

National Line Against Human Trafficking, operation basis

Chapter 3





PREVENT AND RAISE AWARENESS

The Line and National Line against Human Trafficking (LNCTP) 800 5533 000 works permanently 24/7 and through the program “Together Against Trafficking” it follows up the reports we receive.



As part of the process, all phone calls are taken and analyzed, even those in which the person who reports asks for anonymity for fear of possible retaliation.

Cases are channeled to federal and/or local authorities, organisms of the civil society or any of the more than thousand service providers with which we’ve established a support network.

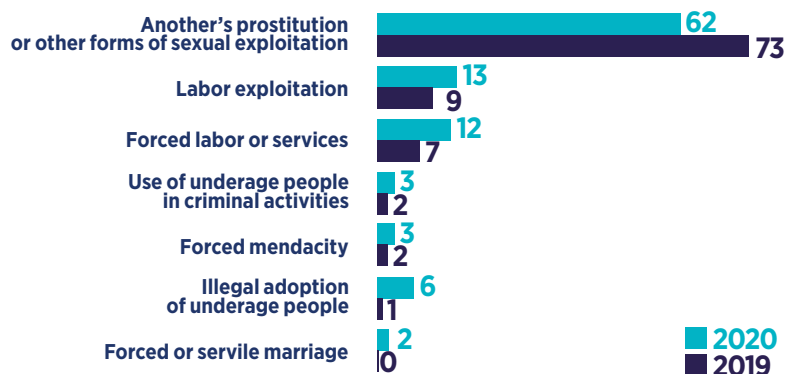
The attention we offer seeks to raise awareness on those who call about the importance of denunciation. In Mexico City and sometimes in the State of Mexico we offer victims legal and psychological support (direct and/or indirect) and help to open an investigation file. In some cases this aid continues until there is a judicial process.

During these past couple of years, teamwork experience led the Citizen Council to creating alliances with national and international organisms that work to fight this crime. This apart from promoting the training program meant for different parts of the population, based on prevention and identification of crimes related with Human Trafficking, thanks to which they also incremented the number of counselors at the LNCTP. This is added to the renewal of attention protocols in order to offer a better service.

Data from this organism are open and shared with authorities, because there is no better way to prevent than raising awareness about the ways in which criminals operate and with which they produce Trafficking. We are com-

REPORTED MODALITIES

About 69% of the Human Trafficking modalities that the LNCTP registered between 2019 and 2020 were related with another’s prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation and, for the first time, in 2020, we found cases of forced or servile marriage.



mitted with raising our voice, making sure that this crime is punished and contributing with rescuing more victims.

The information we've gathered for two years through the LNCTP allows us to have a more accurate scope of how criminals behave in social networks and the people who are involved in that.

VICTIMS

In one social networks Sandra found the person who would victimize her. After texting each other for some time, she accepted to meet him personally. Soon they began a sentimental relationship and Sandra moved in with him in San Pablo del Monte in Tlaxcala. One day the man told her that they had stolen his car and that they had to move to another city while also asking her for economical help to overcome the situation.

In Mexico City, the couple stayed at a hotel in a tolerance area. That's where the sexual exploitation began. He urged her to have sex with other men in order to earn money. It was supposed to be for just one week, while they paid their debt.

Sandra noticed that she was not the only one being exploited by this man who had a wife and other two women. She says that during the time she suffered this situation she probably earned 100 thousand pesos.

By late 2019 she decided to end the exploitation relationship with help from a friend who contacted the Citizen Council.

Another case this organism documented and that also took place in San Pablo del Monte, was the rescue of 120 migrants from Central America including children, teenagers and adults who had been retained by people who would supposedly help them cross the border.

After contacting one of the victims through the Line and National Chat and coordinating the Council's work with state and municipal authorities, they were freed.

In general, and according to data registered by the organism, groups that are at greater risk are women, children, teenagers, elder people and migrants.

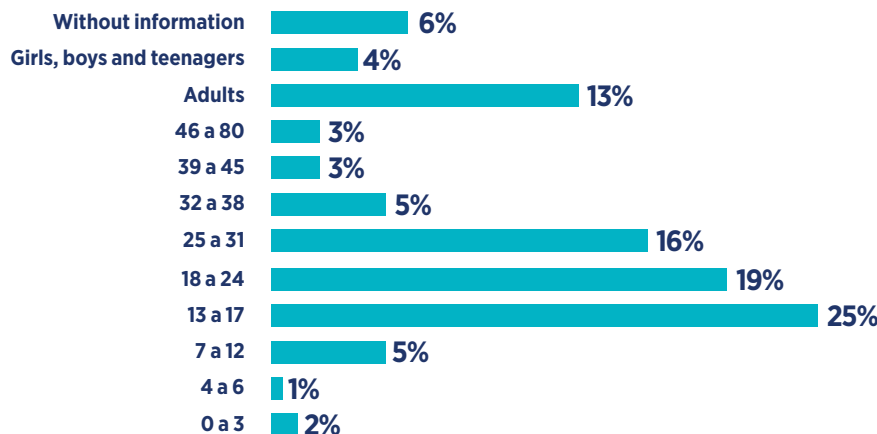


"I began providing counseling in October 2017. Initially, it was a challenge to digest the information we had first-hand: to listen to a person when their voice breaks and they begin to cry. It motivates me to achieve good results with the person and that months later he calls us and says: 'Thank you very much, you supported me all this way'.

Víctor Alan Hernández Aparicio
Counselor

AGES

Teenagers and young people between 13 and 31 years of age represent the most victimized people in Human Trafficking, representing three out of five reports the LNCTP receives. t



Traffickers look for people in situations of vulnerability and exclusion, people who suffer from systemic discrimination derived from their sex, gender identity or disability; who suffer violence within the family in their community or at work. They seek a population that needs a dignified treatment, love, work and who are looking to escape violent environments where they lack opportunities.



FORCED TO TRAFFIC



Two underage children were intercepted by two men when leaving school, and they were threatened with a firearm and forced to get into a vehicle in order to take them to a nearby warehouse. There they handed them cocaine, marihuana and pills that had to sell in their school. The kids told their families what had happened and with help from the Citizen Council they could free themselves from this form of Trafficking, defined as using underage people in criminal activities.

AGE

The ages of the 232 victims that were identified range between 7 and 38 years, although there are more in the category labeled as adults, with a total of 36.

However, in 45 cases the victims were girls, boys and teenagers; altogether, they add up more than the number of adults, a fact that shows that the population made up by children and teenagers continues to be more vulnerable before Trafficking.

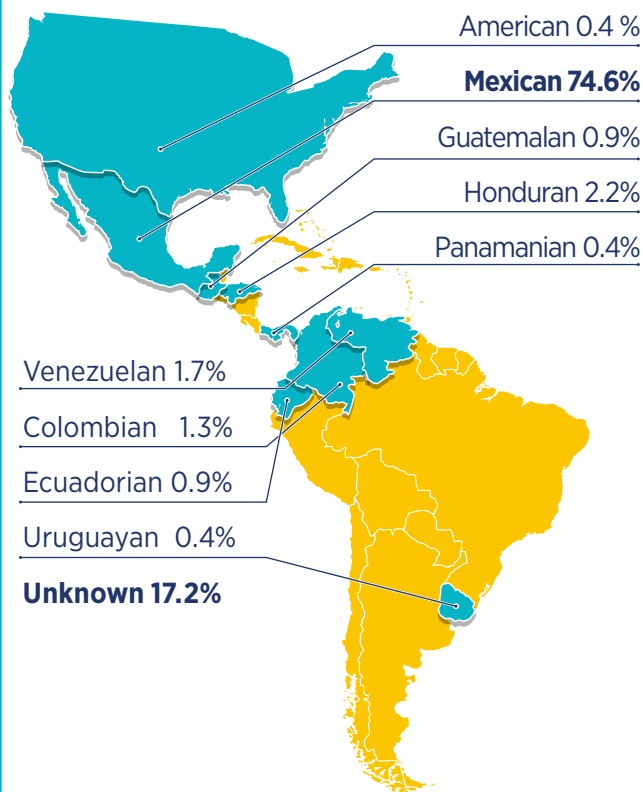
This trend coincides with the Global Report in Trafficking in Persons 2020 by the United

NATIONALITIES

Three out of every four victims



are Mexican, the LNCTP registered cases from people from Central and South America.



Nations Office Against Drugs and Crime (UNODC), which found out in a two-year period that out of 50 thousand victims in 148 countries, girls and women were more vulnerable with 65%.

NATIONALITY

In the 184 cases of Trafficking the Citizen Council documented between 2019 and 2020 they identified the following nationalities: Mexican (173) Honduran (5) Venezuelan (4), Colombian (3), Ecuadorian and Guatemalan (2 each) and American, Uruguayan and Panamanian (1 each). They couldn't identify the origin of 40 people.

Regarding the nationality of 119 groups of victims, according to witness reports, 56 of these have a Mexican origin, 37 have an unknown nationality, 8 Venezuelan, 5 Colombian, 3 Honduran, 3 Cuban and one each of the following countries: Guatemala, Ecuador, Philippines, India, El Salvador, Brazil and Nicaragua.

The migration crisis, both internal and external, is not foreign to the severe situation of Human Trafficking. Given that the United States established agreements with Honduras, Guatemala and our country to move military and police officers to the borders with the purpose of stopping irregular migration, the presence of children and teenagers, many of them without the company of an adult, highlighted them as a vulnerable sector in matters of traffickers and drug cartels.

ORIGIN OF THE CALL

The registry of cases that are classified with all the elements of Human Trafficking allows to establish that there was an increase in the number of phone calls that were received; especially those that came from the Mexican states, increasing from 43 in 2019 to 48 in 2020, the same as with those that came from the State of Mexico, which augmented from 7 to 13, and those that came from abroad were 2 to 4.

In Mexico City there was a reduction. In 2019 there were 35 registries while in 2020 there were 17.

Also, the LNCTP attended cases in Puebla (10), Jalisco (9), Tlaxcala (8), Nuevo Leon (7), Baja California and Chiapas (6 each), Southern Baja California, Guerrero, Guanajuato, Michoacán, Morelos, Queretaro, Quintana Roo, Sonora, Tabasco, Veracruz and Yucatan (3 each), Campeche, Chihuahua, Coahuila and Oaxaca (2), Colima, Durango, Sinaloa and Tamaulipas (1).

From abroad, the United States (5) and France (1), while in fifteen phone calls they didn't establish their origin.

It's possible that this decrease in the number of reports happened because due to the COVID-19 pandemic, traffickers saw their criminal activity affected by the situation at first because they couldn't access hooking or exploitation places, so they had to look for new methods and places.



EXPLOITATION MODALITIES

In some cases that were documented there is more than one type of exploitation. Another person's prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation is the modality with more registries, adding 135.

It's followed by labor exploitation with 22, forced labor or servility with 19, using underage people in criminal activities, 5 of forced mendacity, 7 of illegal adoption of an underage person and 2 cases of forced and servile marriage.

MEANS AND METHODS USED IN HOOKING

We understand as means of hooking the way in which the trafficker establishes contact with the potential victim, while the method is the strategy employed to convince him/her.

During these two years, the most commonly used mean was person to person, with 72%; followed by the use of social networks, with 22%. The rest are divided between websites and publicity in other platforms.

The main method traffickers use to recruit victims is offering them a job with 47% of the cases, contrary to what was thought before, when we thought that the most common hooking strategy was sentimental manipulation.



Data from the LNCTP point out that sentimental manipulation represented 29%. The rest is divided between promises of help, deprivation of liberty, substance abuse, offering education opportunities, among others.

TRAFFICKERS

They seek people in situations of vulnerability and exclusion, who are discriminated for matters of sexual diversity or disability, with a low self esteem or victims of violence within the family, social or labor violence, single mothers or women who are responsible for supporting their families.

The people who traffic usually don't act alone. It's a crime in which, usually, there needs to be an organized criminal structure, with defined roles that can range from local operation (families who opt for "selling" or "renting" their children for sexual jobs or services) and national (gangs with connections in other



cities around the Republic where they exploit the victims) or groups that belong to organized crime with connections abroad, such as drug cartels. In some cases, they are different generations of a single family.

Cuando las mujeres llegan a participar en la estructura delictiva lo hacen como reclutadoras o cuidadoras, incluso algunas antes fueron víctimas de las mismas bandas.

Men who traffic and participate in sexual exploitation are usually extrovert and manipulating, and as part of their characteristics they don't usually coincide with the stereotype of handsome or athletic man, but they stand out because they show a "willingness to get married and have children" and that's how they are able to have more control over their female victims who are usually "hooked" through emotional and psychological manipulation.

When women participate in the criminal structure they do so as recruiters or caretakers, and even some of them used to be victims of the same gangs.



According to the LNCTP, these are the qualities of traffickers who participate in sexual exploitation



Young men between 24 and 31, and between 32 and 46 years of age



They are smooth with words, extrovert and controlling



They don't always fall into a stereotype of attractive and athletic man



They seek their victims on social networks, parks, streets and markets



They promise love, marriage, a home, a family or help with their children's education



They convince women of prostituting themselves in order to help them overcome a problem



They isolate them from their places of origin and prevent them from having contact with their families



They control them with psychological, sexual or physical violence

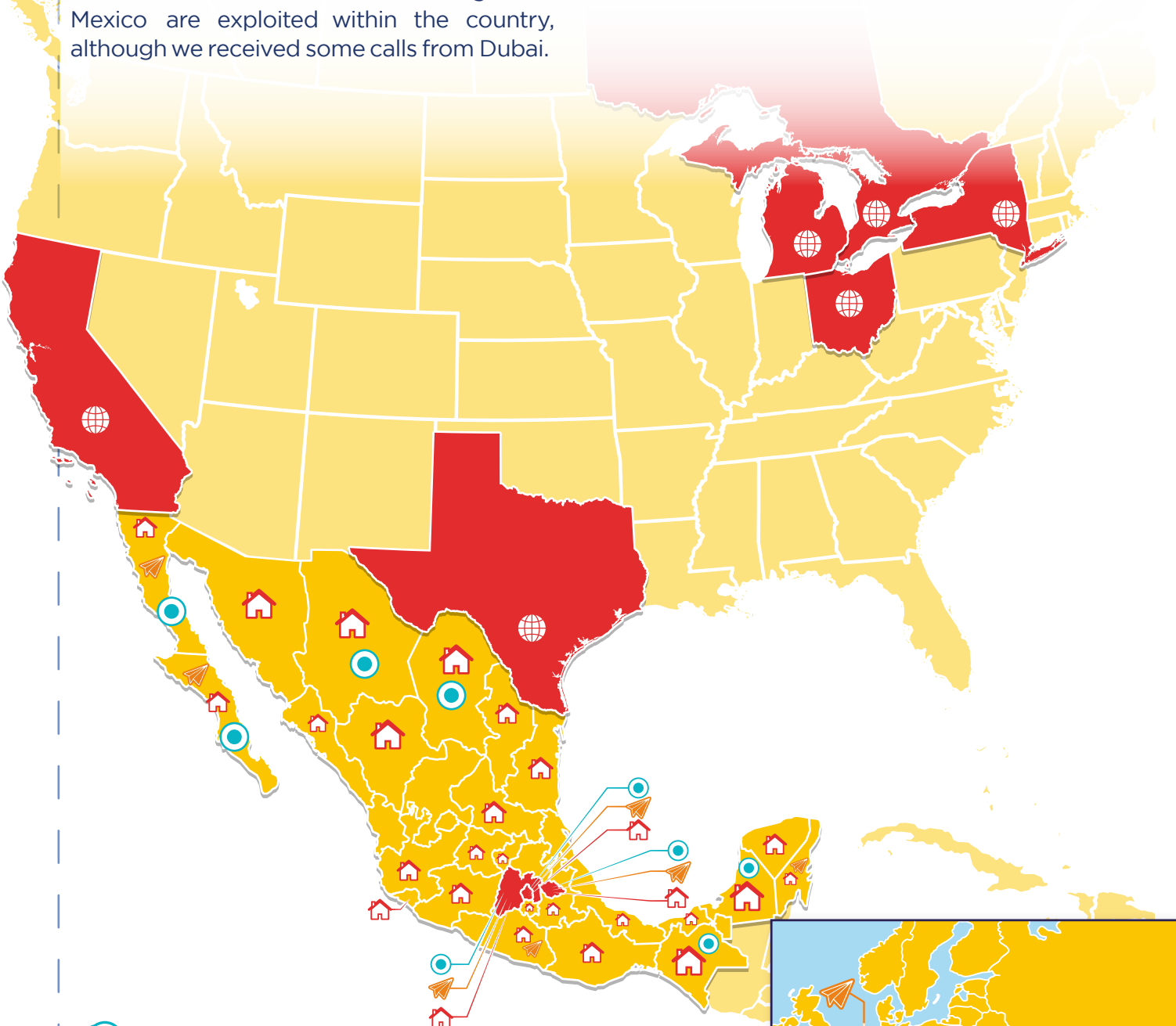


They exploit more than one woman at a time

NATIONAL VICTIMS



Most victims of Human Trafficking from Mexico are exploited within the country, although we received some calls from Dubai.



STATES OF ORIGIN _____ 25



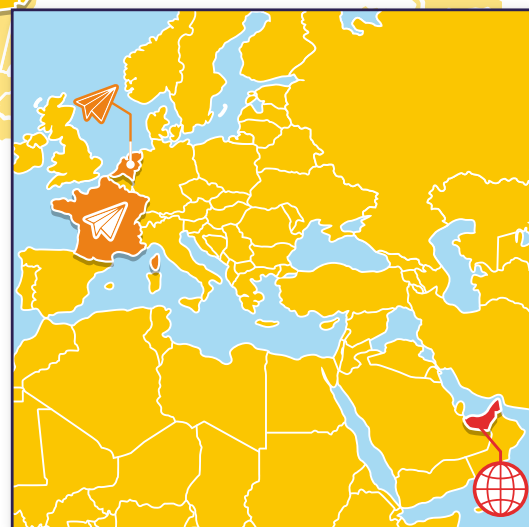
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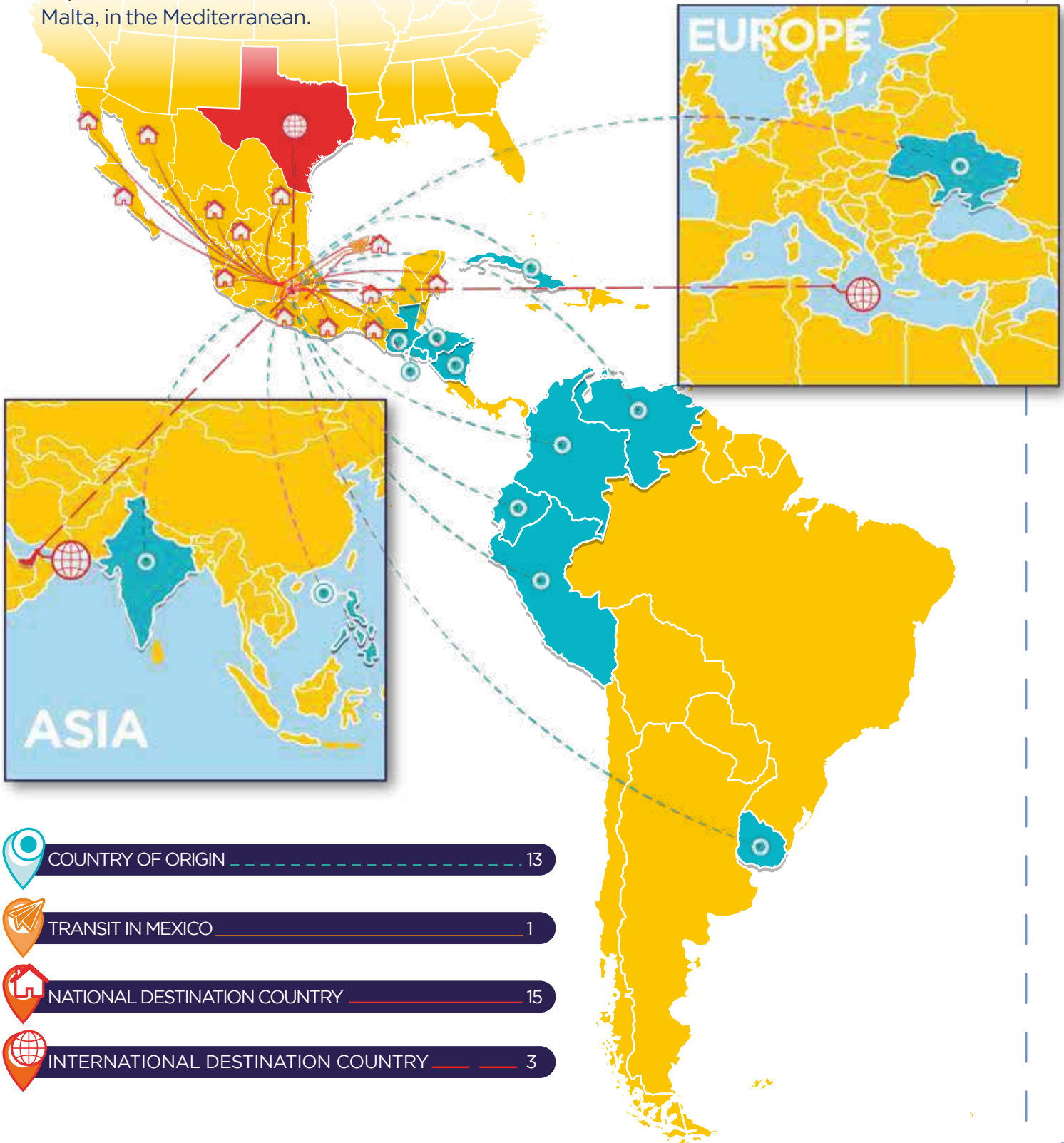
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INTERNATIONAL VICTIMS

Coming from Central and South America, international victims of Human Trafficking report exploitation in 15 states of the Mexican Republic and even in Dubai or the island of Malta, in the Mediterranean.



LOCATIONS

In the worrying diversification of methods for human Trafficking we could identify new methods and places of operations that range from working at a hawker stall to a barbershop.

Subjugation represents a central element criminals use, so that's why the usually use violence in different manifestations: psychological, physical, sexual, family, labor, housing and/or economical.

Far from disappearing, this crime transforms and traffickers look for new ways of operating, that's why the data we obtained through reports are fundamental, because they allow us to identify new modus operandi and create alerts.

Despite representing a low rate in this period, it's still important to have this registry because it can represent that informal groups and criminal organizations have identified a new niche to operate this type of business where they identify potential "clients" in an indirect way and behind a façade that seems to be "normal" unlike bars and restaurants.

Au Pair in Canada, diversity in victims' nationality

During 2019 and 2020 we also observed a variation in relation with the victims' nationality. In 2019 most were brought to Mexico with purposes of sexual exploitation and they came mainly from Colombia and Venezuela. In 2020, labor exploitation grew stronger and we identified more foreign victims that were brought with this purpose from countries such as Uru-



Barber shops as centers of trafficking activities

During the past few years, this type of business has grown in Mexico. The concept focuses mainly on male clients, and this coincides with the main consumer of sexual commerce.

During 2019 and in 2020 we identified at least three cases that pointed to Human Trafficking with purposes of sexual exploitation and one of them with purposes of forced labor and whose operation hid behind businesses that pretended to be barber shops.

guay, Ecuador, and also Colombia, Venezuela, Honduras and El Salvador.

Thanks a report, in 2019 we detected a case of labor exploitation related with the so-called "Au Pair", which operate as cultural exchange companies in which young women live with a foreign family and in exchange they work as nannies while having the chance to learn English at a school and practice the language. This exchange model is no longer legal in Canada and its operation is not backed up by the country's activities, a situation that makes women who participate more vulnerable.

Once in that country, women discover that the conditions of the exchange are not the same as the ones established in the contract, the work hours are excessive and they are greater in number than the hours they get to study. Also, there are usually forced to perform cleaning activities and the quality of the English schools is very low or the schools don't have a valid registration.

The purpose of this type of companies is to take people to work under a supposed model of cultural exchange through which the company benefits from the women's domestic work. They receive the payment for the job but they don't give anything to the victims, arguing that it's an exchange.

Finding themselves in another country, without any support networks and not knowing the language, victims are very vulnerable and they are forced to stay in that situation or if they complain they are intimidated.

WHO ENDS THE CYCLE?

Although the "client or consumer" is not considered as a member of the criminal structures, it's important to consider him because it's him who determines a demand for victims in the different forms of Trafficking.

That's why it's important to say that between 2019 and 2020 the LNCTP registered 7 cases with purposes of sexual exploitation thanks to reports made by the receptors.

ASKING FOR HELP AMIDST THE PANDEMIC

Between March 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic began and December of the same year, they registered 1,744 reports at the LNCTP, representing 39% of the total number of reports in two years.

Registers confirmed what was said in April 2021 by the European Commission (during a presentation of a proposal with which the European Union pretends to extend the risks

and reduce the benefits of those who participate in this crime) by declaring that criminal groups have adapted to the sanitary crisis in order to generate conditions for a better exploitation.

According to the UNODC "in the crime of Human Trafficking, criminals are adjusting their business models to the 'new normality', especially through the use of new technologies. At the same time, COVID-19 has an impact on the state authorities and organizations (ONG) capacities to provide essential services for victims. More importantly, the pandemic has worsened and increased the economical, systemic and social inequalities that are part of the main causes of Human Trafficking."



In terms of work, the increasing unemployment and the reduction of income are two elements that enable the operation of traffickers who participate in exploitation with labor exploitation ends. People who are vulnerable have been at greater risk of being exploited when looking for a job.

During the contingency months, according to data from the LNCTP, 58 of the reports corresponded with prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, 20 were for modalities related with employment: forced labor or services and labor exploitation. Each report can reflect more than one modality.

The Citizen Council's work did not stop. Before the sanitary contingency we designed a strategy to enable work from home, making sure people would receive attention 24/7 through the LNCTP.

THE COMPLEXITY OF DENUNCIATION

According to the Diagnostic About the Situation of Human Trafficking in Mexico 2019, the National Commission for Human Rights (CNDH), whose period goes from June 2012 to July 2017, nationwide they opened 2 thousand 701 pretrial investigations and investigation files on the matter; locally, they opened 932, out of which 92 percent were thanks to a denounce, 6 percent ex officio and in 2 percent they did not find data about the origin.

Out of the 184 cases that were classified as Human Trafficking, the Citizen Council helped open 109 investigation files, out of which 64 took place in 2019 and 45 in 2020.

This number represents a contribution of 59% of the files nationwide between 2019 and 2020.

In Mexico, the Citizen Council's numbers estimate that there's a 99% black rate in relation with Human Trafficking, a concept that defines the number of crimes that are not reported to the authorities and whose percentage varies depending on the situation of which a person was victim.

"Being a counselor at the LNCTP is important because it has helped me understand and learn about the impact this crime causes on victims and their families, promoting empathy, motivation to continue to learn about related topics and techniques to empower people who communicate with us, showing the range of alternatives there are before the complex situation they are going through."

Fabiola Padilla
Counselor



It's important to promote a culture of denunciation and for authorities to guarantee access to justice in order to fight against impunity and reduce the black rate.

Sometimes, a victim of Trafficking does not denounce because they don't think they're victims, and they only with to overcome the traumatizing experience. The migratory situation of people who are subject by traffickers is one more of the causes for avoiding to denounce the crime, for fear of being expelled from the country once their illegal situation is discovered.

For this reason, the Council offered the victims counseling during the process of denunciation and, sometimes, during the adjudication of cases, in order to give them trust and help them understand the states it complies.

MOTIFS

Some of the reasons victims have not to face the legal process are:

Not having migratory documents in order to return to their countries safely.



In the case of women who are sexually exploited, sometimes their families lose trust in them or feel shame, so going back to their communities is no longer an option.

Feeling ashamed of going back home without having achieved their economical goals.



Fear of retaliation of persecution by traffickers, mainly when they are related with criminal organizations and they have witnessed these criminal activities.

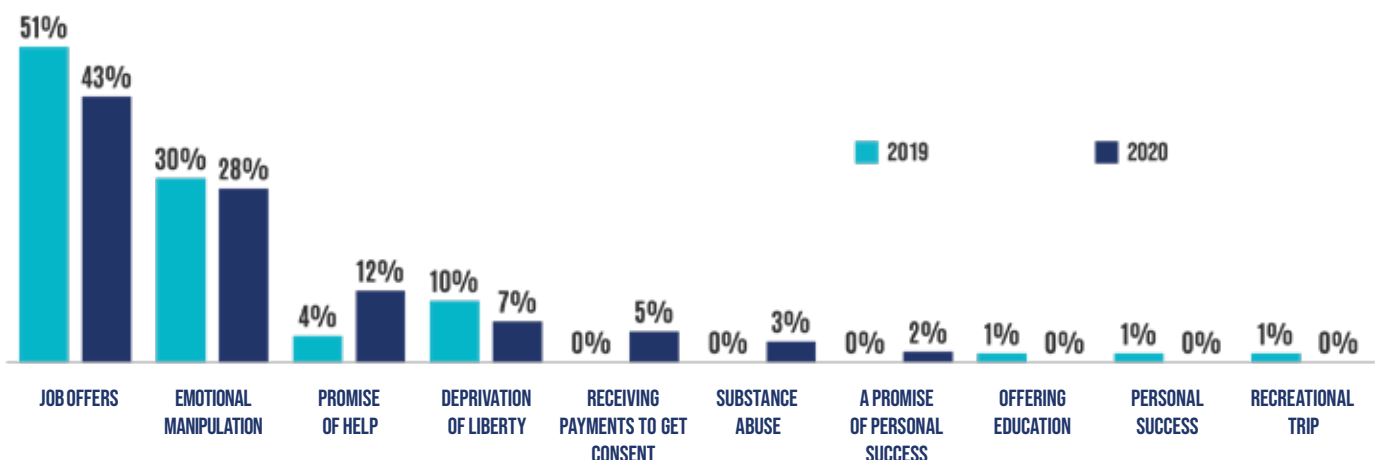
Creating empathic bonds with their abusers and normalizing their situation of violence.



In cases in which traffickers are family members or belong to the same community of origin as the victim, the probabilities of them being exploited again are greater and the probability of denunciation diminishes.

HOOKING METHODS

Job offers were the main hooking method used by traffickers, followed by emotional manipulation.



OUR ALLIES SAY



Comisión **Unidos Vs Trata**

Desde el inicio de la pandemia

Since the beginning of the pandemic in Mexico, in cases of Human Trafficking, specifically in relation with sexual exploitation of girls, boys and women, there was no public policy or government action that would help identify and rescue victims.

The dynamics of criminal organizations as well as the criminal organizations that participate in the exploitation of human beings, migrated to digital platforms in which they began to offer sexual services through streaming of acts with a sexual content.

It's important for Public Safety Institutions to start to plan concrete and defined actions to fight the new dynamics that the criminal organizations have created through the use of internet and streaming.

Civil organizations face the challenge of installing more places to receive victims of Human Trafficking. The victims' destination will have to be to become refugees in houses that guarantee that they are fed, safe and that they have a place to stay.

In this sense, crime prevention must be made through massive means of communication, identifying the population that is in a more vulnerable situation.

Rosi Orozco

President of the United Commission vs Trafficking A.C.

In these different times of voluntary or involuntary isolation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we talk about topics of social justice using virtual means of communication (social networks), reaching bigger audiences and accompanying the community in its vulnerability by informing, raising awareness, preventing and inviting victims to denounce Human Trafficking and gender-based violence.

The pandemic changed our plans for 2020 (strategic plans) but we emerged as virtual strategists and agents of change for the community. Another challenge we face is to reach wider communities with the help of groceries coupons for people who lost their jobs.

Lt. Coronela Ruth Cerezo

Territorial Ministry of Integrated Mission, Salvation Army Mexican Territory



OUR ALLIES SAY



Human Trafficking is considered and described as a crime that is “hidden at plain sight” or that has been normalized and is part of the urban landscape. Regretfully, this is because the population ignores much about this situation. That’s why it’s necessary to talk about it, to teach, raise awareness, inform and create opportunities to participate.

Unfortunately, some people believe that due to the sanitary crisis children teenagers and young people are exempt from Human Trafficking just because “they’re at home”; this is far from the reality teenagers and young people face because they’re spending more time than ever online and in social networks, being exposed to fake profiles and to all the dangers that represents.

The pandemic has given us a lesson, so we must continue with the mission and vision we have as an association and establish alliances with other organizations that are working on the same path as us. This way, together we’ll advance swiftly and effectively.

Psychologist Diana Flores Rojas
General Director

In a social dynamic in which people have been limited to move around for matters of public health related with the pandemic, restrictions for the tourist sector in Mexico and around the world have become stronger given the strong control measures and, above all, because there has been almost an absolute standstill of the operations this industry, catalogued as the industry without chimneys, carries out.

It’s true that confinement has affected the operation of companies of this sector but we have learned that the execution of the crime of Human Trafficking has been using the following dynamic:

- Perpetrators and consumers of Human Trafficking have diversified their operations through the use of new technologies.
- Demand has moved from physical rooms at an establishment to virtual rooms of sites that offer sexual encounters.
- The operation of criminal networks at destinations considered red spots have diminished their physical movement to hook and/or subtract victims, but they haven’t stopped 100%.

The challenges tourism faces are big. Even before the pandemic it was a big challenge to sensitize the sector in relation with the importance of prevention and the eradication of Human Trafficking. In the process of recovering thousands of jobs and reactivating the economy it’s important to double our efforts so that just as it seems imperative to create a “Covid-Free” certification, there’s a profound need to create a “Human Trafficking-Free” seal.

Rosa Martha Brown
President of Infancia Foundation



OUR ALLIES SAY



INSTITUTO PRO INFANCIA Y JUVENTUD FEMENINA, A.C. CENTRO MADRE ANTONIA

The Centro Madre Antonia has accompanied women in situations of prostitution and/or Human Trafficking with purposes of sexual exploitation, mainly in the area of la Merced, whose complicated context has become more evident due to the pandemic. We identified women in situations of Trafficking as well as those who are controlled by the partners who are actually their pimps, and who don't let them talk to the

CMA staff, or move from where they live and those who give their pimp the money they get during sexual activities need to ask for permission to go to the doctor, eat or even see their children.

In times of COVID, pimps', clients' and hotel owners' demands have become more violent and hostile. Because the system demands that they remain captive and can't decide what they do with their time or will, the challenge lies in the disposition these women have to allow us to reach them and talk to them.

POLARIS

When vulnerability conditions became work due to the pandemic, the risk for people who, in despair, will accept abusive situations or will be willing to accept exploiting job offers.

At the National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH) in the United States that Polaris operates we have established that:

- One of the main needs victims have is a safe refuge.
- Closing schools has exposed children to greater risks of mistreatment, but also to being victims of Trafficking. There has been an increase in online exploitation of minor, and in direct contact with possible abusers at home.
- Domestic workers in the United States face conditions that make them vulnerable to labor trafficking, including isolation, informal work agreements and a lack of protection under labor laws.



Ted Lynch
*US/Mexico Partnership Manager
Strategic Initiative on Labor Trafficking
Polaris - Freedom Starts Now*