

## Exploitation and the Private Sector

### How are victims exploited in different sectors? Which sectors see a high rate of trafficking?

Nearly 70 percent of trafficking victims are exploited in the private economy. Industries that are at highest risk for human trafficking globally include agriculture, construction, electronics manufacturing, mining, fishing, forestry, hospitality, housekeeping and janitorial services, textile and apparel manufacturing, transportation, and warehousing. Workers in these fields face a common set of hazards and harms, including dangerous work environments, verbal and physical abuse, low and withheld wages, and a general sense of vulnerability due to being considered “unskilled” and easily replaced. Migrant workers are also drawn to these industries for their seasonality and high worker demand, and due to the efforts of [labor recruiters](#).

In 2015 labor trafficking cases were most often reported in the U.S. in the following sectors, in order: 1) domestic work, 2) agriculture, 3) traveling sales, 4) restaurants and food service, and 5) health and beauty services.

The sex industry is a high-risk sector for both labor and sex trafficking. There can often be overlap between sex and labor trafficking in the adult entertainment industry. In areas such as adult film and exotic dancing, individuals can be forced to work for little to no pay and sexual abuse and exploitation often follow. Sex trafficking operations also frequently rely on other legal industries and businesses, including hotels, classified advertising websites, and matchmaking and dating services.



### How much do traffickers profit from human trafficking?

Human trafficking is one of the most profitable criminal enterprises in the world. With \$150 billion in annual profits and relatively few prosecutions globally each year, human trafficking operations reward perpetrators financially with relatively little risk. Among the most profitable sectors for labor trafficking are, in order, 1) construction, mining, manufacturing and utilities; 2) agriculture, forestry and fishing; and 3) domestic servitude.

Domestic sex traffickers also stand to make extraordinary profits from pimping both children and adults. According to the Urban Institute, weekly income for pimps and sex traffickers can be upwards of \$30,000.

### What is the role of the private sector in combatting human trafficking?

The private sector plays a critical role in combatting human trafficking in the United States and abroad. Business owners not only have a responsibility to make sure that their own employees are paid a fair

wage, know their rights, and are working willfully, but they are also uniquely positioned and should be responsible for ensuring that their suppliers and production lines are free from slave labor.

Employers in high-risk industries have become instrumental in preventing and investigating human trafficking. Local police stations have begun working with strip clubs and massage parlors to disseminate materials that would make potential victims aware of their rights. Healthcare and travel industry professionals have also become more educated on the signs of trafficking, keys to prevention, and how to report the crime.

The private sector can help fight forced labor and slavery internationally as well. U.S. law doesn't require large multinational corporations to monitor their supply chains for forced labor, and suppliers in countries that lack strong rule of law run many labor trafficking operations. Therefore, it's generally up to the corporations to self-police and to prioritize eliminating slavery from their global supply chains.

By adopting best practices such as monitoring and auditing suppliers, not charging workers recruitment fees, and enforcing health and safety standards for foreign suppliers, companies can start developing a corporate culture of respecting the human rights of workers and begin to ensure that supply chains are free of slave labor.

This process of transforming supply chains is most effective when companies across an entire sector collaborate to set industry standards. One example of this type of initiative is the Electronic Industry Citizenship Coalition (EICC).

The EICC was founded in 2004 and now consists of over 100 electronics companies, including Apple, Microsoft, Ford Motor Company, Samsung Electronics, and other major industry leaders. EICC members submit to a thorough auditing process holding them accountable to the EICC Code of Conduct, which sets standards for company policies and practices related to ethics, labor, environment, and health and safety. Members are held responsible for the behavior of their next-tier suppliers, and the EICC provides them with concrete tools to improve their supply chains.

Other industries where trafficking is prevalent should undertake similar large-scale efforts, such as the construction, manufacturing, and mining sectors. ■