

Human Trafficking

What is human trafficking? It is transporting people away from their countries by threat or use of violence. Is it always the case? Some of them are willing to go to earn money, but their experience abroad is often a far cry from what they had expected. The reality is often very different and the dream of a bright future soon turns into a nightmare.

Most of them are exploited as forced workers for sex or labour. Women are forced to work in brothels as prostitutes and are controlled through mental abuse and physical violence. The pimp takes away their passports and they are completely deprived of their rights. Men are forced to work long hours for little or no pay in agriculture or construction sites. The most vulnerable are children, when they are trafficked even no violence or deception needs to be involved.

A recent United States Government report estimates, that at least 700 000 women and children are trafficked globally across borders each year. Trafficking is the fastest growing form of modern slavery, affecting every continent in the world.

As a part of their three-month undercover investigation, the BBC Northern Ireland's Spotlight journalists followed the trail from Lithuania to the farmlands of Northern Ireland. The immigrants are paying 1000 pounds to be trafficked to the province. They found some of them living in an unheated barn with no toilets and washing facilities. Migrants from China, Iraq, Afghanistan, Albania and other countries often pay the trafficking syndicates up to 20 000 pounds to come to the United Kingdom.

Organized criminal gangs take advantage of the lack of possibilities for legal migration. They operate through false employment agencies, offer good jobs as waitresses, dancers, nurses. The salaries promised are well above what they can earn in their native countries.

As there is no law against trafficking in some countries traffickers go unpunished. Wide spread corruption and poor understanding of the issues means law enforcement agencies rarely investigate cases.

Another Opinion

Some people don't think that there is a problem and that the men and women involved are 'wiling victims'. They say that the women know that they will be involved in prostitution. Though some people have bad experiences they are in a minority.

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A: Discuss these questions

- What are the most frequent countries people are trafficked from?
Is there anything common about the countries?
Put down as many common features as you can.
- What makes some countries attractive to people who come from developing countries?
- In what way does human trafficking affect your country?
Give your reasons.

Homework:

Prepare a briefing on the topic.

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Teacher's Notes

1. T asks the students to imagine themselves in a following situation:

Imagine that you are a 22-year-old girl whose company went bankrupt and you were made redundant. You come from a financially stressed family: your father is unemployed, your mother has two low-paid jobs as a cleaner. Your disability to pay for rent makes you accept an offer to work in Ireland as an office worker.

You have done your best to pay \$1000 to a go-between to get the job that would solve your problems. But the reality turns to be different. You have to labour in a farm under physically very demanding conditions for long hours going without lunch breaks. The hard work has resulted in health problems. Your pay was 50 pounds per day.

2. Questions:
 - What do you think should people feel sorry for you?
Are you to be blamed for the situation? Explain your point of view.
 - Can we find some typical features from the story to draw a general profile of a victim of human trafficking?
Why it is necessary for police people to understand their motives?
Explain the idea behind the saying: It takes a thief to catch a thief.
Why most of the victims are reluctant to give their evidence in court?
3. Sts read the text to answer the question: What position does the author take on that issue?
4. Questions:
 - What are the most frequent countries people are trafficked from?
Is there anything common about the countries?
Put down as many common features as you can.
Sts should discuss their choice with their partners and then as a group.
 - What makes some countries attractive to people who come from developing countries?
 - In what way does human trafficking affect your country?
Sts should give their reasons, discuss them with their partners and then as a group.
5. Homework:

Sts should prepare a briefing at home on the topic.
6. An additional activity (crossword) to be given to sts a week later to revise key vocabulary.