2008 as Bulgaria, Moldova, Nigeria, Romania, the Russian Federation, and Ukraine. In many cases, trafficking to Europe is facilitated by members of victims' own migrant communities.<sup>32</sup> Identified source countries include some of the poorest nations in Europe. Meanwhile, Europol fails to mention several source coun-

24 UNODC, *Trafficking in Persons: Global Patterns* (Vienna: UNODC, 2006): 92, [www.unodc.org/pdf/traffickinginpersons\\_report\\_2006-04.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/pdf/traffickinginpersons_report_2006-04.pdf).

25 Akis Kalaitzidis, "Human Smuggling and Trafficking in the Balkans: Is It Fortress Europe?" *Journal of the Institute of Justice and International Studies* 5 (2005): 3-4.

26 Alejandro Gómez-Céspedes and Per Stangeland, "Spain: The Flourishing Illegal Drug Haven in Europe" in *Organised Crime in Europe*, eds. Cyrille Fijnaut and Letizia Paoli (Dordrecht: Springer, 2004): 402-4.

27 UNODC, *The Globalization of Crime*.

28 Europol, *Trafficking in Human Beings in the European Union*, 12.

29 Ibid, 11-12.

30 For more on the Southern and Eastern European region see Rebecca Surtees, "Traffickers and Trafficking in Southern and Eastern Europe: Considering the Other Side of Human Trafficking," *European Journal of Criminology* 5, no. 1 (2008): 39-68.

31 Europol, *EU Organised Crime Threat Assessment (OCTA) 2011* (The Hague: Europol, 2011): 12, [www.europol.europa.eu/content/press/europol-organised-crime-threat-assessment-2011-429](http://www.europol.europa.eu/content/press/europol-organised-crime-threat-assessment-2011-429).

32 Europol, *Annual Report 2008* (The Hague: Europol, 2008): 17-9, [www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/annual\\_report\\_2008.pdf](http://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/annual_report_2008.pdf).



tries that were once European colonies. These include Morocco and Algeria in North Africa, and Brazil, the Dominican Republic, and Colombia in Latin America. Citizens from these former colonies are increasingly identified as victims of trafficking, both for sex work and general labor, particularly in Mediterranean countries. Large numbers of women from the Dominican Republic, a Spanish colony until the early 19th century, are trafficked to Spain.<sup>33</sup> Women from Brazil and Colombia are increasingly identified as victims of sex trafficking in Europe.<sup>34</sup> Italy, home to the second-largest Nigerian diaspora community in Europe, had 12,500 trafficked Nigerian women working as prostitutes in 2006, representing approximately half of the prostitutes in Italy.<sup>35</sup>

Among child victims, leading source regions are Eastern Europe, North Africa, and Asia.<sup>36</sup> A significant number come from the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent by way of Turkey and often the Balkans. Most of these children, defined as trafficking victims, will work in illegal labor markets, but not the sex markets that have received the most attention.<sup>37</sup>

The Arab Spring had a significant impact on illegal immigration into Western Europe. Many migrants from sub-Saharan Africa who were working in North Africa when the unrest started escaped to Europe. Frontex, the European border-control agency, noted that in the first nine months of 2011 there were 112,000 illegal migrants detained compared to 77,000 for the same time period in 2010, although not all from sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>38</sup> As routes across the Mediterranean were shut off through interdiction at sea, more individuals came through Turkey. Consequently, Greece noted an upturn in smuggled migrants.<sup>39</sup>

## B. Routes

There are many routes into Europe from different regions of the world—North Africa, Latin America, and Eastern Europe and Asia. These routes change over time as traffickers and smugglers adapt to enforcement and effective border patrols. The accession of the Czech Republic and Poland into the European Union in 2004 reduced the use of routes across these countries, as border controls were tightened with training and support from the European Union. By contrast, the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the European Union in 2007 has not been as successful in shutting off Balkan smuggling rings. These countries still suffer high levels of corruption at the borders and in law enforcement generally. Many of the routes used for humans are the same as those used for traded goods.

The primary transit routes are across the Mediterranean, the Balkans, Eastern Europe, and Turkey. The individuals trafficked into Europe usually travel by air, sea, and land (most often by cars, buses, and trucks, and not much by rail). The most recently identified route is from Macedonia, through Serbia and Hungary, and into Austria.<sup>40</sup> Entry from the Baltic Sea and through the northern parts of Europe is less

33 International Organization for Migration (IOM), Migration Information Program, *Trafficking in Women from the Dominican Republic for Sexual Exploitation* (Geneva: IOM, 1996), [www.oas.org/atip/country%20specific/TIP%20DR%20IOM%20REPORT.pdf](http://www.oas.org/atip/country%20specific/TIP%20DR%20IOM%20REPORT.pdf); U.S. Department of State, “Dominican Republic,” in *Trafficking in Persons Report 2009* (Washington, DC: Department of State, 2009): 123–34, [www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2009/123136.htm](http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2009/123136.htm).

34 Liz Kelly, *Journeys of Jeopardy: A Review of Research on Trafficking in Women and Children in Europe* (Geneva: IOM, 2002): 26, [www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/published\\_docs/serial\\_publications/mrs11b.pdf](http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/published_docs/serial_publications/mrs11b.pdf).

35 John Picarelli, “Organised Crime and Human Trafficking in the United States and Western Europe,” in *Strategies Against Human Trafficking: The Role of the Security Sector*, ed. Cornelius Friesendorf (Vienna: National Defense Academy and Austrian Ministry of Defense and Sport, 2009): 134; Jørgen Carling, “Trafficking in Women from Nigeria to Europe,” July 2005, *Migration Information Source*, [www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=318](http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=318); Jørgen Carling, *Migration, Human Smuggling and Trafficking from Nigeria to Europe* (Geneva: IOM, 2006), [www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/published\\_docs/serial\\_publications/mrs23.pdf](http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/published_docs/serial_publications/mrs23.pdf).

36 United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) Innocenti Research Center, *Child Trafficking in Europe: A Broad Vision to Put Children First* (Florence, Italy: UNICEF, 2008), [www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/ct\\_in\\_europe\\_full.pdf](http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/ct_in_europe_full.pdf).

37 Financial Action Task Force (FATF), *Money Laundering Risks Arising from Trafficking in Human Beings and Smuggling of Migrants* (Paris: FATF and OECD, 2011): 34, [www.fatf-gafi.org/dataoecd/28/34/48412278.pdf](http://www.fatf-gafi.org/dataoecd/28/34/48412278.pdf).

38 Agence France Presse (AFP), “Arab Spring Prompts Surge of Illegal Immigrants to EU,” AFP, November 16, 2011, [www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20111116/local/arab-spring-prompts-surge-of-illegal-immigrants-to-eu.394158](http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20111116/local/arab-spring-prompts-surge-of-illegal-immigrants-to-eu.394158).

39 EurActiv, “Greece Measures Arab Spring Immigration Impact,” EurActiv, November 22, 2011, [www.euractiv.com/justice/greece-measures-arab-spring-immigration-impact-news-509109](http://www.euractiv.com/justice/greece-measures-arab-spring-immigration-impact-news-509109).

40 AFP, “Arab Spring Prompts Surge of Illegal Immigrants to EU.”



common. Many routes—whether from Africa, China, or Afghanistan and Pakistan—are circuitous and involve long distances. The routes from Latin America are more direct; those smuggled and trafficked often fly straight to Spain or Portugal.

For migrants from Nigeria, there are many routes from the exit point of Lagos into Europe.<sup>41</sup> These routes change and reorganize on a constant basis to avoid intervention by the police or immigration patrol guards. During the civil conflict in Libya, new routes were used as smugglers and traffickers exploited the internal chaos in Libya to move individuals from sub-Saharan Africa to Italy's island of Lampedusa.<sup>42</sup> Overall, approximately 8 percent of unauthorized migrants from North Africa enter Europe by sea. And a significant number enter legally by air, then stay on beyond their visa authorization.<sup>43</sup>

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*Traffickers are logistics specialists who can  
move individuals across vast distances.*

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Various types of transport are often combined. The Chinese who died in a van crossing the English Channel had been initially transported by “Snakeheads”<sup>44</sup> from Beijing to Belgrade. Then with the efficiency of a well-coordinated international business, they were moved by auto through Hungary, Austria, France, and the Netherlands before being loaded in a van for their last fateful leg to the United Kingdom.<sup>45</sup>

### III. Profile of Facilitators

Traffickers are logistics specialists who can move individuals across vast distances. They often require numerous safe houses along the way where they can lodge their human cargo until it is safe to move them further. For individuals traveling the Balkan route into Western Europe, these safe houses are often in Turkey and Eastern Europe. For those traveling from sub-Saharan Africa, there are many stations along the way. Routes are often indirect, as traffickers carefully avoid policed roads, border checkpoints, and jurisdictions where there is efficient and honest law enforcement. While not quite as complex as the operations of large-scale narcotics traffickers, human traffickers and smugglers do require a military-like intelligence capacity to successfully avoid these obstacles. The end destinations for victims are often diaspora communities that can absorb the trafficked people, or urban areas where allied crime groups can receive and distribute the trafficked laborers.<sup>46</sup>

41 The air routes include direct flights from Lagos to Italy, Lagos-France-Italy, Lagos-London-Italy, Lagos-Accra (by road)-Italy (by air), Lagos-the Netherlands-Italy, and Lagos-any Schengen country-Italy. Other land and sea routes include Lagos-Togo-Morocco-Spain-Italy, Lagos-Togo-Libya-Italy, Lagos-Togo, Morocco-Spain-France-Italy, and Lagos-Togo-Burkina Faso-Mali-Spain-France-Italy. United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNCJRI), *Trafficking of Nigerian Girls in Italy: The Data, the Stories, the Social Services* (Rome: UNCJRI, 2010), [www.unicri.it/services/library\\_documentation/publications/unicri\\_series/trafficking\\_nigeria-italy.pdf](http://www.unicri.it/services/library_documentation/publications/unicri_series/trafficking_nigeria-italy.pdf).

42 Sabina Castelfranco, “Italian Island of Lampedusa Sees Increase of North African Refugees,” Voice of America, March 7, 2011, [www.voanews.com/english/news/europe/Italian-Island-of-Lampedusa-sees-Increase-of-North-African-Refugees-117510933.html](http://www.voanews.com/english/news/europe/Italian-Island-of-Lampedusa-sees-Increase-of-North-African-Refugees-117510933.html).

43 UNODC, *The Role of Organized Crime in the Smuggling of Migrants from West Africa to the European Union* (Vienna: UNODC, 2011): 8, [www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/Migrant-Smuggling/Report\\_SOM\\_West\\_Africa\\_EU.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/Migrant-Smuggling/Report_SOM_West_Africa_EU.pdf).

44 “Snakeheads” refers to smugglers who facilitate the transfer of Chinese migrants to Western countries.

45 Joan Clements and David Sapsted, “Terror Inside the Lorry of Death, Britain’ Straw Says Truck Deaths a Warning,” *The Telegraph*, June 20, 2000, [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1343932/Terror-inside-the-lorry-of-death.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1343932/Terror-inside-the-lorry-of-death.html); Warren Hoge, “Dutch Truck Driver Sentenced in Chinese Immigrant Deaths,” *New York Times*, April 6, 2001, [www.nytimes.com/2001/04/06/world/dutch-truck-driver-sentenced-in-chinese-immigrant-deaths.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2001/04/06/world/dutch-truck-driver-sentenced-in-chinese-immigrant-deaths.html).

46 For example, see FATE, *Money Laundering Risks*, 35–6.



The barriers to entry have created an enormous variety of facilitators who assist those who seek illegal entry into the European Union.<sup>47</sup> They range from small groups to complex international organizations. Some of these criminals engage in only smuggling while others also traffic individuals.<sup>48</sup> Those who facilitate these movements are not necessarily part of criminal networks. Knowingly or unknowingly, legitimate businesses can aid in the trafficking process. Employment agencies, which may be complicit, are used to facilitate the movement of victims. Apartment owners may knowingly or unknowingly rent apartments to smuggled and trafficked individuals, thus facilitating their residence in Western Europe. Nightclub owners may employ young unauthorized female workers, and some even go to great lengths to secure such employees. Hotels seeking cheap staff may hire unauthorized workers who have been smuggled or trafficked into Europe.<sup>49</sup>

The business of human smuggling and human trafficking is possibly more ethnically diversified in the European Union than in North America. Of various national and ethnic criminal groups, several in particular are associated with the trafficking of human beings. Nigerian and Chinese groups are probably the most threatening to society, according to a 2011 Europol assessment.<sup>50</sup> Bulgarian, Romanian, and Roma criminal groups are also particularly active, as are Albanian, Russian, Turkish, and Hungarian groups. Such criminal groups—especially the Chinese, Nigerian, and Romanian ones—work with diaspora communities overseas to limit detection. Bulgarian, Hungarian, and Turkish groups are often facilitators, moving individuals from the east through the Balkans to Western Europe. Balkan traffickers operate within family groups, often functioning within diaspora communities. For example, French police discovered through wiretaps that a sister of a French-based Balkan trafficker was operating a cell in Belgium.<sup>51</sup> But such groups also hire individuals outside their communities to reduce suspicions. Belgian and Dutch women have been hired by Balkan clans to help run day-to-day operations and minimize risks.<sup>52</sup>

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*The business of human smuggling and human trafficking is possibly more ethnically diversified in the European Union than in North America.*

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Women are more active in human trafficking than other areas of transnational crime.<sup>53</sup> That said, they still number less than half of traffickers. According to a UN analysis of identified offenders in Europe, women rarely compose more than one-third of identified suspects in human-trafficking cases. Minors have been suspected as traffickers in some Western European countries. The majority of identified traffickers work within their own countries, but in some countries the presence of foreign traffickers is much higher.<sup>54</sup>

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47 Shared Hope International, *DEMAND: A Comparative Examination of Sex Tourism and Trafficking in Jamaica, Japan, the Netherlands and the United States* (Vancouver, WA: Shared Hope International, 2012): 71–2, <http://sharedhope.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/DEMAND.pdf>.

48 Louise Shelley, *Human Trafficking: A Global Perspective* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010); FATF, *Money Laundering Risks*, 34.

49 Alexis Aronowitz, Gerda Theuermann, and Elena Tyurykanova, *Analysing the Business Model of Human Trafficking to Better Prevent the Crime* (Vienna: Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, 2010), [http://s3.amazonaws.com/rcpp/assets/attachments/1154\\_osce\\_business\\_model\\_original.pdf](http://s3.amazonaws.com/rcpp/assets/attachments/1154_osce_business_model_original.pdf).

50 Europol, *Trafficking in Human Beings in the European Union*, 20.

51 Jana Arsovska and Stef Janssens, “Human Trafficking and Policing: Good and Bad Practices,” in *Strategies against Human Trafficking: The Role of the Security Sector*, ed. Cornelius Friesendorf (Vienna: National Defense Academy and Austrian Ministry of Defense and Sport, 2009), 213.

52 Ibid, 184.

53 Dina Siegel and Sylvia de Blank, “Women Who Traffic Women: The Role of Women in Human Trafficking Networks — Dutch Cases,” *Global Crime* 11, no. 4 (2010): 436–47; Alexis Aronowitz, *Human Trafficking, Human Misery: The Global Trade in Human Beings* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2009): 52–5.

54 UNODC, *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* (Vienna: UNODC, 2009): 56, [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html).



## A. Criminal Groups from Turkey and the Balkans

Turkish criminal groups have become specialists in the logistics needed to move drugs and people. Groups in the eastern parts of Turkey, especially on the borders with Iraq and Syria, have helped facilitate this illicit trade.<sup>55</sup> In some cases, the crime groups are linked with the terrorist organization the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK).<sup>56</sup> Data from the Organized Crime and Smuggling section of the Turkish National Police reveal that many transnational criminals from different countries are now operating in Turkey, facilitating this trade. In 2008 criminals from 64 different countries operating in conjunction with different Turkish crime groups were arrested in Turkey.<sup>57</sup> Many of these were functioning in the drug arena, but their networks were also utilized for trade in human beings.

Turkish human smuggling follows the trade routes of the Ottoman Empire. Instead of bringing spices and silks from the Orient to Western Europe, these routes bring political refugees from conflicts in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Somalia and labor migrants who seek to earn more in the economies of Europe. Turkish organized crime has globalized in recent decades, facilitating this trade from East to West.<sup>58</sup> The geographic location of Turkey on the Black Sea and its borders with Soviet successor states Iraq, Syria, and Iran all facilitate this trade. Moreover, its long Mediterranean border—too long to be fully policed—provides excellent points of covert entry and exit from the country.

Turkish diaspora communities play a central role in human trafficking for labor exploitation, with some members collaborating with Turkish crime groups—either voluntarily or as a result of coercion. Because these networks are strong in the United Kingdom, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, and elsewhere in Western Europe, Turkish groups can effectively smuggle individuals into Western Europe, where their labor can be exploited.<sup>59</sup>

The now dismantled Balkan human trafficking ring Tara, which had 52 participants identified through regional coordination, reveals the complexities of illegally transporting large numbers of people across different borders. Four criminal groups, each in a different country, cooperated to move at least 192 people from the Near and Far East, charging those seeking to enter the European Union 1,000 to 1,500 euros each. The Croatian newspaper *Dalje* reports:

*The smugglers were very careful about their business, trying to cover up their tracks by all means, i.e., to stay below the radar. The groups from Croatia were connected with smugglers from other countries. The persons transported across the border with regular transport lines, in personal vehicles, taxis or vans. The persons were accommodated at secret locations before the transport and payments were conducted via messengers—drivers of regular bus routes or Western Union...The arrested criminals often used illegal border crossings and a guide.*<sup>60</sup>

55 Mark Galeotti, "Turkish Organized Crime: Where State, Crime, and Rebellion Conspire," *Transnational Organized Crime* 4, no.1 (1998): 25–42.

56 Janssens, Le Cocq, and Dewulf, *La Traite et Le Trafic des être\$ humain\$*.

57 Turkish National Police, *Turkish Organized Crime Report* (Ankara: Department of Anti-Smuggling and Organized Crime, 2008).

58 Stef Janssens and Jana Arsovska, "People Carriers: Human Trafficking Networks Thrive in Turkey," *Jane's Intelligence Review* (December 2008): 44–7; Xavier Raufer, "Une maffya symbiotique: traditions et évolutions du crime organisé en Turquie," *Sécurité Global*, 10 (2009-10): 91–119.

59 Frank Bovenkerk and Y. Yucel Yesilgoz, "The Turkish Mafia and the State," in *Organized Crime in Europe*, eds. Cyrille Fijnaut and Letizia Paoli (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer, 2004): 585–603; Janssens, Le Cocq, and Dewulf, *La Traite et Le Trafic des être\$ humain\$*.

60 For a discussion of the case, see Southeast European Law Enforcement Center (SELEC), "52 Persons Detained in 4 Countries during Operation 'TARA' Joint Investigation Supported by the SECI Center" (press release, SELEC, April 3, 2009), [www.secicenter.org/p450/02+April+2009](http://www.secicenter.org/p450/02+April+2009). For the specific quote, see *Dalje*, "Smuggled 200 people to EU via Croatia," *Dalje*, April 2, 2009, [www.javno.com/en-croatia/smuggled-200-people-to-eu-via-croatia\\_248077](http://www.javno.com/en-croatia/smuggled-200-people-to-eu-via-croatia_248077).



## B. The Role of Corruption

Corruption is deeply connected to the problem of human trafficking in Europe: travel agencies, border guards, customs officials, consular officers, and other diplomatic personnel must be bribed or extorted for trafficking to be successful.<sup>61</sup> This problem is not confined to Eastern Europe and other transit countries where corruption levels are known to be high. As illustrated below, corruption in Western European embassies overseas has also facilitated human trafficking.

The high levels of corruption in transit countries aid greatly in facilitating the movement of people. Turkish law enforcement investigations of human smuggling have disclosed that corruption facilitates this trade not only in sending countries, but also among law enforcement officials in the Balkans.<sup>62</sup> For example, in the mid-1990s a former senior Bulgarian intelligence official opened a travel agency in Bulgaria. By establishing close relations with the embassy of a Western European state in Sofia, official tourist visas were delivered en masse to the travel agency for travel to Western Europe. This allowed the agency to facilitate human smuggling and trafficking, activities it combined with money laundering.<sup>63</sup>

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*Corruption is deeply connected to the problem of human trafficking in Europe.*

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Similar problems have been documented for the Swiss embassy in Pakistan. In 2006 Swiss officials in the Department of Foreign Affairs reported that criminal gangs “involved in human trafficking had almost certainly infiltrated the visa section of the Islamabad embassy and corrupted officials.” As in the Bulgarian case, Pakistani travel agencies were complicit in the visa fraud.<sup>64</sup> In the same time period, a Belgian employed in the protocol service of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs arranged the distribution of diplomatic passports and “sold at least 300 residence permits to people associated with the Russian mafia. One of the accomplices in this case was an important figure in a large Russian company engaged in money laundering.”<sup>65</sup>

In Senegal press reports reveal that in at least two different cases, officials in embassies of Western European countries were engaged in the selling of visas. This corrupt activity has possibly allowed the admission of thousands of people to EU Member States over the years.<sup>66</sup> Corruption does not only occur at the borders or the consulates and embassies of European countries overseas. It also takes place on the street, as police are paid to look the other way and not probe brothels or target labor or sex traffickers.<sup>67</sup>

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61 John Pomfret, “Bribery At Border Worries Officials” *Washington Post*, July 15, 2006, [www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/07/14/AR2006071401525.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/07/14/AR2006071401525.html); Transparency International, “Corruption and Human Trafficking” (working paper #3/2011, Transparency International, Berlin, 2011), [www.transparency.org/whatwedo/pub/working\\_paper\\_corruption\\_and\\_human\\_trafficking](http://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/pub/working_paper_corruption_and_human_trafficking).

62 Interview by the author with a police official assigned to the organized-crime branch in Konya, Turkey, in March 2008.

63 Arsovska and Janssens, “Human Trafficking and Policing,” 190.

64 Leslie Holmes, “Corruption and Trafficking: Triple Victimization?” in *Strategies Against Human Trafficking: The Role of the Security Sector*, ed. Cornelius Friesendorf (Vienna: National Defense Academy and Austrian Ministry of Defense and Sport, 2009): 103.

65 Arsovska and Janssens, “Human Trafficking and Policing,” 190.

66 UNODC, *The Role of Organized Crime in the Smuggling of Migrants from West Africa to the European Union*, 11.

67 Holmes, “Corruption and Trafficking.”



## IV. Profile of Trafficked and Smuggled Persons

Smuggled and trafficked individuals work in many different sectors of the economy. According to a 2012 UN study, 62 percent of victims in Europe and Central Asia are trafficked for sexual exploitation. Of those individuals who are trafficked for other types of work, most perform menial jobs that do not require specialized training. As many as 29 percent of trafficked victims in some Western and Central European countries are working in forced labor.<sup>68</sup> Most are men, but some are women and children. Exploitation in the construction sector and in restaurants, bars, and small-scale production is particularly common.<sup>69</sup> Trafficked and smuggled individuals also commonly work in agriculture and fisheries. Domestic servitude, a highly concealed phenomenon, often occurs within ethnic diaspora communities: young girls and women are forced to work long hours and sometimes confined to the homes where they work.<sup>70</sup> Overall, trends on the national level vary. The 2012 UN study highlighted a particularly high percentage of trafficked domestic servitude victims in Austria, where a nongovernmental organization (NGO) reported that 15 percent of its trafficked victims fell in this category. In the Netherlands, these victims accounted for 2 percent of those helped by a local NGO.<sup>71</sup>

Authoritative sources on trafficking in European countries reveal an enormous range of victims: young children who are forced to sell flowers in the street, beg, or commit petty crime for their traffickers; mature women who are exploited as care providers for children and the elderly; and men forced to undertake manual labor.<sup>72</sup>

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### *Smuggled and trafficked individuals work in many different sectors of the economy.*

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There are many types of individuals who can be classified as trafficking victims under European law and who work in countries throughout Europe. A detailed ILO study of the approximately 50,000 Chinese individuals illegally in France reveals that many working in restaurants and small factories could be trafficking victims.<sup>73</sup> Smuggled Chinese are also exploited in Italian sweatshops to keep the Italian textile industry competitive. Trafficked workers in southern Italy harvest agricultural products at prices that keep these products competitive.<sup>74</sup> In 2004 Operation Marco Polo led to the arrest of 91 traffickers and 571 accomplices who supplied more than 600 businesses with more than 3,200 Chinese laborers in Italy.<sup>75</sup>

Khalid Koser's research on Pakistanis smuggled into the United Kingdom reveals that these individuals are primarily working in restaurants and other service industries.<sup>76</sup> In 2004 at least 21 Chinese cockle

68 UNODC, *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* (Vienna: UNODC, 2012), [www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/Trafficking\\_in\\_Persons\\_2012\\_web.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/Trafficking_in_Persons_2012_web.pdf).

69 FATF, *Money Laundering Risks*, 14, 32–56.

70 Europol, *Trafficking in Human Beings in the European Union*; Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), *Unprotected Work, Invisible Exploitation: Trafficking for the Purpose of Domestic Servitude* (Vienna: OSCE, 2010): 13–9, [www.childtrafficking.com/Docs/osce\\_10\\_unprotected\\_work\\_0411.pdf](http://www.childtrafficking.com/Docs/osce_10_unprotected_work_0411.pdf).

71 UNODC, *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*, 2012, 56.

72 Kristiina Kangaspunta, "Trafficking in Persons: Global Patterns" (presentation at International Symposium on International Migration and Development, UNODC, Turin, June 28–30, 2006): 20, [www.un.org/esa/population/migration/turin/Turin\\_Statements/KANGASPUNTA.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/population/migration/turin/Turin_Statements/KANGASPUNTA.pdf); Europol, *Trafficking in Human Beings in the European Union*.

73 Yun and Poisson, "Le trafic et l'exploitation des immigrants chinois en France," 70–2.

74 See a video documenting the experiences of migrants from Africa and Eastern Europe harvesting oranges in southern Italy: Link TV, "Orange Harvest: The Human Cost," [www.linktv.org/video/7381/orange-harvest-the-human-cost](http://www.linktv.org/video/7381/orange-harvest-the-human-cost).

75 John T. Picarelli, "Enabling Norms and Human Trafficking," in *Crime and the Global Political Economy, International Political Economy Yearbook 16*, ed. H. Richard Friman (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 2009): 97; Government of Italy, "Operation Marco Polo: An Investigation of the Illegal Trade in Asian Traditional Medicine," [www.cites.org/common/cop/13/inf/E13i-45.pdf](http://www.cites.org/common/cop/13/inf/E13i-45.pdf).

76 Koser, "Why Migrant Smuggling Pays."



pickers died in the United Kingdom after being trapped in rising tides—evidence of the exploitation of smuggled workers.<sup>77</sup> French parliamentary hearings almost a decade ago focused on the problem of children, primarily from Africa, trafficked into domestic servitude.<sup>78</sup> The same problem is now reported in Spain, involving Angolan children.<sup>79</sup> Well-developed Brazilian networks bring irregular workers to Portugal, where they are distributed for labor exploitation to construction sites throughout Western Europe.<sup>80</sup>

A UN study that focuses on sex trafficking suggests that most victims are adult females.<sup>81</sup> But there are male victims, too. Research conducted on the trafficking of Ukrainian and Belarusian men reveals that they are trafficked both for labor and sexual exploitation.<sup>82</sup> And research in Germany shows that some men from Bulgaria and Romania, often of Roma origin, are forced by traffickers to sell themselves on the streets of German cities.<sup>83</sup>

Significant differences are found between smuggled and trafficked people. Those who are smuggled must pay for their transport, and so often derive from the more economically privileged sets of society.<sup>84</sup> Of Pakistanis smuggled to the United Kingdom, for example, many have some amount of higher education but cannot find jobs commensurate with their skills at home. (Most will encounter the same fate in the United Kingdom, though for relatively higher wages.) Yet this generalization does not apply to all cases. In 2006 and 2007 many who crossed to the Canary Islands from Africa were fishermen or from fishing communities. According to one study, 58 percent had never gone to school and only half were literate.<sup>85</sup>

In contrast, trafficking victims are often from the “weakest social and economic groups in their countries of origin.”<sup>86</sup> Yet there are differences among the trafficked populations. Women who come from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have higher levels of education than women who are trafficked from Africa and Latin America, where there is much less access to education.<sup>87</sup>

The number of exploited children is not large but still numbers in the thousands. Many minors travel unaccompanied to Western Europe, most often from Eastern Europe, North Africa, and Asia.<sup>88</sup> In the early 2000s in Belgium alone, more than 1,000 cases were recorded of minors, primarily from Asia and Eastern Europe, transiting through Belgium to the United Kingdom to find work, unite with family, or escape a difficult situation.<sup>89</sup> Children trafficked into Europe may suffer severe abuse. They do not enjoy the protections that are available to native-born Western European children, who generally have access to the extensive social welfare systems of the region. Children trafficked into Europe have been exploited by pedophiles; forced to become prostitutes, domestic servants, sweatshop workers, or beggars; and made to engage in petty or violent crime.<sup>90</sup>

77 British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), “Cockle Pickers Died from Drowning,” June 22, 2004, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/england/lancashire/3827623.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/lancashire/3827623.stm).

78 Assemblée Nationale, *Lesclavage, en France, aujourd’hui, Report No. 3459, Tome II, Auditions, Vol.1*, Paris, 2001, Les Documents d’information de l’assemblée nationale (Documents of the National Assembly).

79 Europol, *Trafficking in Human Beings in the European Union*.

80 FATE, “Money Laundering Risks,” 34.

81 Kangaspunta, “Trafficking in Persons.”

82 IOM, “Trafficking of Men — A Trend Less Considered — The Case of Belarus and Ukraine” (IOM Migration Series No. 36, IOM, Geneva, 2008), [www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/published\\_docs/serial\\_publications/MRS-36.pdf](http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/published_docs/serial_publications/MRS-36.pdf).

83 Christophe Gille, “Romanians and Bulgarians in Male Street Sex Work in German Cities” (working paper, Comparative European Social Studies, Metropolitan University London), 37–59, [www.aksd.eu/download/Rom\\_Bulg\\_in\\_German\\_Male\\_Sex\\_Work\\_Gille\\_2007.pdf](http://www.aksd.eu/download/Rom_Bulg_in_German_Male_Sex_Work_Gille_2007.pdf).

84 Julie Kaizen and Walter Nonneman, “Irregular Migration in Belgium,” *International Migration* 45, no. 2 (2007): 121–46; Koser, “Why Migrant Smuggling Pays.”

85 UNODC, *The Role of Organized Crime*, 16.

86 Kaizen and Nonneman, “Irregular Migration in Belgium,” 138.

87 Shelley, *Human Trafficking*.

88 UNICEF, “Child Trafficking in Europe.”

89 Ilse Derluyn and Eric Broekaert, “On the Way to A Better Future: Belgium as Transit Country for Trafficking and Smuggling of Unaccompanied Minors,” *International Migration* 43, no. 4 (2005): 31.

90 UNICEF, “Child Trafficking in Europe.” There is much concern about the disproportionate trafficking of Roma children. See Europol, *Trafficking in Human Beings in the European Union*.



With demand exceeding supply, the preponderance of European prostitutes are migrants, many of them trafficked. About 70 percent of all sex workers across Western, Southern, and Northern Europe are migrants, with significant national-level variations. In Italy, Spain, Austria, and Luxembourg, migrants comprise 80 to 90 percent of the sex-worker population; in Finland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, France, Greece, Denmark, and Norway, they comprise 60 to 70 percent. In the new EU countries of Central Europe, by contrast, only 16 to 18 percent of sex workers are migrants.<sup>91</sup> Among trafficking victims in West and Central Europe between 2005 and 2006, 32 percent were from the Balkans, 19 percent from the former Soviet Union, 13 percent from South America, and 5 percent from Africa.<sup>92</sup>

Giving some sense of the scale of the problem is the fact that in Italy alone, 11,500 foreign trafficking victims working in prostitution entered a state-supported assistance program between 2000 and 2006.<sup>93</sup> The identified victims are only a fraction of the women trafficked into Italy. An Italian trafficking specialist suggested that at least 100 different ethnic groups were engaged in prostitution in that country with many diverse transnational crime groups involved.<sup>94</sup> Other European countries, lacking extensive assistance programs, are unable to identify their trafficked women. The percentage of prostitutes who are foreign born varies between 50 and 90 percent in countries for which data are available. The highest percentage of foreign-born sex workers was found in Ireland, where it reached as high as 90 percent in 2008, before the economic collapse.<sup>95</sup> In Norway foreign women constitute 70 percent of the prostitution market. Native-born Norwegian prostitutes are generally older, as they are able to work under better conditions than those who have been forced into prostitution.<sup>96</sup> Those forced into prostitution do not have access to medical care and are forced to work outside in the extreme cold.

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*With demand exceeding supply, the preponderance of European prostitutes are migrants, many of them trafficked.*

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Some children—most often from Latin America, the former Soviet Union, and Asia—are trafficked for adoption by parents in Western Europe, who pay high fees to secure desired babies.<sup>97</sup> In Southeast Asia and within the Roma communities in France, Greece, and Bulgaria, pregnant women have been trafficked to secure their babies after birth.<sup>98</sup>

91 European Network for HIV/STI Prevention and Health Promotion among Migrant Sex Workers (TAMPEP), *Sex Work in Europe: A mapping of the prostitution scene in 25 European countries* (Amsterdam: TAMPEP International Foundation, 2009): 16, <http://tampep.eu/documents/TAMPEP%202009%20European%20Mapping%20Report.pdf>.

92 UNODC, *Trafficking in Persons to Europe for Sexual Exploitation*, 3.

93 Niki Kitsantonis, "In Greece, Female Sex Victims Become Recruiters," *New York Times*, January 29, 2008, [www.iht.com/articles/2008/01/29/europe/traffic.php](http://www.iht.com/articles/2008/01/29/europe/traffic.php).

94 Picarelli, "Enabling Norms and Human Trafficking," 97.

95 The Ireland data come from a private communication from Nusha Yunkova, anti-trafficking coordinator, Immigrant Council of Ireland, September 12, 2008, discussing a report that her organization was preparing on human trafficking. The calculation of 40 percent for Greece was made in the late 1990s; see Gabriella Lazardis, "Trafficking and Prostitution: The Growing Exploitation of Migrant Women in Greece," *European Journal of Women's Studies* 8, no. 1 (2001): 80–1; Netherlands data come from Shared Hope International, *DEMAND*.

96 Anette Brunovskis and Guri Tyldum, *Crossing Borders: An Empirical Study of Trans-National Prostitution and Trafficking in Human Beings* (Oslo, Norway: FAFO, 2004): 115, [www.faf.no/pub/rapp/426/index.htm](http://www.faf.no/pub/rapp/426/index.htm).

97 Ethan B. Kapstein, "The Baby Trade," *Foreign Affairs* 82 (2003): 115–25; David M. Smolin, "Child Laundering: How the Intercountry Adoption System Legitimizes and Incentivizes the Practices of Buying, Trafficking, Kidnapping, and Stealing Children," *Wayne Law Review* 52 (2006): 113–200.

98 Assemblée Nationale, *Lesclavage, en France, aujourd'hui*, Report No. 3459; Niki Kitsantonis and Matthew Brunwasser, "Baby Trafficking is Thriving in Greece," *International Herald Tribune*, December 19, 2006, [www.nytimes.com/2006/12/19/world/europe/19iht-babies.3951066.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/19/world/europe/19iht-babies.3951066.html); Focus News Agency, "Bulgaria and Greece Smash Baby Trafficking Network," Focus News Agency, January 25, 2011, [www.flarenetwork.org/learn/project\\_echo/italy/article/bulgaria\\_and\\_greece\\_smash\\_baby\\_trafficking\\_network.htm](http://www.flarenetwork.org/learn/project_echo/italy/article/bulgaria_and_greece_smash_baby_trafficking_network.htm).



## V. Impacts of Smuggling and Trafficking

The consequences of human smuggling and trafficking include reduced quality of governance as a result of corruption, violence against individual victims, and increased anti-immigrant sentiment. The last, in turn, has had a significant impact on domestic politics in Europe and has limited the possibility of integrating victims of trafficking after their identification. The diversification of organized crime into the business of human smuggling and trafficking has garnered significant profits, further embedding crime into the economic life of European countries.

Not only do the practices of smugglers and traffickers violate basic human rights, but, once arrived, the unauthorized status of the immigrants so transported challenges democratic processes. The significant numbers of unauthorized immigrants, including trafficked people, now living and working in Europe do not enjoy the rights of citizenship or legal residency. Few countries in Europe are willing to regularize their status or provide residence permits, since this could be seen as rewarding illegal behavior.<sup>99</sup> The result is structural inequality between citizens and legal residents on the one hand, and unauthorized migrants on the other.

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*The problem of human smuggling and trafficking in Europe is further impacted by the ambivalent relationship between states and victims.*

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The illegal status of trafficking victims also has concrete consequences for the victims. In the legalized sex markets of Europe, legal residents and native-born prostitutes have health benefits, the protections of labor laws, and pension benefits. Trafficked women, meanwhile, go unprotected. The same can be said of smuggled workers, who enjoy none of the benefits of European labor laws. They may work double the hours of authorized European workers and in unsafe and unregulated work conditions, with no health protections and for often inadequate wages.

The problem of human smuggling and trafficking in Europe is further impacted by the ambivalent relationship between states and victims. European countries, for example, have fewer protections for victims of trafficking than does the United States. In many European countries, women are given temporary visas to help in the prosecution of their cases but are provided no long-term assurance of staying in Europe, as the T (for trafficking) visa provides in the United States. In other words, the victims are helped only as long as they are useful to the state in its prosecution of the perpetrators. Most states only provide financial and support services to victims who aid criminal investigators but there are not provisions for those who have been victimized and manage to escape their traffickers. Those who are returned home often face renewed victimization either by their families, their communities, and/or their traffickers.<sup>100</sup>

Although Europe has lower levels of violence than many regions in the world, the presence of human traffickers and smugglers increases the level of intrapersonal violence. Because much of this violence occurs within closed communities where individuals are exploited in industries under the radar, it remains unreported to law enforcement and often stays off official registries. Although the violence among organized-crime groups has diminished in recent years,<sup>101</sup> this decline refers to intragroup conflicts. Meanwhile, female and child trafficking victims silently suffer high levels of abuse. *Stolen Smiles*, a study conducted in

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<sup>99</sup> Cornelius Friesendorf, ed., *Strategies against Human Trafficking: The Role of the Security Sector* (Vienna and Geneva: National Defense Academy and Austrian Ministry of Defense and Sport, 2009): 444–510.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Pino Arlacchi, *L'inganno e la paura. Il mito del caos globale* (Milan: Il Saggiatore, 2009).



Great Britain, found that trafficked women suffered extreme physical abuse.<sup>102</sup> In Belgium today, according to the research of Jana Arsovska, pimps have been known to brand trafficked women's vaginas to ensure that ownership is known and the women cannot escape their control.<sup>103</sup>

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*The transnational and covert nature of human-trafficking networks has made it difficult for European authorities to dismantle them.*

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The violence and human-rights abuses are transnational, as criminal investigations reveal. The Sneep Case, an investigation of a large trafficking organization in the Netherlands, showed that perpetrators committed violence across borders to intimidate any victims willing to cooperate with Dutch investigators. In that case the home of a victim from the Czech Republic was burned to ensure she would not testify against her traffickers. Human smuggling and trafficking, meanwhile, have resulted in multiple deaths in Europe. The previously cited case of the Chinese immigrants killed while crossing the English Channel is but one example. After the October 2013 capsizing of a migrant-carrying vessel off the coast of Lampedusa, which killed more than 350 African migrants, police reported that traffickers had tortured and raped some of the migrants while they were in a camp in Libya before setting off across the Mediterranean.<sup>104</sup>

The transnational and covert nature of human-trafficking networks has made it difficult for European authorities to dismantle them. There have been very few arrests or prosecutions of those engaged in the smuggling and trafficking of other humans.<sup>105</sup>

## VI. Policy Response: Looking Forward

There is no single strategy that will stem the growth of human trafficking, but there are several ways to discourage it:

**Address demand.** Demand for both trafficked women and forced labor must be reduced. This comes through education and prevention, prosecution, and a political will to terminate labor and sexual exploitation. It requires the participation of not only governments but also the private sector and civil society.

**Target consumers and businesses.** A successful anti-trafficking strategy must involve consumers, business people, and vulnerable communities. Those who avail themselves of the services of trafficked people, and the businesses that facilitate this trade, must become more central to countertrafficking policies. This involves raising awareness. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) launched a media campaign in late 2009 urging consumers to buy responsibly. This campaign goes beyond fair trade; it seeks to

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102 Cathy Zimmerman, Mazedra Hossain, Kate Yun, Brenda Roche, Linda Morison, and Charlotte Watts, *Stolen Smiles: A Summary Report on the Physical and Psychological Health Consequences of Women and Adolescents Trafficked in Europe* (London: London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, 2006): 10–22, [www.lshtm.ac.uk/php/ghd/docs/stolensmiles.pdf](http://www.lshtm.ac.uk/php/ghd/docs/stolensmiles.pdf)

103 Jana Arsovska, "Albanian Organized Crime, Past and Present: Changing Operational Methods and Organizational Structures" (presentation at annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology, Washington, DC, November 16, 2012).

104 BBC News, "Lampedusa boat tragedy: Migrants 'raped and tortured,'" BBC News, November 8, 2013, [www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-24866338](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-24866338).

105 Shelley, *Human Trafficking*, Conclusion; Rudolf E. H. Hilgers, "The Programmatic Approach of Trafficking in Human Beings in the Netherlands" (presentation at The Commodification of Illicit Flows: Labour Migration, Trafficking and Business, Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies, University of Toronto, October 9-10, 2009).



bring those working in the informal sector in developing countries under the protection of labor laws, and to ensure greater control of product supply chains.<sup>106</sup>

Yet, more is needed than words. A stick is required to impose financial, reputational, and legal penalties on those who exploit others. At the same time there must also be a carrot that incentivizes corporations and others to counter trafficking by providing above-board employment, jobs, and proper due diligence. Citizens must recognize the human consequences of purchasing goods or services that depend on trafficking for their provision.

**Address policy discrepancies.** Many policymakers suggest that tackling the problem of human trafficking requires harmonization of laws, from specific prostitution laws to trafficking and immigration policy more generally. Harmonization, however, must occur *between* as well as *within* countries. As it is, national approaches vary greatly. In the Netherlands, legalizing prostitution and ensuring that brothels have legal workers will, it is hoped, control trafficking. Sweden, on the other hand, has outlawed the purchase of sex in efforts to control both domestic prostitution and trafficking. The danger is that trafficked migrants will simply be displaced from Sweden to the Netherlands.

**Decrease profits.** More attention needs to be paid to the financial aspects of human smuggling and trafficking. At the present time, too few steps are being taken to either follow the profits of exploitation or deprive smugglers and traffickers of those profits. With high demand and promising profits, there is little disincentive.

**Improve labor laws.** Last but not least, migration policies need to be revised to allow for the legal movement of workers to supply sectors of the European economy for which workers are needed. Labor demand will be an acute problem in Europe as long as birth rates remain low. Without policies that can provide for more legal migration, the problems of human smuggling and trafficking will continue despite efforts to secure borders.

For more on MPI's Transatlantic Council on Migration, please visit:  
[www.migrationpolicy.org/transatlantic](http://www.migrationpolicy.org/transatlantic)

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<sup>106</sup> *Global Eye on Human Trafficking*, "What's Behind the Things We Buy?" *Global Eye on Human Trafficking*, Issue 7, October 2009, 1–2, [www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/projects/showcase\\_pdf/global\\_eye\\_seventh\\_issue.pdf](http://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/projects/showcase_pdf/global_eye_seventh_issue.pdf); Interview by the author with Richard Danziger, head of countertrafficking at IOM, who is behind this campaign, November 20, 2009, Dubai.



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