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**PANEL IV**

Remaining challenges in relation to statistics and indicators, building on the discussions at the High-level round table organized in the 48<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission 2004 as well as available data from the World's Women: Trends and Statistics (2005) and the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development (2005)

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## **Collecting Data on Human Trafficking**

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This paper will focus on data collection on trafficking in women as a form of serious crime. In the 2004 World Survey of Women and Development it was noted that in general, data on the international movement of women are lacking. Trafficking in women is part of this international movement and it has been agreed that the lack of reliable data is even more acute in the case of human trafficking.

### **Availability, reliability and comparability of trafficking data**

During recent years, there has been a boom in information on trafficking in persons. However, reliability of data remains a problem with most of data sources. If figures on trafficking are given, they are often based on estimates of the level of trafficking and usually, no explanation is given on how these figures were calculated. In many cases, they are used for advocacy or fund raising purposes. Data collection on human trafficking is complicated and reliable data is still difficult to find.

Some existing data collection initiatives gather information globally<sup>1</sup>. These initiatives usually focus on legislation, victim assistance, trafficking routes and other related information. Because of the nature of the information, in most cases data is not comparable. There are well known problems that are common to all efforts to gather comparative data on crime, such as imprecise definitions, improper classifications and differences in units of measurement. With “new forms of crime” such as trafficking, most of the traditional methods of collecting data cannot be applied.

One of the major problems with a comparative analysis is the lack of specific legislation on trafficking in persons resulting in the absence of official criminal justice statistics on human trafficking cases including number of police recorded crimes and number of persons prosecuted and convicted. In countries where legislation on trafficking in persons is available, the legal definitions may vary from one country to the other and official statistics may include only some types of trafficking crime.

The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime<sup>2</sup>, adopted in November 2000 by the United Nations General Assembly has improved the situation because for the first time, the international community has adopted an agreed definition of human trafficking<sup>3</sup>. Several countries have already reformed their legislation to

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<sup>1</sup> E.g. Innocenti Research Centre of UNICEF; ILO; UNESCO; IOM; The Protection Project at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies; and Trafficking in Persons Reports of the Department of State of the United States of America.

<sup>2</sup> Full text of the Convention and the Protocols can be found on:  
[http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crime\\_cicp\\_convention.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crime_cicp_convention.html)

<sup>3</sup> “Trafficking in persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force 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

be in compliance with the definition. It can be expected that this will lead also to more harmonized practice in recording crime, allowing collection and comparison of trafficking data.

The Convention against Transnational Organized Crime is also supplemented by the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air<sup>4</sup> including a definition of such smuggling. The difference between the definition of human trafficking and migrant smuggling is important to stress because in some countries, there is no clear distinction between trafficking and smuggling cases in official statistics. This is usually based on the lack of clear legal definitions of these crimes. This could lead to the under recording of trafficking crimes because the police might prefer to categorise some of the trafficking cases as smuggling crimes because often collection of evidence is easier. In general, there are only few countries which publish official statistics on trafficking cases so the global comparison of these statistics is difficult.

It is generally understood that official crime statistics do not reflect actual levels of crime but rather give information on the operations of criminal justice systems. The existence of hidden numbers of crime including all those crimes which are not reported to the authorities, is a well known phenomenon. These figures include particularly cases of rape and violence against women. For such crimes victimization surveys give more reliable figures on the true level of crime. In these surveys, sample of people are asked about their victimization experiences over a certain period of time. International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS)<sup>5</sup> and International Violence against Women Survey (IVAWS)<sup>6</sup> are examples of such research.

When estimating the hidden number of trafficking crimes it might be informative to look at the reporting practices of women in general and their relationship with affluence. When reporting practices of women are compared with the human development indicators it can be noted that women from less developed countries tend to report less in general than women who live in more affluent countries (figure1). Trafficking victims are usually recruited from poor countries where women are reporting fewer crimes. In addition, trafficking victims are often even more reluctant than other victims to report crimes because of the fear of retaliation by traffickers or deportation by authorities. It can be expected that most of the trafficking crimes never come to the attention of authorities.

Figure 1. Crimes reported to the police by women by Human Development Index

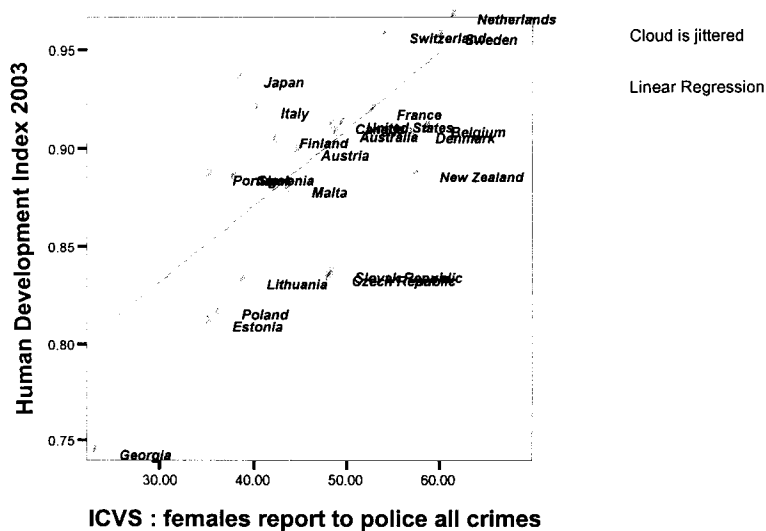
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sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. (A/RES/55/25)

<sup>4</sup> "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. (A/RES/55/25)

<sup>5</sup> See Alvazzi del Frate, Anna, The voice of victims of crime: estimating the true level of conventional crime, Forum on Crime and Society, Vol 3, Nos 1 and 2, Decemebr 2003, UNODC.

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.heuni.fi/12859.htm>; Jenny Mouzos & Toni Makkai (2004), Women's Experiences of Male Violence. Findings from the Australian Component of the International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS). Australian Institute of Criminology, Research and Public Policy Series No. 56



Even though general victimization survey can give a better understanding of the levels of crime, they cannot be used to collect data on the number of trafficking victims because the crime is not common enough to be represented in a small sample of the population. However, a focused victimization study on trafficking experiences could be carried out among, for example, young women from developing countries returning from abroad. Several analyses have been made of data collected from clients of service-providers. A good example of such initiative is the data collected by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) using standardized methodology<sup>7</sup>.

### UNODC database on global trafficking trends

A global database on trafficking trends was established under the Global Programme against Trafficking in Human Beings (GPAT) of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in order to systematically collect and collate open source information on trafficking in persons<sup>8</sup>. A broad range of sources is scrutinized for information on trafficking trends and routes, victim's and offender's characteristics and criminal justice responses. The main sources include official reports from governments, information disseminated by inter- and non-governmental organizations, research reports, conference material and media reports. The database collects both qualitative and quantitative information about human trafficking<sup>9</sup>.

When analyzing the information included in the database an assessment on how much a country is affected by the trafficking phenomenon as country of origin, transit or destination

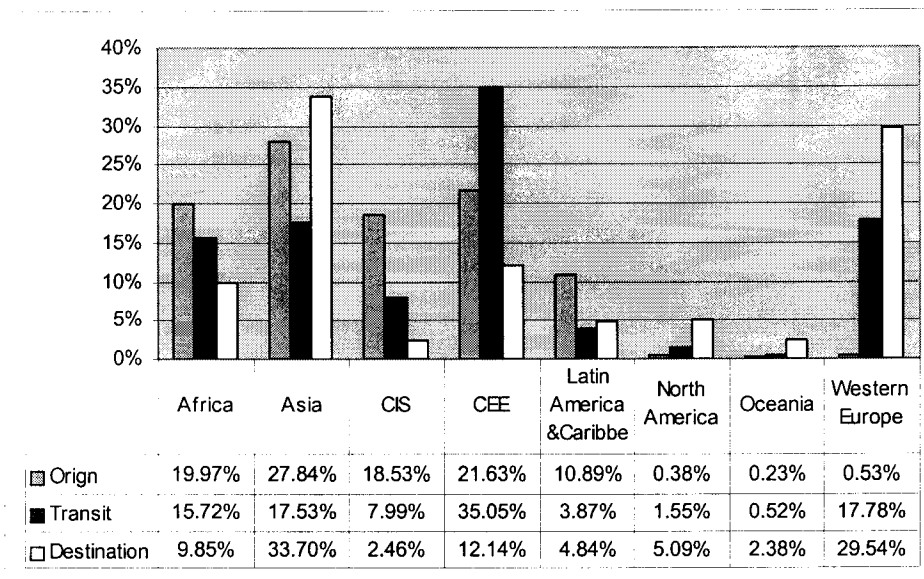
<sup>7</sup> See Laczko, Frank (2002), Human Trafficking: The Need for Better Data. Migration Information Source. Data Insight. <http://www.migrationinformation.org>; Omelaniuk, Irena (2002), Trafficking in persons: nature and logistics, Case study –Balkans. Presentation at the ISPAC Conference on “Trafficking: Networks and Logistics of Transnational Crime and International Terrorism”, Courmayeur, Italy, 2002.

<sup>8</sup> See Kangaspunta Kristiina, Mapping the inhuman trade: Preliminary findings of the database on trafficking in human beings, Forum on Crime and Society, Vol 3, Nos 1 and 2, Decemehr 2003, UNODC

<sup>9</sup> The first UNODC Global Report on Huamn Trafficking Trends will be published in 2005.

can be established. In this assessment the number of citations in different sources was calculated<sup>10</sup>. Based on the analyses it can be seen that the main origin regions are Asia and Central and Eastern Europe, main transit regions CEE and Western Europe and Asia, and main destination regions are Asia and Western Europe (Figure 2).

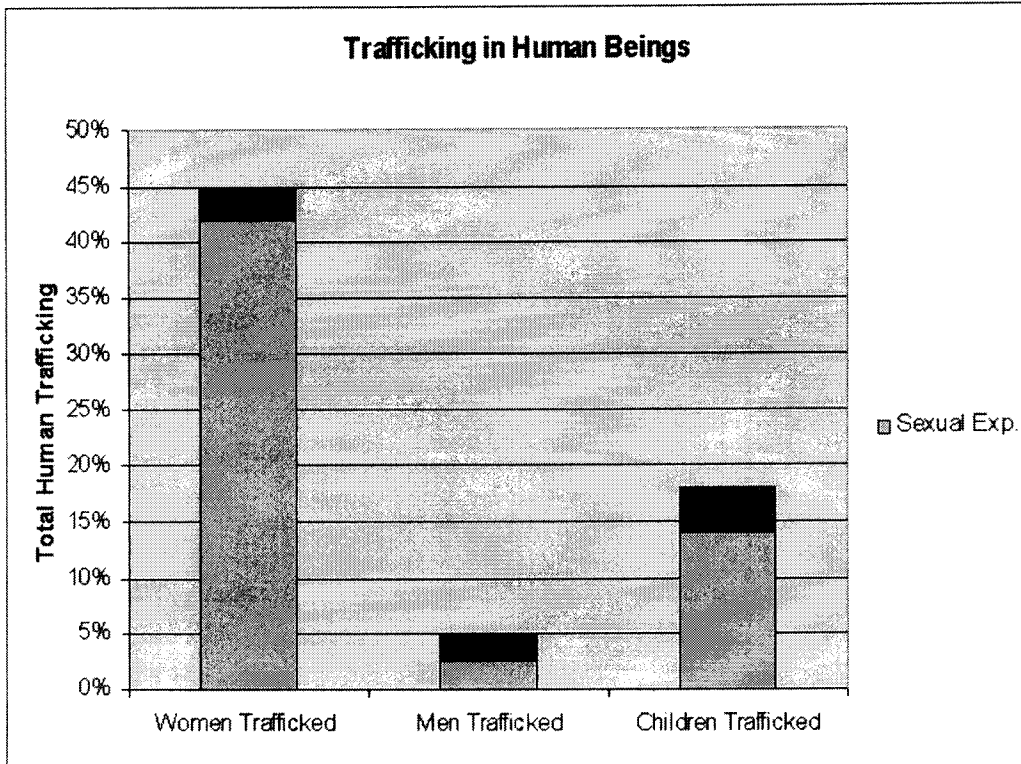
**Figure 2.** Number of times a country has been cited as a country of origin, transit or destination, by region, % of all citations



The main form of trafficking is sexual exploitation: out of all sources entered into the UNODC database, 75 % refers to sexual exploitation and 25 % to forced labour. Majority of the known trafficking victims are women who are trafficked for sexual exploitation as shown in figure 3. However, there might be a larger number of victims who are men and those who are trafficked for forced labour than shown in the figure. One reasons for low numbers is connected to the trafficking legislation which in many countries is restricted only to sexual exploitation. In this case, forced labour cases are not classified as human trafficking crimes and they are not shown in the statistics or reports. In addition, many victim support organizations provide services only for women and child victims. So it could be assumed that the number of male victims particularly trafficked for forced labour is under estimated. In some countries where the trafficking legislation covers also labour exploitation and services are not restricted to women and children, several male victims have entered the victim protection programmes.

**Figure 3.** Women, children and men trafficked for sexual exploitation, % of sources referring to such exploitation

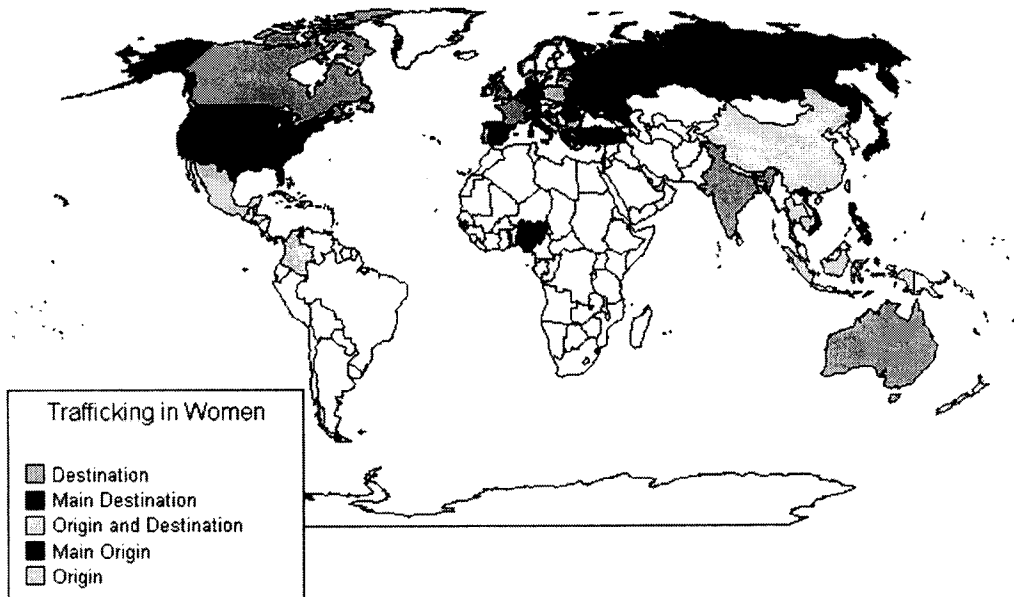
<sup>10</sup> For detailed information on the methodology, see *ibid.*



If the information on victims is studied in detail, it can be noted that in more than 90 % of cases involving women, victims were trafficking for sexual exploitation and in almost 80 % of cases involving children, victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation.

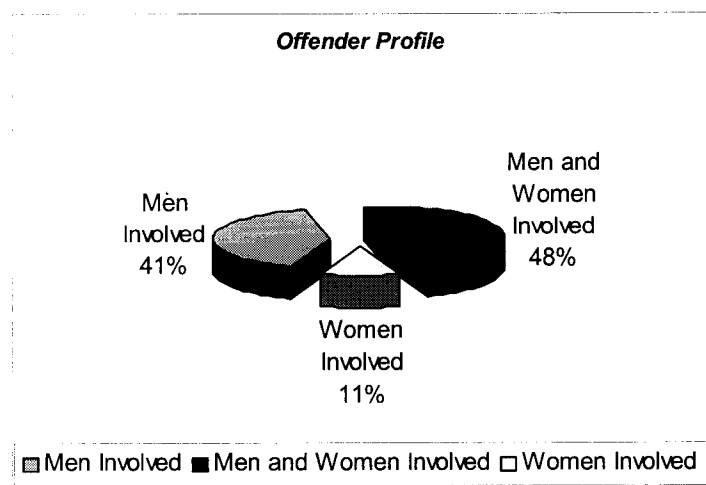
Trafficking in women touches nearly all countries in the world. Women are typically recruited from poor or politically and economically unstable countries, transported through countries that provide geographically expedient routes and exploited in more affluent parts of the world. Figure 4 presents the main countries of origin and destination for trafficking in women.

Figure 4. Trafficking in women



It is clear that women are heavily victimized through human trafficking. But women can also be traffickers. Based on the analysis of the database, where such information could be obtained, women were reported to be offenders in 11 % of the cases entered into the database and in 48 % of the cases included both women and men as offenders (figure 5).

**Figure 5.** Involvement of women and men in trafficking as offenders



### **Conclusion**

There are many complications in collecting data on human trafficking. However, there are some encouraging examples of such data collection. Systematically documented quantitative and qualitative data can provide important information for policy making as well as theory formulation. At an *international* level, global mapping of the trafficking situation, based on the identification of the main countries involved in human trafficking, is useful for planning and evaluation purposes. Mapping “hot spots” can give valuable information on the nature and situation of trafficking, such as origin, transit and destination countries, as well as involvement of organized crime groups in different countries and the main routes used. This knowledge can be used when developing cooperation between practitioners in the field of prevention, victim assistance and criminal justice responses and monitoring the impact of these actions.

In addition, carefully collected and analyzed *national* and *regional* data might yield profiles useful for developing regional cooperation in the fight against human trafficking. At a national level, more effort should be put on the recording and publishing information on the trafficking crimes by the criminal justice system. This would allow the evaluation of the effectiveness of the police, prosecutors and judiciary in dealing with traffickers. At the same time, reliable data on trafficked persons and their support, protection and care should be collected and published in order to identify gaps and respond to the needs of victims. Cooperation between authorities and civil society is elementary in this type of data collection.

Based on the available data it is clear that trafficking in persons is a gender related phenomenon, reflecting the special vulnerabilities of women and girls. It constitutes a sad manifestation of the widespread violence against women which is related to gender inequalities in many countries.