



**STOP**

**SEX TRAFFICKING  
OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE**



# SEX TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN IN DENMARK

## What is child trafficking?

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation.

UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime

A child is anyone under the age of 18 years.

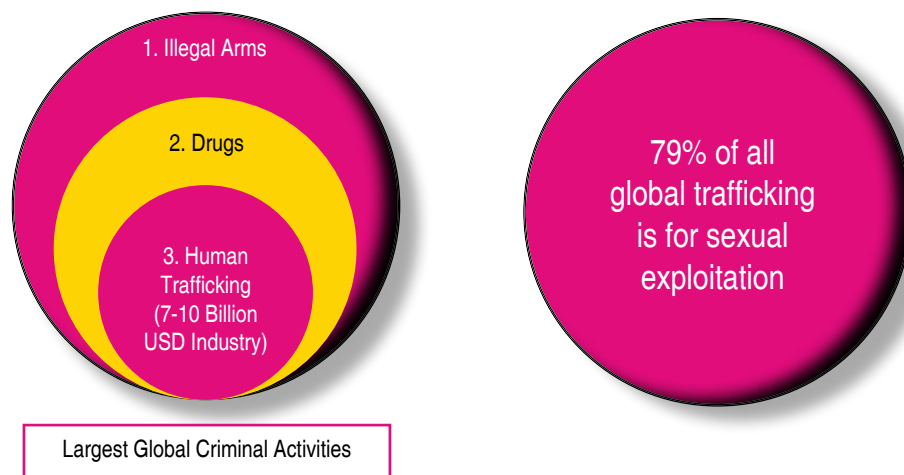
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

## What's the problem?

### GLOBAL SEX TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is a complex phenomenon fueled by the tremendous growth in the global sex market, and caused by poverty, uneven development, official corruption, gender discrimination, traditional cultural practices, civil unrest, natural disasters and lack of political will to end it.

The number of child victims trafficked worldwide for sexual exploitation or cheap labour on an annual basis is 1.2 million.<sup>1</sup> Human trafficking, the third largest criminal activity in the world, following the international trade in illegal drugs and arms trafficking, is believed to be worth billions of dollars each year. Driving the trade is the demand for commercial sexual exploitation. Seventy-nine percent of all global trafficking is for sexual exploitation.<sup>2</sup>



### SEX TRAFFICKING IN DENMARK

According to Save the Children Denmark, an ECPAT network member, children are trafficked to Denmark mainly for commercial sexual exploitation and/or for petty criminal activities, such as pick pocketing.<sup>3</sup> There is very limited knowledge about the number of minors trafficked to Denmark. The judicial data provided by the National Police – in which there were 11 reported cases of trafficking in 2006 - does not specify how many minors were involved.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, it is certain that among the

roughly 2000 foreigners in prostitution in Denmark, some are under 18. NGOs and local police working directly with adults in prostitution believe that there are actually more children who have been trafficked to Denmark than what authorities and NGOs are currently aware of. This assumption builds on the fact that the very young girls involved are kept under the close watch of their foreign pimps, as convictions for trafficking in children carry stiff sentences. Furthermore, minors are equipped with false documentation, and traffickers are less likely to offer children on the street, where the risk of detection is too high.<sup>5</sup> It is believed that 90% of all prostitution occurs indoor in brothels, massage parlours, in the escort prostitution sector, etc. while the remaining 10% is street prostitution in Denmark's three largest cities.<sup>6</sup>

## Who gets trafficked?

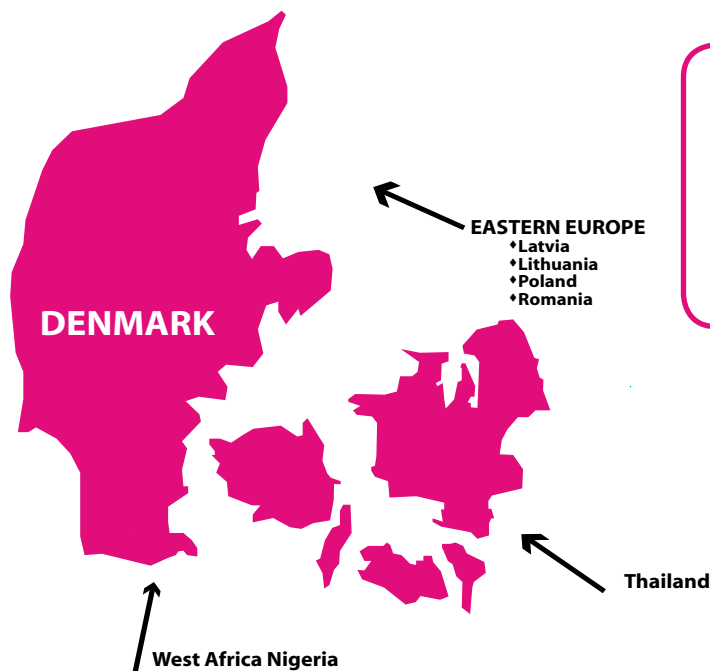
The majority of children being trafficked into and through Denmark come from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and other Eastern European countries. Cases of women and girls from Thailand, Nigeria and other West African countries also occur.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, there are incidents, such as the disappearance of 24 Chinese minors from a Red Cross asylum centre for unaccompanied children, which may possibly indicate that Chinese children are also being trafficked into Denmark.<sup>8</sup>

As in other countries, children are being trafficked to Denmark because they often lack life opportunities, are uneducated, easy to overpower and easy to manipulate and control. In many cases, they come from families in total or partial disintegration, typically on account of alcohol or drug abuse by one or both parents. Research carried out by Save the Children Denmark in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania showed that in some cases, children who had been sexually abused in institutions had later been trafficked to Denmark. Street children and children from ethnic minorities (mainly Roma) in these countries are also vulnerable to being trafficked to Denmark.<sup>9</sup>

Children may be at greater risk of trafficking from places where they are less protected. This may be because the law is weak or not properly enforced, or because children are less aware of the risks of trafficking and are more easily deceived. Countries are considered:

- 'Sending' or 'origin' - from where children are sent;
- 'Transit' - where the children might be moved through and temporarily kept on the way to their final destination; and
- 'Receiving' or 'destination' - where the children finally end up.

Depending on the reason for trafficking, some countries might only be sending, while others might be both sending and transit. Some countries can be all three. Denmark is considered primarily as a destination country of child trafficking, with a majority of children being trafficked into the country. While there have been reported cases of children trafficked through Denmark to Scandinavian countries such as Norway,<sup>10</sup> the scale is much less than the trafficking of children into Denmark.



For child trafficking, **Denmark** is primarily considered as a:

- origin country
- ✓ transit country
- ✓ destination country
- internal/domestic country

## Who creates demand?

Traffickers prey on children and young people to meet the sexual demands of paedophiles and people who pay for sex. Any person who patronises the commercial sex market may end up sexually exploiting a child. There is actually no common profile of perpetrators who sexually exploit children – they may be young, old, married, single; they come from all kinds of socio-economic backgrounds and work in all kinds of professions. Denmark is a source country for tourists seeking sex with children, traveling to destinations such as India,<sup>11</sup> Thailand, Cambodia<sup>12</sup> and Romania.<sup>13</sup>

## Who are the traffickers?

Traffickers can be a stranger or someone the child knows, such as a relative or a friend. Traffickers are often part of an organised criminal network that ‘recruits’ children and supplies them with fake identification. They may also pose as boyfriends or girlfriends in order to convince children to leave for a new life. According to the Danish police, eight people were convicted for trafficking in persons in Denmark, while a total of 23 people were charged.<sup>14</sup>

### CASE STUDIES

#### Lured into commercial sexual exploitation

In 2006, a 16-year-old girl of West African origin was trafficked to Denmark for commercial sexual exploitation. The girl was lured to Denmark believing she would have an ordinary job in Western Europe. She was rescued and her traffickers were arrested. In this case, due to fear of reprisals, the girl did not have to testify against the traffickers in court.<sup>15</sup>

### Trafficked to Denmark via Italy

A 16-year-old girl from Eastern Europe was trafficked from Italy to Denmark to work at a strip bar. Her contact in Denmark had a false passport made with a different nationality and indicating she was over 18 years of age, enabling her to appear to work in Denmark 'legally'.<sup>16</sup>

## How can we stop the trafficking of children?

### LAW AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

- It is essential to review the role and responsibility of service providers, in particular the Danish Immigration Services, to ensure that all child victims or potential child victims of trafficking receive the appropriate care and protection they are entitled to, indiscriminately and regardless of their immigration status.
- Danish law enforcement and authorities must collect disaggregated data (age, sex, minority status etc) on commercial sexual exploitation of children in order to improve data collection on child prostitution and child trafficking.
- Danish law on trafficking in humans fails to provide special protection for children against trafficking, as it entails the same penalty as the trafficking of adults.

International Conventions/Laws	Date of Ratification by Denmark	Date of Reports Submitted	UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Recommendations for Denmark
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	1991	Initial Report – 1993 1998 2003	In response to the 2003 report, the UN Committee made the following recommendation in terms of child trafficking: Strengthen its efforts to prevent commercial sexual exploitation of children, including through the development of a national plan of action on commercial sexual exploitation of children, as agreed at the World Congresses against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children held in 1996 and 2001
Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	2003	Initial Report - 2006	The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that research is undertaken into issues covered by the Protocol, and that data be disaggregated by age, sex and minority group, as well as be systematically collected and analysed, as it provides essential tools for measuring policy implementation.
The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress & Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women & Children	2003	N/A	N/A

International Conventions/Laws	Date of Ratification by Denmark	Date of Reports Submitted	UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Recommendations for Denmark
ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour	2000	N/A	N/A

## PREVENTION OF CHILD TRAFFICKING AND VICTIM PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE

- The Danish Government should establish a procedure that ensures the rights of minor victims of trafficking are respected, particularly that minors are not imprisoned.
- The Government must ensure that all children, including EU citizens, who cannot be guaranteed protection from their traffickers and from continued exploitation upon repatriation receive appropriate long-term protection and support in Denmark.
- Danish initiatives to prevent trafficking in children should be based on a more holistic approach that includes supporting efforts to address the factors contributing to trafficking in children, e.g., poverty, economic disparity and vulnerability of families in the sending countries.

## TO REPORT A SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF CHILD TRAFFICKING, CONTACT:

The **Danish Anti-Trafficking Centre** runs a hotline (tel. from within Denmark: 70 20 25 50; from abroad: +45 70 20 25 50) that receives reports of trafficking **for all potentially trafficked individuals in Denmark**.<sup>17</sup>

## MORE INFORMATION

- Save the Children Denmark (ECPAT Group): <http://www.redbarnet.dk>
- ECPAT International: [www.ecpat.net](http://www.ecpat.net)
- The Body Shop and ECPAT Stop Trafficking of Children and Young People Campaign : [www.thebodyshop.com/stop](http://www.thebodyshop.com/stop)

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> UNICEF. *UNICEF calls for increased efforts to prevent trafficking of children*. 16 June 2007. [http://www.unicef.org/media/media\\_40002.html](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_40002.html)
- <sup>2</sup> UNODC. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*. 2009. <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html>
- <sup>3</sup> Save the Children Denmark. *Trafficking in Children in Denmark*. 2003. Accessed from: <http://www.childcentre.info/projects/traffickin/denmark/dbaFile11026.pdf> . And Save the Children Denmark, *Trafficking in Children to Denmark, 2006* (in Danish only).
- <sup>4</sup> UNODC. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*. 2009. <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html>
- <sup>5</sup> Save the Children Denmark. *Trafficking in Children in Denmark*. 2003. Accessed from: <http://www.childcentre.info/projects/traffickin/denmark/dbaFile11026.pdf>
- <sup>6</sup> Combating Trafficking in Denmark. Presentation by The Nest International. 2008. Accessed from: [www.norden.org/nr/utskott/medborga\\_konsument/Konferenser\\_Hearings/sk/thenest-nordiskraad-2-lang.ppt](http://www.norden.org/nr/utskott/medborga_konsument/Konferenser_Hearings/sk/thenest-nordiskraad-2-lang.ppt)
- <sup>7</sup> US State Department. *Trafficking in Persons Report 2008*. Accessed from: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/105656.pdf>
- <sup>8</sup> "Refugee Children Disappear". *Copenhagen Post*. 11 November 2005.
- <sup>9</sup> Save the Children Denmark. *Trafficking in Children in Denmark*. 2003. Accessed from: <http://www.childcentre.info/projects/traffickin/denmark/dbaFile11026.pdf>
- <sup>10</sup> US Department of State. *Trafficking in Persons Report 2008*. Accessed from: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/105656.pdf>
- <sup>11</sup> Save the Children Denmark. Supplementary NGO report on the OPSC. 2006.
- <sup>12</sup> V. Jones, K. Zeuthen Jeppesen and L. Ladegaard: *Sex offenders without Borders- An investigation into sexual abuse and exploitation of children in Thailand, Cambodia and Burma in relation to travel and tourism*, Save the Children Denmark 2009.
- <sup>13</sup> ECPAT International. *Global Monitoring Report on the Status of Action on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children - Denmark*. Bangkok. 2006.
- <sup>14</sup> UNODC. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*. 2009. <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html>
- <sup>15</sup> Case study from the Danish Red Cross, 2009.
- <sup>16</sup> Save the Children Denmark. *Trafficking in Children in Denmark*. 2003. Accessed from: <http://www.childcentre.info/projects/traffickin/denmark/dbaFile11026.pdf>
- <sup>17</sup> The Danish Anti-Trafficking Centre. Accessed from: <http://www.centermodmenneskehandel.dk/wm146572>



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