



General Assembly

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

Arjun Azhagappan and Sanaya Bothra
Co-Chairs



United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Letter from the Chairs

GSMUN XXVI
United We Stand

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Dear Delegates and Sponsors,

Welcome to GSMUN XXVI's United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Committee! Our names are Arjun Azhagappan and Sanaya Bothra, and we are thrilled to be your chairs this year. As delegates in the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, you will all convene to tackle the scourges that are the illicit synthetic drug trade and human trafficking of immigrants, for a brighter future. Meeting in March 2024, the committee will focus not only on the rapid influx of synthetic drugs being produced illegally and the abuses immigrants face, but also the humanitarian crises brought upon the global community thus far. The delegates of the UNODC must think creatively and come up with solutions to prevent immigrant trafficking and cut the illicit drug trade while minimizing negative externalities upon those inflicted by addiction or tied to the trade.

Arjun Azhagappan, a senior at Maggie Walker, is ecstatic to be your co-chair this year. This is his fifth year as an avid Model UN delegate and second year at GSMUN. Other than Model UN, Arjun is the President of the Chess Club and is actively involved in several others. Outside of school, Arjun is an enthusiastic chess player, a quantum physics researcher at VCU, and a dedicated martial artist of ten years. He looks forward to witnessing the next generation of visionaries convene to solve the world's most pressing issues!

Sanaya Bothra, a sophomore at Maggie Walker, is thrilled to be your co-chair this year. She has been an enthusiastic Model UN delegate for three years, and this marks her second year at GSMUN. In the previous year, she was vice chair of SOCHUM and intercommittee crisis director of JCC. Outside of school, Sanaya is a tennis player and violist of six years, and a biomagnetics researcher at VCU. She is eager to see what solutions delegates have to offer in tackling the most urgent global problems!

As delegates of this committee, you are expected to come prepared to debate resolutions to the illicit synthetic drug trade and the different aspects causing its prevalence in the world today. You should know the current endeavors being taken by the UNODC to rid this blight along with the trade and terminology outlined within your background guide. The background guide is simply a guide to start your research, and delegates will be expected to complete a position paper, formatted in Chicago Manual Style (CMS) and pertaining to your position on the committee. At GSMUN, all position papers are expected to follow the Maggie Walker honor code; any and all plagiarism will not be tolerated – especially the use of AI-generated content.

Finally, a large part of GSMUN is our commitment to making a difference through charity. There will be merchandise, baked goods, and many other things on sale during the conference, with all of the proceeds going to our charity for this year: The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. As such, don't forget to bring money! If you have any questions or concerns, or would like feedback on your position papers, feel free to contact your chairs at gsmunxxvi.unodc@gmail.com. Make sure you send in your position papers to the UNODC email by 5:00 pm on conference day! We look forward to meeting everyone in committee! See you at GSMUN XXVI and good luck!

Your Chairs,

Arjun Azhagappan
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Sanaya Bothra

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

Committee Overview

Background

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), founded in 1997 by the United Nations (UN), addresses and combats global challenges relating to illicit drugs, transnational organized crime, human trafficking, terrorism, and corruption. With field offices all over the world, the purpose of the UNODC is “to achieve security and justice for all by making the world safer from drugs, crime and terrorism.” The current executive director of the office is Ghada Waly, the first woman, Arab, and African to lead the office. The UNODC heavily utilizes democratic negotiation, specifically preventative action and treaties, to execute its lofty goals. From developing more dynamic security systems to preventing the spread of HIV among drug users, the UNODC has the responsibility of maintaining the health and well-being of our nations.

Within the official mandate of the UNODC lies three international conflicts the agency strives to resolve: Transnational Organized Crime, Corruption, and the Drug Trade. Today, delegates will be spearheading change in the first and third components of the overall mandate, tackling the issues of the illicit synthetic drug trade and the human trafficking of immigrants. These are just the latest blights the UNODC has had to address by passing international legislation through democratic procedure – just the most recent of issues in its 25+ years of history, with over 150 nations under its jurisdiction. We hope to see delegates utilize the power of global diplomacy to resolve the issues plaguing our communities.

Topic I: The Illicit Synthetic Drug Trade History of the Issue

The synthetic drug market (and thereby, its governance) has become a fundamental quagmire of the United Nations, exponentially increasing in severity since 1970. Recently, the presence of synthetic drugs in overdose cases, drug seizures, and related crimes has reached an all-time high, with no signs of receding. In 2021, over 80,000 opioid-related overdoses were reported in the United States alone, with 70,000 of those deaths due in part to synthetic opiates like fentanyl and heroin.

Synthetic drugs, as opposed to their naturally derived counterparts, are formed in laboratories from raw chemicals. Producers of these organic compounds control every aspect of the final product, including purity, potency, and price. Soaring price hikes on synthetic drugs at every stage of the supply chain is an inherent property of the illicit trade. Furthermore, the supply chain for illicit drugs is much shorter with recent advancements in communication and chemical separation technologies. The most severe aspect of the synthetic drug trade is the rapid development of new psychoactive substances (NPS). New natural drugs take years to find in nature, test, and develop for human use. New synthetic drugs, on the other hand, can be synthesized, tested, and refined within a matter of minutes using the latest technology.¹

Even though the production method of synthetic psychedelics, amphetamines, and barbiturates was discovered in the early 1900s, the first trace of the modern synthetic drug phenomenon began with the advent of the LSD hallucinogen in 1938. Its synthesis was accidental and its mind-altering effects were

only discovered five years later. In the 1950s, the psychedelic effects LSD brought upon its users were exploited by the CIA in Project MK-Ultra, an endeavor to harness the power of mind control. The drug was deemed “too unpredictable to use in the field” and was forgotten until the early 1970s. The drug was brought back to the limelight in the Counterculture movement of the 70s, where the government’s concealed activities two decades prior were discovered. The synthetic psychedelic developed a recreational usage and so did many others in the years to come. Recreational drugs subsequently became a blight for governments around the world to address.² The United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, founded as a part of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1946, assisted in outlawing dangerous drugs around the world and continues to do so through annual conferences to this day. The UNC joined the UNODC in 1991 as its governing body.³

Designer drugs, as the name suggests, are addictive psychoactive substances that are designed to mimic the effects of illegal drugs while evading classification as one. They tend to be synthetic opioids and amphetamines sold for recreation, the two major contributors to the current synthetic drug crisis. Since 1980, these drugs have grown exponentially in popularity, with modern drugs like MDMA (a type of methamphetamine), fentanyl (a type of opioid), heroin (a type of opioid), and cocaine (a general analgesic) evolving their means of production over time. According to the UNODC, the term “New Psychoactive Substance” refers to any new synthetic drug whose effects are largely unknown and can be synthesized in a wide range of variations by automated processes. Furthermore, most NPS drugs do not fall into an illegal drug category, as the rate at which NPS substances are produced is far greater than that of the potential legislation that can be put forth to illegalize them.⁴

Current Status of the Issue

The global Opioid Epidemic persists, with approximately 53 million people worldwide experiencing opioid use disorders in 2019 according to the World Health Organization. The epidemic has been sustained by the widespread availability of prescription opioids and the illicit production and distribution of substances like heroin and synthetic opioids. The situation has been further complicated by the emergence of potent synthetic opioids, including fentanyl, leading to a substantial rise in the risk of overdose deaths. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported a notable increase in overdose fatalities involving synthetic opioids, particularly fentanyl, in recent years. Moreover, the complexities of the opioid epidemic have been heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbating challenges related to accessing treatment, addressing mental health issues, and providing social support.⁵

In 2019, 70000 drug overdose deaths involved opioids, only increasing to over 80000 in 2021. Of those in 2021, over 70000 deaths involved synthetic opioids. Although the overall number of opioid overdose deaths increased by approximately 14%, the percentage of those deaths being related to synthetic opioids is far greater. The opioid epidemic exists predominantly in nations like the United States, Mexico, and several throughout northern Africa, where access to the synthetic opiate drug trade is higher. In these regions, synthetic opioids originate from other nations and are imported for sale. The general illicit synthetic drug trade trends in other nations are a blend of both opiates and amphetamines.

Recently, there has been a major shift in the Asian theater of the drug trade, with the Taliban’s ascension to power in Afghanistan. Under Taliban rule, Afghanistan has significantly curtailed its natural opium production. Before the Taliban regained control, Afghanistan stood as the source of

80% of the world's opium. However, the anticipated production levels for 2023 suggest a drastic reduction to less than 20% of its previous output. This sharp decline in Afghanistan's opium production has far-reaching consequences, particularly in the global illicit drug market. The scarcity of Afghan opium is expected to drive up prices for opium, poppy resin, heroin, and related products, rendering them more expensive. This trend has yet to be observed in full force, although it is anticipated. The substantial decrease in Afghanistan's opium supply is expected to create a void in the global narcotics market, which could potentially give birth to further synthetic opiate production.

Amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) are the latest line of synthetic drugs to increase starkly in popularity and are known for their stimulant effects on the central nervous system, leading to a comparable feeling to alcoholic influence although more effective and cheaper. ATS include a variety of drugs, with methamphetamine and ecstasy (MDMA) being the most significant examples. From 2018 to 2019, the quantity of ATS seizures by the UNODC increased by 212%. As such, it has been calculated that approximately 27 million people used ATS that year. Of this staggering 0.5% of the global population, 20 million used MDMA, and 7 million used Methamphetamine and other stimulants.⁶

Illicit synthetic drug trends vary across different regions globally. In North and Central America, there is a prevalence of synthetic opioids and methamphetamine. South America is associated with the production and distribution of New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), hallucinogens, and Ecstasy. Europe sees a notable presence of methamphetamine and Ecstasy. In the Middle East and Northern Africa, Captagon and Tramadol are commonly trafficked. Central Asia is witnessing an extreme expansion in the market for New Psychoactive Substances. South and East Asia are characterized by the

dominance of methamphetamine and the growing markets for Amphetamine-type Stimulants. Australia faces issues related to stimulants, methamphetamine, and Ecstasy. These regional distinctions may deem the process of passing specific legislation to outlaw synthetic drugs insurmountable, given pre-existing national laws regarding these substances' legalities.⁷

Legal Framework

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has implemented three key legislative frameworks in an attempt to curb the illicit synthetic drug trade, even before its official creation. The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, enacted in 1961 under ECOSOC, marked the first international agreement on synthetic drug restrictions. While it successfully controlled specific narcotic drugs, outlining their legal medical and scientific applications, it failed to account for the emergence of New Psychoactive Substances (NPS). This legislative gap left a significant loophole as traffickers increasingly turned to new and unregulated substances.

The United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances, established in 1971 under ECOSOC, aimed to address the rising threat of NPS, making up for their shortcomings a decade prior. These novel NPS substances included amphetamine-type stimulants, barbiturates, and benzodiazepines. However, the treaty's reliance on individual countries to enforce legislation resulted in varying levels of commitment and effectiveness. The decentralized approach left room for inconsistencies and allowed illicit drug trade networks to exploit jurisdictional disparities.

The United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, administered by the UNODC, focuses on restricting the illicit drug trade through law enforcement and asset seizure. While it successfully established a hierarchy of addictive substances and prevalent precursor chemicals, a notable

loophole in Article Three created ambiguity regarding personal drug possession. The provision deferred to previous legislation, which, at the time, primarily addressed organized drug possession and trafficking. Despite a repeal attempt in 2003, the loophole persists, granting member states discretion over personal drug possession.⁸

Current UNODC Initiatives

In 2021, the UNODC set into motion its Synthetic Drug Strategy – a plan that would help significantly reduce illegal synthetic drug manufacturing and trade over the next four years. The Synthetic Drug Strategy is a four-pronged plan of attack focused on tackling different aspects of the issue; these four are multilateralism and international cooperation, early warning systems, the promotion of science-informed health responses, and trafficking disruption.

Firstly, through “Multilateralism and International Cooperation,” the UNODC aims to enhance collaboration and coordination globally. By establishing systems to identify emerging synthetic drug challenges within the United Nations and working closely with other UN agencies and the scientific community, a unified front can be forged to tackle the synthetic drug trade collectively.

The second prong is “Early Warning on the Emerging Synthetic Drug Threats.” This involves setting up early detection systems for New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) threats, increasing understanding of synthetic drugs, and encouraging the reporting of information through the UNODC Forensic Early Warning Advisory. By staying ahead of emerging threats, the UNODC can proactively address the evolving landscape of synthetic drug production and trafficking.

The third component focuses on promoting “Science-Informed Health Responses.” This includes de-stigmatizing attitudes toward addiction, facilitating access to drug treatment, and engaging in awareness

campaigns. By addressing the health aspects of synthetic drug use and addiction, the UNODC aims to reduce demand and encourage individuals to seek guidance in quitting unnecessary drug usage.

Lastly, to “Strengthen Counter Narcotic Capacity and Support International Operations to Disrupt Trafficking,” the UNODC emphasizes technological development for identifying and handling synthetic drugs and their precursor chemicals. Targeting the trafficking of precursor chemicals, disrupting online transactions related to synthetic drug trafficking, and gaining the assistance of forensic science services form a multifaceted approach to dismantling the infrastructure of the illicit synthetic drug trade. Through these efforts, the UNODC aims to diminish the impact of synthetic drugs globally and promote a safer, healthier global population.⁹

Analysis and Solutions

Synthetic Drugs persist in the market, and so far, not much legislation has effectively curbed its trade. Several solutions have been proposed, although each comes with its own drawback that renders the methodology inadequate on the global scale.

Chemical tracking is often perceived as a simple solution to cracking the illicit synthetic drug trade, addressing the problem at the beginning of the supply chain. There are several issues with this approach. As aforementioned, new synthetic drugs can be brought into existence in mere minutes using completely new synthesizing procedures. Once one chemical is seized, there are a myriad of other options for these producers to default to. Furthermore, the chemicals from which these drugs are synthesized are bountiful and inexpensive. Figuring out the regions where chemical access is least restricted would prove beneficial, however specific chemical tracking may be ineffective in the long run.¹⁰

Most synthetic drug trade occurs over the dark web, a region of the internet unable

to be indexed by search engines and ideal for illicit activities. Access to it involves specific software, authorization, system configurations, and pre-existing proxy networks. More importantly, money is often discussed and transferred over the dark web, with up to \$1.6 million worth of illicit drugs sold every day. Monitoring such transactions may shed light on where supply chains and distributors are located. However, anonymous transactions, heavily encrypted data, and the sheer quantity of data to parse are the primary issues with this medium of resolution.¹¹

Despite the many ways the drug trade cannot be hindered, some techniques have been proposed but are yet to be attempted on a global scale. According to the UNODC's latest Special Points of Interest Drug Report, some possible responses to the synthetic drug phenomenon include first targeting the global trade and then tackling individual markets later by honing in on maritime routes. Ports all over the world are important nodes of the illicit synthetic drug network, so effective control of popular ports may result in the prevention of international trade.¹²

Another proposed method of resolution is alternative development. For those supplying the basic chemicals fueling the synthetic drug economy, it is often the only viable method of staying financially afloat. Alternative development is a method that addresses this issue by undermining the drug trade and providing substitute economic pathways. Once government intervention leaves a region that contributes to the illicit synthetic drug manufacturing, former chemical manufacturers with their new licit livelihoods are disinclined to default back to their illegal money-making methods. This technique, if implemented by the United Nations, would assist nations where overall drug cultivation is a predominant proportion of GDP, such as Afghanistan, Laos, Myanmar, and several South American countries.¹³

Questions to Consider

As a delegate of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, you will be tasked with working with nations across the world to tackle the synthetic drug trade. Consider the following questions as a start to your research:

1. What methods could be employed to strengthen international collaboration and the exchange of information, effectively tackling the international aspect of drug trafficking and organized crime? What obstacles might emerge concerning issues of national sovereignty over the drug trade and mutual trust among participating nations?
2. How might the UNODC proactively respond to the rapid evolution of synthetic drugs facilitated by technological progress? What mechanisms could be implemented to oversee and manage the online and physical aspects of the distribution of these new psychoactive substances (NPS)?
3. In what ways can member states adopt viable strategies to successfully shift communities away from involvement in the illicit supply of drugs' precursor chemicals? How can these programs be thoughtfully structured to ensure their post-intervention sustainability?
4. How should the UNODC's budget be shared among the four spheres of the Synthetic Drug Strategy? For your delegation, which of the four spheres is there the most dire need to address?

Further Research

1. <https://www.vew.site/unodc-syntheticdrugstrategy-en/>: The UNODC's Synthetic Drug Strategy until the end of 2025.
2. https://www.unodc.org/res/WDR-2023/WDR23_B3_CH1_Synthetic_drugs.pdf: Overview of synthetic drugs, their types, and where they are

prevalent, and general ideas as to how they should be addressed.

3. https://www.unodc.org/res/WDR-2023/WDR23_Exsum_fin_SP.pdf: Regional data on NPS prevalence in nations around the world.
4. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/world-drug-report-2023.html>: The World Drug Report for 2023, outlining sectors of the drug trade to be addressed in regions across the world.

Topic II: Human Trafficking of Immigrants **History of the Issue**

The exploitation of migrants during and after the immigration process has been a long-term issue, continuing to develop into more complex circumstances. Immigrant trafficking can be seen as a modern form of slavery, where immigrants continue to be abused and taken advantage of ceaselessly. In numerous global regions, migrants constitute a substantial portion of the identified trafficking victims: 65% in Western and Southern Europe, 60% in the Middle East, 55% in East Asia and the Pacific, 50% in Central and South-Eastern Europe, and 25% in North America. Globally, 49.6 million people were living in modern slavery in 2021, of which 27.6 million were in forced labor and 22 million in forced marriage.¹⁴



An early event that may have greatly influenced this ongoing problem is the transatlantic slave trade. Although not considered "immigrant trafficking" in the modern sense, the transatlantic slave trade is an example of large-scale trafficking. Around

10 to 12 million enslaved Africans were transported across the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas from the 16th to the 19th century. This could have possibly set the stage for the beginning of the trafficking of immigrants; the slaves representing the immigrants who came to America and got taken advantage of.¹⁵

After the slave trade, in the late 19th to 20th century, the beginning of Chinese Labor Migration took place. Immigrant trafficking especially emerged in this period. From China, younger, teenage girls were lured into America with the idea of a promising future and life; instead, they got caught in the net of trafficking and spent years in slavery and prostitution.¹⁶

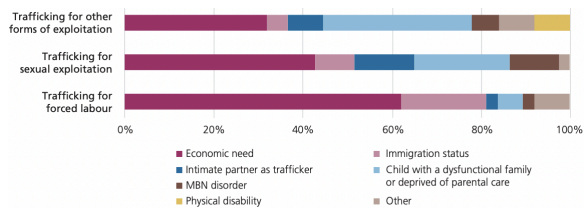
However, trafficking truly expanded into a global issue during the second World War. World War II caused the displacement of millions and afterward, there was a significant wave of migration. Some migrants faced challenges related to their immigration status and were vulnerable to exploitation. More attention was brought to the issue after war refugees were being taken advantage of and the following addressed this issue: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), International Refugee Organization (IRO), The Displaced Persons Act of 1948, and the Refugee Relief Act of 1953.¹⁷

Current Status of the Issue

Around the world, there are numerous reasons which increase the susceptibility of an immigrant to human trafficking; one of which being a lack of immigration status. Victims of trafficking who lack authorization to work or reside in the host country are exposed to an added layer of susceptibility. The fear of being exposed as an undocumented immigrant can serve as a potent tool for traffickers, who typically use the threat of reporting victims to authorities to maintain control and exploit them more easily. Even migrant workers with legal work rights can be at risk of exploitation, often due to their lack of awareness regarding their labor rights. They may face language

barriers or have limited access to legal resources, making it even more challenging for them to assert their rights or seek help when subjected to exploitative working conditions. Avoiding the risks of being overseen by national authorities can be achieved in any location if law enforcement and labor inspectors' controls are limited, corrupted, or focused on migration status rather than labor standards.¹⁸

Another common factor among many immigrants who experience trafficking is a background of poverty. Almost or at least more than 50% of trafficking victims had a background of economic need as seen in the data chart below.¹⁹



According to the UNODC, poverty and economic vulnerability are primary contributors to trafficking in persons. Additionally, from a global report on trafficking, it is evident that child trafficking has a more pronounced impact on low-income countries, where it is intricately associated with the broader issue of child labor. Based on the same report, the analysis of 233 court cases related to human trafficking, as detailed in the same report, reveals that a significant portion of the victims were in a state of economic vulnerability. This vulnerability was defined by their inability to fulfill fundamental requirements like food, housing, or healthcare. Typically, individuals with lower economic means and fewer skills are more vulnerable to falling for the false promises of employment and wages offered by traffickers, who may deceive and coerce them into situations of trafficking. Human traffickers often target families in extreme poverty, persuading them to send their children to work. They provide upfront funds for purchasing work tools, ensnaring the families in an enduring cycle of debt bondage

while subjecting their children to ongoing exploitation.²⁰

Furthermore, strict migration and labor laws can lead to trafficking, as desperate migrants seek alternative, often illicit, routes through smugglers who can later exploit them. In previous cases, states have aimed to assist vulnerable migrants with legal job pathways during labor shortages. However, passport, ID, delays, costs, and post-border trafficking risks pose challenges. Restrictive labor laws for migrants often bind them to specific employers or sponsors. Accessing legal remedies can be challenging, time-consuming, and costly. Exploitative employers capitalize on these obstacles. A specific example is the Kafala System in Kuwait in which each worker is tied to a specific employer as a sponsor. This system generates conditions of vulnerability that facilitate abusive and exploitative work dynamics, results in domestic workers having their documents and mobile phones confiscated, restricts their ability to contact their families or form social connections outside the household, imposes long working hours and exposes them to mistreatment and physical abuse, and leads to hundreds of domestic workers fleeing from their employers annually.²¹

The recent COVID-19 pandemic has unfortunately brought increases in cases of immigrant trafficking as well. The sharp incline in unemployment rates caused by COVID-19 resulted in increased trafficking, especially in nations facing the most drastic and enduring job losses. Individuals seeking employment from these nations may become more inclined to undertake risky endeavors in the pursuit of better prospects. Furthermore, one of the first studies conducted on the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on migrants in Central America suggests that migrants may have been, and continue to be, disproportionately affected by the economic consequences of non-pharmaceutical interventions, as half of respondents had reportedly lost their employment due to the

Pandemic. The pandemic additionally resulted in heightened obstacles for victims in accessing essential services and adversely affected the timely and equitable legal processes. This, in turn, contributed to the accumulation of pending cases and restricted the availability of legal assistance to trafficking victims.²²

Lastly, the Russia and Ukraine conflict has produced a plethora of immigrants fleeing from Ukraine to surrounding countries. The ongoing humanitarian crisis arising from the conflict between Russia and Ukraine is rapidly transforming into a dire situation of human trafficking. Women and children, who make up the majority of the refugees fleeing this conflict, are especially at risk of exploitation, as highlighted by Pramila Patten, the United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. The problem of human trafficking was exacerbated after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Nearly 1/3 of Ukraine's population were forced to flee their home into border countries, becoming refugees. Russian troops were supposedly, using sexual violence as a weapon of war in Ukraine. Specifically, refugee women and children were being exploited. To address part of this issue, in Ukraine, on behalf of the United Nations, Pramila Patten signed a Framework of Cooperation with the Ukrainian government, aimed at supporting efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence associated with the conflict.²³

Analysis and Solutions

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) currently collaborates with law enforcement partners to dismantle the global criminal infrastructure involved in human smuggling and trafficking, and non-governmental organizations to locate, rescue, and assist trafficking victims. ICE leverages its legal authorities and expertise, confiscates assets, and diminishes profit incentives, while partnering with U.S. and international allies to combat these networks worldwide. It also employs 350 collateral duty

victim/witness coordinators who cooperate with NGOs to ensure the provision of victim services.²⁴

The Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants between Asia and the Middle East (GLO.ACT Asia and the Middle East) serves as a collaborative effort between the European Union and UNODC, with implementation by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). This project, funded by the European Union, assists government and civil society entities with targeted, innovative, and adaptable measures including aligning and revising legislation, strengthening capacities, facilitating regional and trans-regional cooperation, extends direct support to victims of human trafficking and vulnerable migrants by enhancing systems for identification, referral, and protection.²⁵

The last address to immigrant trafficking is the Fair Recruitment Initiative, launched by the International Labor Organization (ILO). This initiative further contributes to the prevention of human trafficking. It safeguard the rights of workers, including migrant workers, by addressing abusive and deceptive practices in the recruitment and placement phases, and lowers the expenses associated with labor migration and promotes development.²⁶

Although these prevention strategies have proved to be somewhat effective, their impact has the potential to be scaled in greater capacity. Building international agreements to foster collaboration between countries can be utilized to share information, intelligence, and resources to combat trafficking networks. Bilateral and multilateral agreements can be instrumental in facilitating this cooperation. Moreover, establishing and strengthening mechanisms for the protection and support of trafficking victims can make them feel more safe in standing up for themselves and their community. This includes providing shelter, medical care, legal assistance, and psychological support. A cause of human trafficking can be specifically addressed by

encouraging business corporations to adopt responsible supply chain practices to ensure that they are not inadvertently contributing to human trafficking through their operations. Lastly, targeting the root cause itself, the human traffickers, can be done by increasing efforts to identify and apprehend human traffickers. This involves intelligence gathering, undercover operations, and international collaboration to dismantle trafficking networks.

Questions to Consider

1. How do traffickers typically recruit and exploit immigrants, and what are the common tactics they employ? How can this information be used for further prevention?
2. What legal frameworks and international agreements supported by the United Nations exist to combat human trafficking, and how effective have they been in addressing the issue of immigrant trafficking specifically?
3. What role do UNODC and government policies as well as immigration systems play in either exacerbating or mitigating immigrant trafficking?
4. What are the challenges the UNODC faces in identifying and providing assistance to immigrant trafficking victims, particularly in cases involving irregular migration?
5. How can countries enhance cross-border cooperation and information sharing to combat transnational immigrant trafficking networks?

6. What preventive measures can be implemented to reduce the risk of immigrant trafficking, especially in source countries?
7. How can industries that may unknowingly benefit from trafficked labor be engaged in anti-trafficking efforts?
8. What are the long-term impacts of immigrant trafficking on individuals, families, and communities, and how can these be addressed by the UNODC?
9. What strategies can be employed to raise awareness about the issue of immigrant trafficking and promote public engagement and advocacy?

Further Research

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2. https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tip/2021/GLOTiP_2020_15jan_web.pdf: A global report along on human, specifically immigrant, trafficking with background statistics
3. <https://www.ice.gov/factsheets/human-trafficking>: Detailed description of human trafficking and the difference between immigrant smuggling and trafficking
4. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/human-trafficking/>: Many different sources from UNODC on human trafficking and migrant smuggling

Endnotes

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6. "UNODC Executive Summary," United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, last modified June 2023, accessed December 28, 2023, https://www.unodc.org/res/WDR-2023/WDR23_Exsum_fin_SP.pdf.
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13. "UNODC Executive," United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.
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