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# National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking Annual Report 2020-2021



Canada 

This marks the second Annual Report on the progress of Canada's National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking (National Strategy), which was launched on September 4, 2019. This report covers anti-human trafficking efforts from April 1, 2020 - March 31, 2021.

Aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Stratégie nationale de lutte contre la traite de personnes

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## Message from the Minister of Public Safety

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As the Minister of Public Safety, and on behalf of all federal partners, I am pleased to present the second annual report on Canada's *National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking (National Strategy)*. This report outlines the progress and achievements made from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

Human trafficking is one of the most horrific crimes imaginable, with certain groups within our community at an increased risk of being trafficked, including: women and girls; Indigenous peoples; migrants and immigrants; 2SLGBTQQIA+ persons; persons living with disabilities; and at-risk children and youth. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the risks that these groups face, and has led to the isolation of victims and survivors, including reducing their access to supports and services needed to escape from exploitative circumstances.

The Government of Canada recognizes the need to fight this abhorrent violation of human rights and dignity, and do everything possible to support those who are at risk as well as those who have been trafficked. Under the *National Strategy*, efforts have focused on increasing supports and services to protect and empower victims and survivors of human trafficking. In 2020-21, we worked to ensure victims and survivors had access to these supports and services that they so critically need. The Government of Canada announced up to \$22.4 million over four years for 63 organizations across Canada for prevention projects, focused on providing support services for victims and survivors, including tools and resources, to assist them in regaining control and independence in their lives.

Building awareness is essential to prevent human trafficking in all its forms. In 2020-21, we launched the first phase of a five-year human trafficking awareness campaign. The advertising targeted Canadian youth, parents, and the general public with the aim of increasing awareness of human trafficking, addressing public misconceptions of the crime, and creating awareness of the warning signs and ways to report suspected incidences.

At the international level, we recognize the importance of a global response to this crime. Canada continues to work with its international partners to prevent and respond to international criminal activity, including human trafficking. This report highlights domestic and international achievements and partnerships, including Canada's contribution to the fight against human trafficking in Central and South America.

In 2020-21, our efforts to fight human trafficking continued to be informed by the Interim Special Advisor to Combat Human Trafficking, Shirley Cuillierrier. In this role Ms. Cuillierrier continued to advise on the development and establishment of specific initiatives under the National Strategy, engage with key stakeholders and partners to identify opportunities for collaboration, represent Canada on the international stage, and inform the Government of

Canada's overall response to human trafficking. I would like to thank Ms. Cuillierier for her work and dedication to fighting human trafficking in Canada and abroad.

Public Safety Canada will continue to work with all partners to adapt to the challenges posed by the pandemic, and provide at-risk populations and victims and survivors of human trafficking with the critical resources and supports they need.

Through efforts made under the *National Strategy*, the Government of Canada has taken strong action to end human trafficking in Canada. I look forward to continuing to work with federal, provincial and territorial colleagues, civil society and the private sector in our collective fight against this heinous crime.

The Honourable Marco E. L. Mendicino, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Public Safety

## Executive Summary – Annual Report on Progress

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This report is the second Annual Report on the progress of **Canada's National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking** (National Strategy or NSCHT), which launched on September 4, 2019. This report covers anti-human trafficking activities between April 1, 2020 - March 31, 2021 and identifies areas of future federal focus and action.

The horizontal five-year *National Strategy* consolidates the efforts of the federal departments and agencies that contribute to addressing human trafficking both domestically and internationally. It builds on existing efforts to combat human trafficking, supports the broader Government of Canada commitment to preventing and addressing gender-based violence, and aligns with Canada's international commitments. Anti-human trafficking activities are framed under the pillars of empowerment, prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnerships. Under the *National Strategy*, over \$75 million in funding is being invested in federal measures to combat human trafficking over 6 years, which includes a 2018 investment of \$14.51 million for the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline, with \$2.89 million ongoing, as well as 2019 investment of \$57.22 million over five years and \$10.28 million ongoing (See Figure 1). This funding does not include additional resources departments and agencies may direct towards activities linked to combatting human trafficking as part of their broader departmental mandates.

The National Strategy is led by Public Safety Canada and provides funding for anti-human trafficking related initiatives to the following partner departments:

- Canada Border Services Agency
- Public Services and Procurement Canada
- Women and Gender Equality Canada
- Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

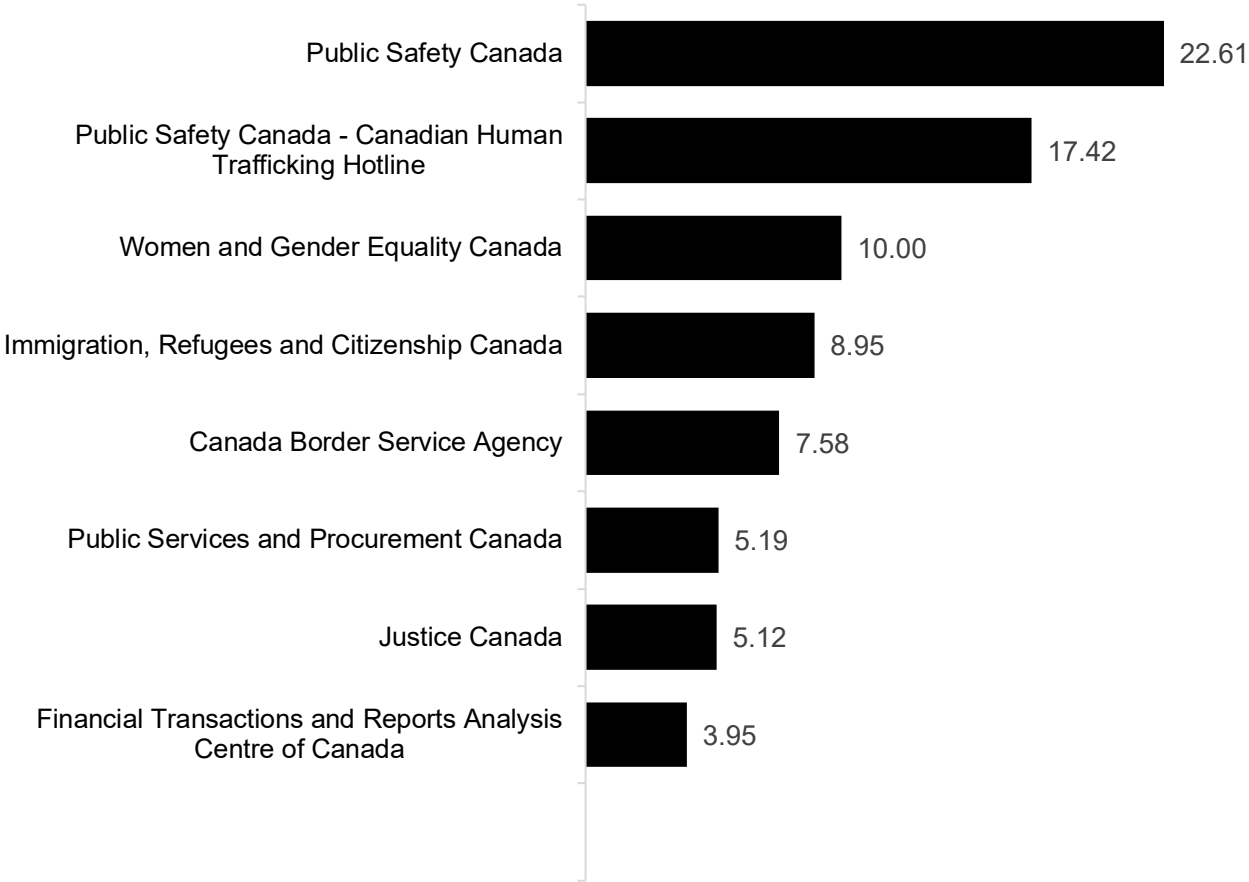
In addition to providing leadership for the National Strategy, Public Safety Canada is responsible for policy and programmatic responses to human trafficking, including: coordinating the overall federal policy response; providing funding to organizations that address human trafficking in Canada; raising awareness of the crime; strengthening knowledge of the crime; and increasing partnerships.

As the scope and nature of human trafficking in Canada changes, the Government of Canada continues to refine its efforts. These efforts are informed by its engagement with partners, stakeholders, survivors, and experts across the country, on an ongoing basis toward combatting human trafficking in all its forms.

While they are not funded through the NSCHT, the following departments and agencies support a range of anti-human trafficking activities through existing resources, and therefore contribute to Canada’s work to combat this terrible crime.

- Global Affairs Canada
- Justice Canada
- Employment and Social Development Canada
- Indigenous Services Canada
- Statistics Canada
- Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- National Defence
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Figure 1. Dedicated Government of Canada investments made since 2018 to combat Human Trafficking (\$M)\*



\*Dedicated Government of Canada funding from 2019-20 to 2023-24 to combat human trafficking

## 2020-21 Key Achievements

- Funded **14 human trafficking related initiatives** through Public Safety Canada's Contribution Program to Combat Serious and Organized Crime
- Launched the **National Human Trafficking Public Awareness Campaign** to raise awareness among Canadian youth and parents.
- Funded over **11 projects** through the **Victims Fund** for a total of \$930,198 to support victims and survivors of human trafficking
- Issued over **90 Temporary Resident Permits** to foreign national victims and survivors of trafficking in persons and their dependents.
- FINTRAC continues to prioritize disclosures related to Human Trafficking through **Project Protect**.
- **Six projects** continued or started to be funded through Global Affairs Canada's **Anti-Crime Capacity Building Program**



# Introduction

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## Canada's Goals and Priorities

Canada has committed to incorporating a trauma-informed, culturally-relevant, gender-responsive and victim-centered approach to deliver programs and develop resources and tools that meet the needs of victims and survivors of human trafficking and increase awareness among all Canadians and foreign nationals in Canada.

Overall, the National Strategy sets out to achieve measurable progress against the following outcomes:

- Victims and survivors of human trafficking have access to trauma-informed services tailored to their needs.
- Canadians, permanent residents, and foreign nationals are protected from all forms of human trafficking and associated harms.
- Federal suppliers mitigate human trafficking risks in federal procurement supply chains.

A range of federal measures and initiatives across many federal departments and agencies are contributing to the outcomes of the National Strategy. This annual progress report covers anti-human trafficking efforts between April 1, 2020 - March 31, 2021.

## What is Human Trafficking

Canada ratified the United Nations *Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* and its supplementary *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* in 2002. The Protocol defines trafficking in persons as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

## Human Trafficking in Canada

Canada has been identified as a source, transit, and destination country for individuals subjected to sex trafficking and forced labour. Human trafficking is a complex crime. It is facilitated by many factors, including the targeting of particular populations for exploitation, and the demand for low-cost goods and services. Women and children from Indigenous communities, low-wage migrants and new immigrants, 2SLGBTQQIA+ persons, persons with disabilities, and children and youth in the child welfare system are especially at-risk. It is a crime that is highly gendered, with root causes that include a lack of education, social

supports and employment opportunities, compounded by poverty, sexism, racism, and wage inequality.

Human trafficking for sexual exploitation continues to constitute the majority of trafficking cases encountered by law enforcement across Canada, most often in large urban centres and with most victims being Canadian women and girls, and Indigenous women and girls being disproportionately represented as victims. About one in five (17%) human trafficking incidents reported in 2019 were in the census metropolitan area (CMA) of Toronto, and 9% were reported in Halifax. These were followed by Montréal (7%), Ottawa (7%) and St. Catharines-Niagara (6%).<sup>1</sup>

Findings from the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline's first year of operations also indicated that the vast majority (90%) of victims/survivors were female. The Hotline data also revealed that transgender and gender non-conforming individuals experience trafficking at disproportionately higher rates relative to their population. This group represents 2% of all victims/survivors calling into the Hotline despite comprising 0.24% of the Canadian population. Findings from the report also indicate that the vast majority of victims/survivors were Canadian; with only 14 per cent of victims/survivors being foreign nationals.<sup>2</sup>

Although it is still too early to comprehensively assess the trends and trafficking risks that have arisen during the COVID-19 pandemic, anecdotal information obtained by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police suggests that there has been a shift of trafficking in persons (TIP)<sup>3</sup> activities to online platforms.

While measures to address the COVID-19 pandemic, such as social distancing, quarantine requirements, and travel restrictions, are crucial for the protection of Canadians, these measures can also increase the risk of human trafficking. Due to the economic slowdown, existing socio-economic disadvantages are amplified for marginalized populations, such as greater economic need, unstable living conditions, and increased prevalence of substance abuse, which can make them more susceptible to sex and labour trafficking.

Project SAFEKEEPING, an assessment of domestic human trafficking for sexual exploitation in Canada conducted by the Royal Mounted Canadian Police (RCMP) in 2013, found that human trafficking in Canada is as likely to be orchestrated by individual or family-based opportunists with little formal structure as it is by transnational organized criminal networks. Findings from this assessment remain valid for 2020-21.

Instances of human trafficking for the purpose of forced labour continue to also be reported in Canada. Human trafficking can occur in almost any industry, including agriculture and

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada, 2021. *Trafficking in persons in Canada, 2019 Juristat*

<sup>2</sup> Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking, 2021. *Human Trafficking Trends in Canada (2019-2020)*

<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of this report, the terms "human trafficking" and "trafficking in persons" are used interchangeably.

domestic service. Migrant workers continue to be at higher risk of forced labour due to language barriers, working in isolated/remote areas, lacking access to services and support, and/or correct information about their legal rights. Victims may suffer physical, sexual, financial, emotional and/or psychological abuse, and may live and work in brutal conditions.

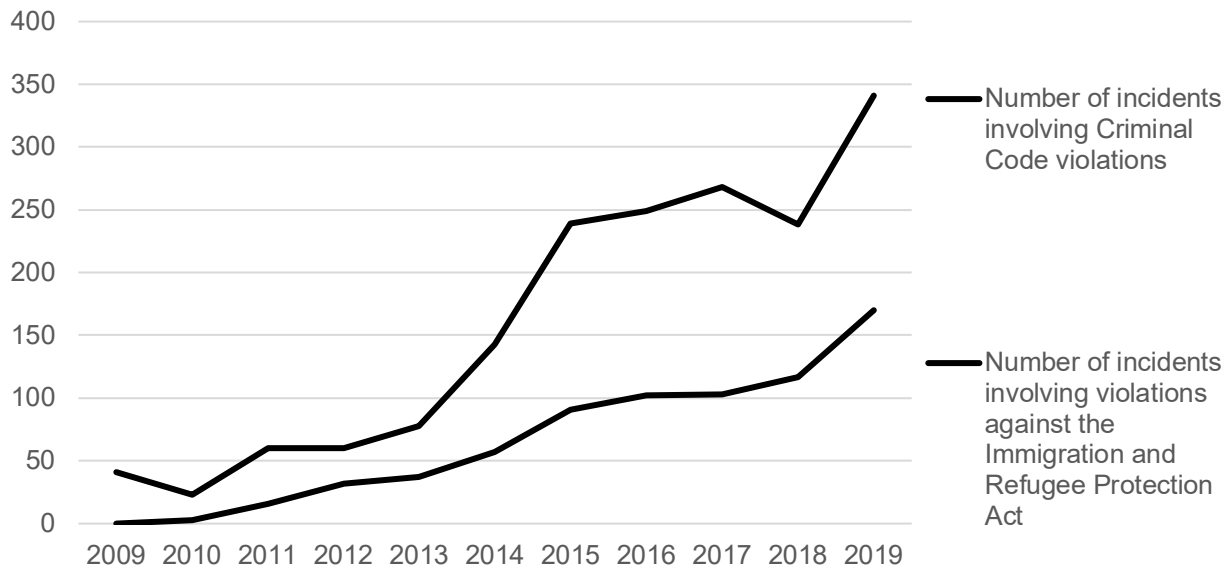
Migrant victims of trafficking are often promised high-paying jobs, education or travel opportunities; however, when they arrive they are forced to work long hours under unsafe working conditions for little or no money. Labourers are often forced to pay back large (illegal) recruitment fees that are separate from the immigration services fee they can legally be charged.

## **Human Trafficking in Canada Statistics**

The National Strategy relies on the data collected by Statistics Canada's Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics (CCJCSS), which is based on data from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey. This survey includes only incidents that have been detected and reported to police. Through the UCR survey, Statistics Canada collects detailed information about human trafficking incidents which are captured through Criminal Code human trafficking offences or through cross-border trafficking offence under the Immigration and Refugee. Data from the Integrated Criminal Court Survey capture information about the human trafficking offences in criminal courts, including court outcomes.

Statistics Canada's Juristat report provides a picture of the number of police-reported incidents of human trafficking in Canada (see figure 2). It is important to note the available data only provides a partial view of the scope of human trafficking in Canada, due to the hidden nature of the crime and the fear of victims to come forward, resulting in underreporting to police. In terms of findings, overall, both the number and rate of police-reported human trafficking incidents have been generally trending upward. The number of human trafficking incidents reported in 2019 marked a 44% increase from the previous year. This follows a slight decline in 2018, the only year-over-year decline reported since 2010. In total, from 2009 to 2019, there were 2,468 police-reported incidents in Canada where human trafficking was the most serious violation related to the incident.<sup>3</sup> The average annual rate over the 11-year period (2009-2019) was 0.62 incidents per 100,000 population.

Figure 2. Annual counts of police-reported human trafficking incidents in Canada, by type of violation, 2009 to 2019

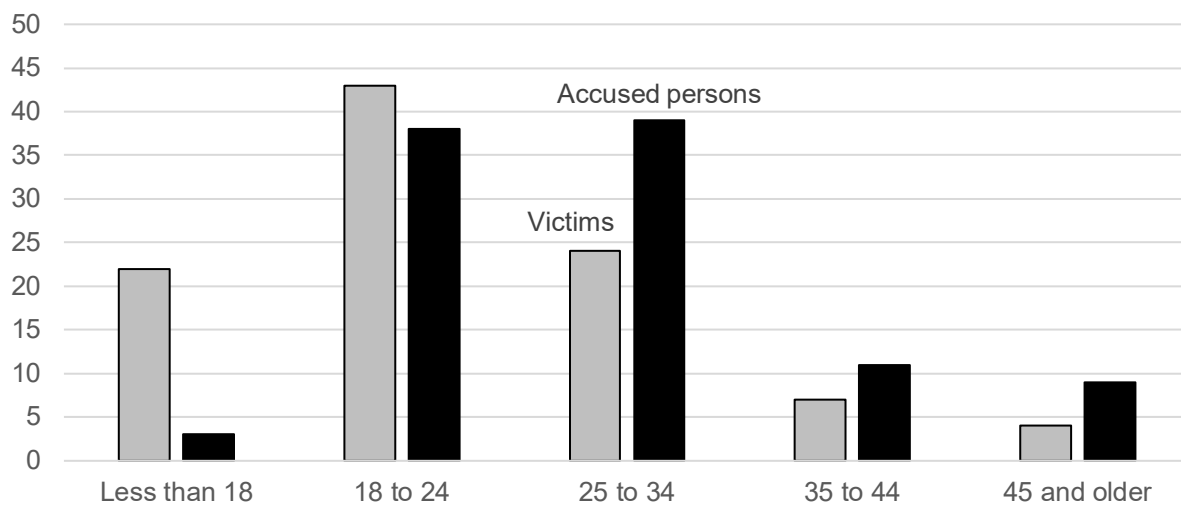


Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Note: This analysis is based on aggregate data, and counts are based on the most serious violation in a criminal incident. Rates are calculated on the basis of 100,000 population. Populations are based upon July 1<sup>st</sup> estimates from Statistics Canada, Centre for Demography. The Uniform Crime Reporting Survey was amended partway through 2011 to allow police services to report the specific offence of human trafficking under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*. Once the specific violation code was introduced, a small number of incidents which took place prior to this date were reported.

The vast majority (95%) of human trafficking victims were girls and women, and overall, most (89%) victims were below the age of 35 (Chart 2). More than one in five (21%) victims were girls below the age of 18, and 43% of victims were young women aged 18 to 24. Just over one-fifth (22%) of victims were women aged 25 to 34.

Figure 3. Victims and accused persons in police-reported human trafficking incidents, by age group, Canada, 2019



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Note: Analysis of victim information is based on Criminal Code human trafficking incidents only, where human trafficking was the only or the most serious violation in the incident. For accused persons, this age group includes persons between the ages of 12 to 17 only. Children under 12 years of age cannot be prosecuted for criminal activities. Police services can report up to four violations for each incident. Calculations for accused persons are based on incidents where human trafficking was any violation in the incident. Victims and accused persons aged 90 years and older are excluded from analyses due to possible instances of miscoding of unknown age within this age category. Excludes persons where the gender or the age was unknown. Given that small counts of victims and accused persons identified as “gender diverse” may exist, the aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting Survey data available to the public has been recoded to assign these counts to either “male” or “female”, in order to ensure the protection of confidentiality and privacy. Victims and accused persons identified as gender diverse have been assigned to either male or female based on the regional distribution of victims’ or accused persons’ gender.

The number of completed human trafficking cases processed in adult criminal courts have been on an upward trend. However, challenges in prosecuting human trafficking cases remain prevalent. From 2008-09 to 2018-19 there were a total of 697 completed cases processed in Canadian adult criminal courts with at least one human trafficking charge, and in about a third (32%) of the cases human trafficking was the most serious offence in the case. Among these

cases, about two-thirds resulted in criminal proceedings being stopped with a decision of stayed, withdrawn, dismissed or discharged.<sup>4</sup>

## Canadian Legal Framework

Canada has comprehensive laws to combat human trafficking, including under the *Criminal Code*, which prohibits trafficking in persons as well as other human trafficking-related conduct. The *Criminal Code* contains several human trafficking-specific offences, including trafficking adults, trafficking persons under the age of 18, materially benefitting from human trafficking, and removing or destroying documents for the purpose of facilitating this crime. The two main offences (sections 279.01 and 279.011) are punishable by maximum penalties of up to life imprisonment if they also involve the commission of kidnapping, aggravated assault, aggravated sexual assault, or caused the death of a victim.

The *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* targets trafficking victims into Canada. Section 118 of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* prohibits knowingly organizing the coming into Canada of one or more persons by means of abduction, fraud, deception, or use or threat of force or coercion. The offence is punishable by a maximum penalty of life imprisonment and/or a fine of up to \$1 million.

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<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada, 2021. *Trafficking in persons in Canada, 2019 Juristat*

## Making Progress

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Canada's efforts during fiscal year 2020-21 under the National Strategy's five strategic pillars – **empowerment, prevention, protection, prosecutions, and partnerships** – includes the development of a number of anti-human trafficking initiatives and progress towards greater collaboration and stronger partnerships.

### Empowerment

Initiatives under the empowerment pillar of the National Strategy focus on providing support services for victims and survivors, including tools and resources, to assist them in regaining control and independence in their lives. This pillar also seeks to empower youth and other vulnerable populations to protect themselves. Under the empowerment pillar, the Government of Canada is also committed to addressing human trafficking in federal procurement supply chains and encouraging action by industry partners.

#### Supporting Victims and Survivors

In 2020-21, the Government of Canada launched a joint request for proposals under Public Safety Canada's **Contribution Program to Combat Serious and Organized Crime** and Women and Gender Equality Canada's (WAGE) **Human Trafficking initiative** for various funding opportunities. Through this initiative, the Government of Canada is investing up to \$22.4 million over four years to provide support to 63 organizations to implement projects that: identify and provide counselling to victims and survivors of human trafficking; provide transition and second stage housing; and provide mental health services, legal services, and employment services and supports, including training and tools to gain financial independence.

Nineteen organizations were approved for funding by Public Safety Canada, with **14 human trafficking-related projects** receiving funding in 2020-21. This included:

- **two youth hackathons** to engage youth and find technology-based solutions to combat human trafficking;
- **seven projects for organizations to implement community-based empowerment initiatives** with the goal of empowering victims and survivors of human trafficking to regain their independence and prevent re-victimization; and
- **five youth pilot projects** to create innovative human trafficking awareness tools for youth at-risk.

WAGE announced funding to 43 projects for organizations to:

- develop, deliver, and test innovative prevention programs for at-risk populations, including women and girls, Indigenous women and girls, LGBTQ2 and gender non-binary people, children and youth; and,
- develop, deliver, and test innovative short-term continuum of care interventions to support survivors while they transition out of human trafficking, reintegrate into their communities, and begin their healing and recovery process.

### Tackling Forced Labour in Supply Chains

The Government of Canada continues to work to address human trafficking within government procurement supply chains. Under PSPC's ethical procurement of apparel initiative, suppliers of apparel are required to self-certify that they and their first-tier subcontractors are complying with a set of human and labour rights. These include: freedom from child labour, forced labour, abuse and harassment, discrimination, freedom of association and collective bargaining, occupational health and safety, fair wages, and hours of work. Furthermore, the 'Origin of Work' clause requires bidders to provide the name, address and country of manufacturers of the item, and of subcontractors in the production chain. To address the potential exposure to forced labour in procurement supply chains, 'Ethical Procurement' and 'Origin of Work' clauses were also added to new contracts for personal protective equipment (PPE) and to all newly issued requests for proposals for PPEs, as of July 2020.

PSPC began work to update its **Code of Conduct for Procurement** (the Code) with the goal of outlining expectations for vendors to comply with international labour and human rights laws, which are key to breaking the cycle of exploitation in which human trafficking occurs. PSPC conducted consultations with industry, suppliers, experts and other government departments to inform the updates to the Code. The consultations also helped to gather information about suppliers' corporate social responsibility practices and the level of awareness of supply chain risks related to forced labour and human trafficking. In addition, PSPC launched a Request for Proposals to conduct a risk assessment of human trafficking, forced labour, and child labour in procurement supply chains. The risk assessment will allow PSPC to determine where supply chains may be vulnerable to risks of forced labour and which goods are at a higher-risk.

### Centralized Website

As part of the *National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking*, Public Safety Canada committed to creating a [centralized website](https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/hmn-trffckng/index-en.aspx)<sup>5</sup> to consolidate information on human trafficking and promote federal programs and funding opportunities for those looking for financial assistance to support their anti-human trafficking initiatives. In collaboration with National

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/hmn-trffckng/index-en.aspx>



Strategy partners, Public Safety Canada updated and developed content for the centralized website to enhance the user experience and ensure victims and survivors of human trafficking are aware of the resources that may be available to them. Since its launch in December 2020 to March 31, 2021, the website received over 16,000 total visits.

Phase 2 of the centralized website will begin in Fall 2021. It will include downloadable educational materials on human trafficking in Canada, such as anti-human trafficking milestones, a human trafficking-related legislative offences fact sheet, and a glossary of terms.

## Prevention

Prevention efforts are essential to tackling human trafficking in all its forms. The objective of the prevention pillar is to increase awareness of this crime and build knowledge and capacity to address human trafficking in Canada and abroad. The Government of Canada continues to work with partners and stakeholders to inform Canadians and foreign nationals of the signs and indicators of human trafficking and how to report it.

### Increasing Awareness of Human Trafficking

The first phase of **Public Safety Canada's five-year human trafficking awareness campaign** was launched in February 2021 with a six-week paid digital advertising strategy. The advertising targeted Canadian youth, parents, and the general public with the aim of increasing awareness of human trafficking, addressing public misconceptions of the crime, and creating awareness of the warning signs and ways to report suspected incidences. Baseline public opinion research was conducted in 2019 to assess the public's level of awareness of human trafficking. A representative target audience of 2,250 people participated in a national online survey to share their knowledge, attitudes, and opinions on the issue of human trafficking. Subsequent research will be conducted in 2022-23 to reassess the public's level of awareness of the crime and pertinent resources.

Through contribution funding, Public Safety Canada supports the Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking (Centre) in the operation of the **Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline**, which includes the production and implementation of national and targeted awareness campaigns to promote the hotline number and services.

In July 2020, the Centre launched its Instagram page, alongside a brand-new visual design, in line with The Centre's existing brand. **The Centre's digital advertising campaign** sought to bring awareness to both labour and sex trafficking in Canada through the use of specially developed public service announcements and promotion of the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline services.

On top of this digital campaign, the Centre continued its public awareness efforts in Canadian communities through the display of posters in transit systems. Between July 1, 2020 -

September 30, 2020, poster ads promoting the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline were displayed in 26 cities and 1 airport, covering all 10 provinces and three territories. Finally, posters featuring the Hotline number were also posted for free in all the Husky gas stations across the country. In total, **138,317 promotional materials** (posters, postcards, etc.) featuring the Hotline number were distributed to partners in communities across Canada.

The RCMP's **National Human Trafficking Section (NHTS) (previously called HTNCC)**, in consultation with law enforcement, lawyers, and service providers, continues to partner with the Canadian Police Knowledge Network (CPKN) to provide an introduction to human trafficking on-line course for Canadian law enforcement. This course is available in both official languages to all Canadian law enforcement personnel through the CPKN website and the RCMP internal website. The primary goal of this learning initiative is to provide learners, particularly frontline police officers who have limited knowledge and experience in dealing with human trafficking investigations, with an overview of human trafficking including legislation, victim assistance, basic investigative techniques, and referral mechanisms. From April 1<sup>st</sup> 2020 up to April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021, a total of **520 people** participated in this course.

The RCMP offers an on-line "**Introduction to Human Trafficking**" course through an internal training module. This course is intended to provide officers with a baseline understanding of human trafficking, how it can be identified, and how to successfully investigate human trafficking occurrences. In 2020-21, **257 officers** completed this training.

In addition, Canada's Department of National Defence is committed to comprehensive implementation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Policy on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (adopted in June 2004 at the Istanbul Summit by NATO Heads of State and Government). This policy represents a political commitment of zero-tolerance for forces and civilian personnel deployed under NATO command who engage in, or facilitate human trafficking activities. It also requires NATO Allies, within their competence and mandate, to support the efforts of responsible authorities within the host country to combat TIP. The Government of Canada is also actively participating in the review of this policy to incorporate best practices and lessons learned over the last 15 years.

The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) conducts pre-deployment training for all CAF members who will be deployed in international operations. As part of the training, there is a presentation and module on human trafficking, which includes how to recognize the signs of human trafficking and the requirement to report any concerns to the chain of Command.

As part of the operational planning process for missions, CAF members are made aware of the issue of human trafficking and are reminded to remain vigilant with respect to the signs of sexual exploitation, trafficking and prostitution, and recruitment and use of child soldiers.

In addition, the Government of Canada has implemented a series of measures to prevent and detect cases of human trafficking for domestic servitude in diplomatic households, and more

broadly to respond to situations of human trafficking and exploitation of accredited domestic workers. These measures, which have been maintained during the COVID-19 pandemic, include a robust outreach program that targets both employees and employers and includes unannounced compliance reviews. In addition, Global Affairs Canada's (GAC) Office of Protocol, in collaboration with the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), conducts systematic outreach to domestic workers on topics, including human trafficking, before they arrive in Canada and throughout their stay.

Forced labour, like human trafficking, refers to situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, coercion, deception, and/or abuse of power. These situations cannot be seen or addressed as isolated problems, and often vulnerable workers are subject to human trafficking for forced labour, which is an accumulation of serious human rights violations. Effective July 1, 2020, Canada amended the *Customs Tariff* to include a prohibition on importing goods "mined, manufactured or produced in whole or in part by forced labour". The ban was legislated to implement a Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) obligation and applies to all imports regardless of country of origin. The Canada Border Services Agency is responsible for administration and enforcement of the forced labour import ban. Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) provides support to CBSA by conducting research and analysis on the risk of forced labour for specific complaints or allegations received pertaining to the ban.

ESDC also contributes to the goal of increasing awareness of human trafficking by providing key information on their website to inform temporary foreign workers (TFWs) on their rights and ways to report abuse or misuse of the TFW Program. This includes how to self-assess whether a TFW is a victim of human trafficking and what to do and also provides the toll-free number of IRCC to obtain a temporary resident permit.

Since early 2019, ESDC has also provided over \$12.5 million of funding to community organizations in an effort to increase migrant workers' knowledge of their rights and provide them with supports to exercise their rights. Funding has supported over 39,000 newly-arrived TFWs to receive orientation services at the Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal international airports, as well as over 60 community organizations to provide accessible information and case management supports directly to TFWs in Canada. In some cases, this funding has enabled community organizations to support workers who are victims of human trafficking or who are at risk of being trafficked, including support to leave abusive situations and apply for an Open Work Permit for Vulnerable Workers or temporary resident permit for victims of human trafficking. To complement direct supports, funding has also been used to provide community organizations with the information, networking opportunities, and training that they need to support the TFW population, such as a webinar on, "Recognizing and Assisting Victims of Labour Trafficking". Resources are available through an [online migrant](#)

[worker hub](#)<sup>6</sup> to facilitate access to consistent and accurate resources for TFWs, the organizations that assist them, and their employers, particularly in B.C. Budget 2021 proposes an investment of an additional \$49.5 million over three years to continue supporting community-based organizations in the provision of migrant-centric programs and services through the Migrant Worker Support Program.

### Improving Knowledge on Human Trafficking

In addition to ensuring Canadians and foreign nationals are aware of human trafficking, the Government of Canada recognizes that it is crucial to improve knowledge and understanding of this crime. That is why the National Strategy includes support for targeted research on human trafficking, in order to close data gaps and inform policy and program initiatives over the five-year National Strategy.

Public Safety Canada is undertaking research to help better understand the nature, prevalence, scale, and scope of human trafficking. In 2020-21, the Public Safety Canada Research Division began work on two projects: a research paper focused on the nature of forced labour in Canada, and a literature review focused on the root causes of human trafficking in Canada. Both research projects are set to be completed in 2021-22.

The National Strategy also supports targeted research, such as Public Safety Canada's collaboration with Statistics Canada to publish the 4th edition of the Trafficking in Persons in Canada, 2019 Special Juristat, which explores trends in the prevalence and nature of human trafficking as reported by Canadian police services. The report also examines court data to explore how incidents of human trafficking are processed in adult criminal courts in Canada. To read the full Juristat, please visit [Statistics Canada](#)<sup>7</sup> for more information.

In addition, Statistics Canada conducted a feasibility study to explore what administrative data is available through federal, provincial and territorial governments on human trafficking which could be exploited to fill critical data gaps. The study involved consultation with key stakeholders to identify and prioritize research objectives, along with data and policy needs, an environmental scan of data sources that could be leveraged and recommendations to develop options for data collection. The findings from the feasibility study help to chart a path for potential activities to strengthen data collection and analysis.

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<sup>6</sup> [https://migrantworkerhub.ca/migrant-resources/?\\_sft\\_resource\\_source=migrant-worker-hub](https://migrantworkerhub.ca/migrant-resources/?_sft_resource_source=migrant-worker-hub)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2020001/article/00006-eng.htm>

## Support for Organizations Combatting Human Trafficking

In 2020-21, the Government of Canada continued to fund the Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking to ensure continuity of services to victims and survivors of human trafficking. The Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline uses a victim-centered approach when connecting human trafficking victims and survivors with local emergency, transition, and/or long-term supports and services across the country, as well as connecting callers to law enforcement, where appropriate. The Hotline uses their national referral directory as a resource to connect victims and survivors of human trafficking. The Hotline has established close to 900 partnerships with service providers for the referral of services. Further, under the National Strategy, Public Safety Canada is developing tools, resources and guidelines to support standard provision of care to victims and survivors of human trafficking.

### Did You Know?

From April 1 to September 30, 2020 approximately 40 tips/reports were provided by the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline to law enforcement and children's aid societies. In that same timeframe, approximately 76 victims and survivors were identified by the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline, and 135 referrals were provided to victims and survivors who contacted the Hotline.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a significant driver of human trafficking, leading to the manipulation and control of women, 2SLGBTQQIA+ persons, children and men into both sexual exploitation and forced labour. In May 2020, the Government of Canada announced \$50 million in emergency funding for organizations providing supports and services to those experiencing (GBV).

- \$10 million was provided to Indigenous Services Canada's (ISC) existing network of 46 emergency shelters on reserve and in Yukon to support Indigenous women and children escaping violence.
- \$40 million was provided, through WAGE to support women's shelters, sexual assault centres, and other organizations providing critical GBV services and supports.

Further, in October 2020, the Government of Canada announced an additional \$50 million in funding through WAGE for organizations providing supports and services to those experiencing GBV:

- Up to \$10 million for women's shelters and sexual assault centres to help them continue to provide their critical services safely.
- Up to \$10 million to support organizations providing services related to GBV to Indigenous people off-reserve.
- Up to \$30 million for other women's organizations to help combat the spread of COVID-19, and to address the increased demand for services.

In addition WAGE contributed an additional \$9.5 million provided through the Department's Grants and Contributions (Gs&Cs) program budget to address the high demand for funding for supports and services to those experiencing GBV. In total, over 1,200 organizations across the country received funding to continue providing critical supports and to ensure the continuity of their services during the pandemic.

Canada also provides support to international partners in their fight to counter human trafficking through humanitarian and international development assistance. The core focus is on prevention, protection, and the rehabilitation of trafficking victims and survivors through a gender and human rights-based approach. GAC provides humanitarian and international development assistance as well as funding to a number of multilateral organizations that provide technical capacity building to other governments and to NGOs that work with governments to address human trafficking.

In addition to the efforts undertaken through development programming, the Government of Canada also supports anti-human trafficking efforts abroad through GACs' Anti-Crime Capacity Building Program (ACCBP) – a Program with a mandate to enhance the capacity of beneficiary states to prevent and respond to threats posed by international criminal activity with a focus on the Americas. One of the thematic priorities of the Program is to combat human trafficking. Six projects continued or started to be funded through this program in fiscal year 2020-2021. Projects funded by ACCBP include:

Enhancing Border Security in Mexico and Guatemala (\$575,000 CAD over 3 years until 2020-21)

- This project, implemented by the CBSA, will enhance the capacities of Mexico's Customs Administration (Servicio de Administración Tributaria – SAT) and Immigration Department (Instituto Nacional de Migración - INM) to better identify and interdict contraband, drugs and imposters in the air mode, in order to disrupt smuggling routes and irregular migration that could facilitate international trafficking in persons.

Detection and prevention of human trafficking within indigenous communities in Mexico (\$995,000 CAD over 3 years until 2020-21)

- In an effort to reduce human trafficking among Indigenous communities in Mexico, UNODC in partnership with the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (CDI) and with the support of the Attorney General's Office (AGO) will implement a technical assistance project in selected pilot communities with the objective of detecting, preventing and combating human trafficking. The project aims to address not only the local dimensions of human trafficking but also human trafficking as part of transnational organized crime networks.

Cross-border Crimes against Women and Girls in the Northern Triangle (\$4.318 million CAD over 3 years until 2020-21)

- This project, implemented by Avocats sans frontières Canada, aims to strengthen the capacity of justice actors working in state institutions specializing in the criminal law enforcement of cross-border crimes, which can include trafficking in persons, against women, girls and other vulnerable people to help reduce impunity for these crimes.

Empowering Actors of Change against Human Trafficking and Exploitation, Particularly for Women and Girls, in Honduras (\$2.5 million CAD over 3 years – until 2022)

- This project aims to build the professional capacities of key actors involved in the prosecution, protection and prevention of human trafficking in Honduras. Its objective is to improve the Honduran authorities' institutional and community level response to human trafficking. More specifically, it will integrate a permanent, mandatory and specialised training course into the curricula of the National Police Academy, the Judicial School, the labor inspection department of the Ministry of Labor and social security, and within the CICESCT. This will enable civil servants to build the technical capacity to address human trafficking with a gender and child sensitive approach.

Strengthening Institutional Capacity to Combat Human Trafficking, with a Focus on Corruption, Money Laundering and Transnational Organized Crime (\$2.5 million CAD over 3 years until 2024)

- Implemented by Justice Education Society (JES), this project aims to improve technical skills of investigators and analysts as well as improving the capacity of prosecutors and the courts to deal with complex trafficking in persons cases and technical evidence. The project also builds transnational cooperation in the investigation of trafficking in persons cases and the dismantling of organized crime networks by building stronger inter-agency collaboration for the strategic prosecution of trafficking in persons.

Capacity building and promotion of victims' rights for the fight against trafficking in persons in Colombia (\$1.1 million CAD over 18 months until 2023)

- This project implemented by Lawyers Without Borders Canada (LWBC) aims to increase the efficiency of actors of the justice sector involved in the fight against trafficking in persons in terms of promoting respect for the rights of victims and potential victims of trafficking in persons, in accordance with international standards.

In addition, the project aims to adopt new practices in line with international standards in the fight against human trafficking in Colombia.

GAC's Trade Commissioners Service (TCS) continued to communicate the importance of Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) for all Canadian companies active abroad by promoting the adoption of international standards on RBC, such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the United Nations Guiding Principles. GAC's Responsible Business Fund, which allows Trade Commissioners to deliver RBC-related projects, funded 49 initiatives in 33 missions overseas, though several activities were postponed due to constraints posed by the pandemic. As well, 41 services, directly related to RBC inquiries from TCS clients, were delivered by Trade Commissioners.

## **Protection**

Victims and survivors of human trafficking require a wide range of supports and services that address their specific needs and assist them in their recovery and healing. Full and comprehensive protection for victims and survivors, and ensuring their safety, requires timely identification and response. Through the National Strategy, the Government will continue to provide assistance to all victims of human trafficking, including foreign nationals who are at-risk of being trafficked.

The CBSA is continuing its assessment and review of the differential impacts of GBV, including human trafficking, throughout its immigration enforcement and inadmissibility policy frameworks. This will ensure that the immigration enforcement and inadmissibility policies account for specific considerations related to victims and survivors of human trafficking and GBV, including by ensuring that policies do not inadvertently re-traumatize victims and survivors.

The Government of Canada provides funding to Canadian organizations that are working to address the needs of victims of crime through Justice Canada's Victims Fund. In 2018, the amount of funding available in the Victims Fund each year for projects that develop or enhance services for victims of human trafficking was increased from \$500,000 CAD, to \$1 million CAD annually on an ongoing basis. The Department of Justice is providing funding to 11 projects in fiscal year 2020-2021 through the Victims Fund. All of these projects are multi-year, with one ending in June 2020, and the others continuing into future fiscal years. The Victims Fund provides funding to organizations to improve services for victims of human trafficking and to develop and deliver training for law enforcement officers and frontline service providers who work directly with victims of human trafficking. A total of \$930,198 in funding was committed in fiscal year 2020-2021 to support victims of human trafficking. In 2020-21, the Victims Fund supported a number of projects, including:



Mental Health and Addictions Program (\$485,191 over three fiscal years until 2022-23)

- The Governing Council of the Salvation Army in Canada-Illuminate (formerly Deborah's Gate) will offer a mental health and addictions program for women and girls who are victims of human trafficking. The project will focus on providing unique, trauma-sensitive addiction and mental health supports through individual counselling, group sessions, and multimodal education (video, audio, restorative therapies), for current, graduated, and outreach clients, with the goal of eventual transition to appropriate community supports once stable.

Rural Outreach and Aboriginal Engagement (\$279,704 over three fiscal years ending in 2021-22)

- Envision Counselling and Support will provide services for Indigenous victims of sexual exploitation and interpersonal violence living in rural and isolated communities and living on reserves in remote and rural regions of Southeast Saskatchewan.

The Essentials Program (\$450,000 over four fiscal years ending in 2022-23)

- New Opportunities for Women (NOW) Canada Society The organization will offer a program for victims of human trafficking, sexual exploitation, abuse and addictions that offers immediate safe housing, a four-month life-skills program and individualized client support. The goals of the program are to encourage growth, build resilience and empower participants to become independent and safe individuals.

### Training for Government Officials

Educating and training government officials remains a priority for Canada and an important tool in the fight against human trafficking. A number of federal departments provide training to their officials who may come in contact with a victim of human trafficking or a perpetrator.

Canada continues to provide training to border officials through the CBSA **Officer Induction Training Program**, where all Border Service Officers (BSO) are introduced to the issue of human trafficking through the *People at Risk* lesson. The CBSA revised its Officer Induction Training Program this past year. Of the **194 recruits** who successfully completed the induction training program in 2020-21, most received the *People at Risk* lesson during the in-residence phase of the program, some received the TIP related portion of the lesson during the officer development phase of the program, through an online course entitled *Trafficking in Persons*.

In addition, the CBSA provides the online course *Trafficking in Persons* to its BSOs, Criminal Investigators, Liaison Officers, Intelligence Officers, Inland Enforcement Officers, and other officers who may come in contact with a victim or perpetrator. This course provides information on how to help prevent or intercept TIP cases; promote victim safety by referring

individuals to government services and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for assistance; and, support investigations. This past year, **258 participants** completed the online TIP course, which includes all CBSA employees (not only front line officers or employees who completed the course for the first time).

Since 2016, all new IRCC overseas migration officers complete mandatory training on human trafficking prior to being posted abroad. Since 2019, this mandatory training on human trafficking has been rolled out to all members of the international network, which consists of approximately **1800 staff members** – including officers, locally engaged staff, and headquarters staff. The current training is a four to six-hour online course that was developed by the province of British Columbia, in collaboration with Public Safety Canada and the Department of Justice Canada. This online training course provides information on how to recognize, protect, and assist a person who may have been trafficked in Canada. COVID 19 has not impacted the ability to provide anti-trafficking training to overseas immigration officers, as this training was delivered virtually prior to the pandemic.

The RCMP offers an on-line “**Introduction to Human Trafficking**” course through an internal training module. This course is intended to provide officers with a baseline understanding of human trafficking, how it can be identified, and how to successfully investigate human trafficking occurrences. In 2020-21, **257 officers** completed this training.

GAC’s Trade Commissioners Service (TCS) provided training on Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) to approximately 800 locally-engaged and Canada-based employees at 22 sessions from April 2020 to March 2021. This training has supported policy coherence and increased capacity for trade commissioners to engage with businesses, local governments and stakeholders on issues related to RBC.

## Protecting Foreign Nationals

The Government of Canada is committed to protecting the rights of foreign nationals. Approximately **90 Victims of Trafficking in Persons (VTIP) Temporary Resident Permits (TRPs)** were issued to out-of-status foreign national victims and their dependents in 2020-21.

In efforts to protect foreign nationals from forced labour and other exploitative and abusive situations, ESDC’s **Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) Program** has an employer compliance regime in place that includes unannounced on-site inspections in addition to other compliance activities such as administrative reviews and announced on-site inspections. With regards to forced labour investigations, from April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021, ESDC has noted **2,869 leads and allegations** of potential abuse from the TFW Program. Of those allegations, **184** were human trafficking and/or exploitation related.

## Prosecution

### Money Laundering

Human trafficking can be very profitable and considered low risk for offenders, given the clandestine and hidden nature of the crime. Following the money, and targeting the profits generated from sexual exploitation, is necessary to combat human trafficking in Canada.

Launched in 2016, Project Protect is an initiative involving FINTRAC; Canada's reporting entities; regulators; law enforcement agencies at the municipal, provincial and federal level; as well as non-profit organizations and technology companies. FINTRAC and Canada's major banks joined forces to develop a comprehensive list of indicators to assist businesses in identifying financial transactions and patterns of activities related to human trafficking in the sex trade that may give rise to suspicions of money laundering. Banks and other businesses and individuals that are required by law to report financial transaction information to FINTRAC, now use these indicators as triggers to complete suspicious transaction reports and submit them to FINTRAC in support of Project Protect.

Through Project Protect, FINTRAC has worked closely with members of Canada's reporting entity community and developed an Operational Alert, "The laundering of illicit proceeds from human trafficking for sexual exploitation", in order to increase awareness and understanding of money laundering in relation to human trafficking in the sex trade. As a result of these efforts and the ongoing commitment of Canadian businesses, FINTRAC received thousands of suspicious transaction reports in relation to Project Protect in 2020-21.

With this information, and since inception, FINTRAC has been able to provide over a thousand disclosures of actionable financial intelligence, including thousands of transaction reports, to Canada's municipal, provincial and federal police forces in support of their human trafficking investigations.

### Immigration Investigations

IRCC conducts large-scale administrative investigations into human trafficking that identify potential foreign national victims and/or perpetrators of human trafficking. By doing so, IRCC is in the position to collect the necessary evidence in support of administrative decisions and referrals to its enforcement partners (e.g., CBSA, RCMP) for possible criminal investigation and prosecution. In addition, these large-scale administrative investigations help IRCC prevent fraud, support officers making decisions on applications, provide input into policy and program development and otherwise strengthen program integrity.

In Fiscal Year 2020-2021, there were approximately ten<sup>8</sup> human trafficking investigations initiated by IRCC.

### Cross-border movements

The CBSA fights human trafficking by: detecting instances of human trafficking, including for the purposes of forced labour; preventing, identifying and interdicting suspected human traffickers involved in the cross-border movement and exploitation of victims of human trafficking; and contributing to the safety and security of potential victims by separating them from the control of suspected human traffickers and referring them to appropriate government services. The CBSA also disrupts human trafficking operations through the investigation and prosecution of a variety of serious offences under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA), committed by suspected human traffickers.

### Partnerships

An effective Canadian response to human trafficking requires many actors working together, including the federal government, provinces and territories, Indigenous stakeholders, law enforcement, academics, victims and survivors, civil society, service providers, the private sector, and international partners. The objective of this strategic pillar of the National Strategy is to build and improve national and international coordination and cooperation to address human trafficking.

Provinces and territories provide important services, such as health and social services, emergency housing, and legal aid to victims and survivors. In some cases, provinces and territories have established their own local strategies and action plans to address human trafficking in their jurisdictions. Maintaining and developing strong

#### Did you know?

During the period of April 1, 2020 - March 31, 2021, the CBSA established a Dedicated Expert Group to coordinate, consult and develop strategies to combat human trafficking to improve the Agency's ability to identify, intercept and investigate instances of human trafficking overseas, at the border and within Canada. The CBSA's efforts to strengthen intelligence production and training will ensure that front line officers - in Canada and abroad - are better prepared when detecting, investigating and disrupting human trafficking.

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<sup>8</sup> Data has been rounded to prevent individuals from being identified when IRCC data is compiled and compared to other publicly available statistics. As IRCC investigations data is manually tracked, data should be considered preliminary and subject to change without notice. Data Source: IRCC as of June 29, 2021

partnerships within and outside of the Government of Canada is critical to Canada's success in combatting this crime.

In 2020-21, engagement with provinces and territories to support Canada's response to human trafficking continued through the **Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group for Trafficking in Persons**. These meetings facilitate information sharing and collaboration, and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned to inform policy and program development. Information gathered through these engagements also informed the National Strategy. Furthermore, discussions on human trafficking and ways to combat the crime continue to progress at the **Federal/Provincial/Territorial Deputy Ministers and Ministers tables**.

## Stakeholder Engagement

Human trafficking is a complex crime in Canada and abroad. It adapts to new environments and challenges with traffickers using new tools, methods, and strategies to traffic individuals and maximize financial gain on the exploitation of victims. The Government of Canada, provinces and territories, civil society, private sector, academics, and law enforcement all play a role in combatting human trafficking across Canada and abroad. Therefore, it is paramount that the Government of Canada engages regularly with key stakeholders to ensure policies reflect the evolving landscape of human trafficking and its emerging trends. Stakeholder engagement is also an opportunity to share essential information, including best practices and lessons learned; identify gaps and priority issues; and, work together to explore innovative solutions and implement effective policies and programs.

For 2020-21, in an effort to continue to strengthen stakeholder relationships and promote knowledge exchange, Public Safety Canada completed a human trafficking stakeholder engagement webinar series where federal, provincial and territorial government representatives heard from experts in the academic sector, technology sector and the financial sector on emerging trends, challenges and best practices to address human trafficking in Canada. Public Safety Canada plans to continue hosting learning sessions and engaging with various stakeholder groups to explore potential collaborative opportunities.

FINTRAC continues to conduct anti money laundering outreach to partners and stakeholders on a regular basis. This outreach includes, but is not limited to, direct

### Did You Know?

In 2020-21, FINTRAC conducted various outreach sessions pertaining to Project Protect and Human Trafficking. Following Canadian media coverage on Project Protect, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime featured an interview of a FINTRAC intelligence analyst on their website. FINTRAC also provided presentations to the United Kingdom's National Crime Agency, the Canada Revenue Agency, the Canadian Police College, and the Ontario Police College.

engagement with law enforcement, reporting entities, private sector partners, domestic government departments and agencies at all levels, foreign government departments and agencies, NGOs and various international organizations (i.e. UN, OECD, Avocats Sans Frontières, etc.).

### **International Engagement**

Canada enhanced its engagement internationally and bilaterally with key international partners to promote the use of international legal instruments and share best practices and lessons learned. This engagement took place through participation in regional and multilateral processes such as the United Nations; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; Alliance 8.7; the Organization of American States; the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; the International Labour Organization; the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM – Americas); the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime; the Global Compact for Migration; the Global Compact for Refugees, the G20, the G7 and its Roma-Lyon Group.

The Government of Canada is also working to combat forced labour in supply chains. Since July 1, 2020, the *Customs Tariff* prohibits the import of goods produced by forced labour into Canada. The Labour Program of ESDC continues to work with the CBSA to operationalize this new prohibition, which applies to all imports, regardless of origin.

In 2020-21, Canada participated in a number of multilateral events to support efforts to combat human trafficking globally and promote domestic achievements, lessons learned, emerging challenges and best practices:

- United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) Conference of Parties, Working Group on Trafficking in Persons, discussions on the UNTOC Review Mechanism, and numerous other events organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime:
  - The UNTOC Conference of the Parties to the Convention was established to improve the capacity of States Parties to combat transnational organized crime and to promote and review the implementation of this Convention and all its supplementing Protocols. The UNTOC Working Group on trafficking in persons explores measures to address TIP with State parties to the UN Protocol on trafficking in persons and develops recommendations on how to best implement obligations under the Protocol.
- United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice:
  - The United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice is the world's largest and most diverse gathering of policy-makers, practitioners, academia, intergovernmental organizations and civil society in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice. The Congresses have been held every five years

- since 1955 in different parts of the world, dealing with a vast array of topics. They have made considerable impact in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice and influenced national and international policies and professional practices. The Congresses provide a forum for (a) the exchange of views between States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and individual experts representing various professions and disciplines; (b) the exchange of experiences in research, law and policy development; and (c) the identification of emerging trends and issues in crime prevention and criminal justice.
- United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) intersessional and reconvened meetings:
    - The CCPCJ acts as the principal policymaking body of the United Nations in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice. It works towards improving international action to combat national and transnational crime and to support the efficiency and fairness of criminal justice administration systems. The Commission did not meet in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but held intersessional and reconvened meetings.
  - Alliance 8.7 Global Coordination Group and other related activities:
    - Alliance 8.7 is a global partnership which fosters multi-stakeholder collaboration to support governments in achieving target 8.7 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, which aims to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking, and eliminate all forms of child labour.
  - Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and its Annual Conference of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons and Meeting of National Anti-Trafficking Coordinators and Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanisms:
    - The OSCE includes 57 participating States and addresses a wide range of security-related concerns through a comprehensive approach that encompasses politico-military, economic and environmental, and human aspects. The Conference of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons is the annual gathering of key stakeholders from the OSCE region for advocacy and cooperation that includes participating States, international, regional and civil society organizations.
  - Organization of American States' (OAS) Committee on Hemispheric Security (CHS) and its workshops on Trafficking in Persons:
    - The OAS brings together all 35 independent States of the Americas and constitutes the main political, juridical, and social governmental forum in the Hemisphere. It has also granted permanent observer status to 69 States, as well as to the European Union. The CHS provides a central role in security and defense matters in the framework of the OAS and promotes and coordinates cooperation.

- International Labour Organization (ILO):
    - The ILO brings together governments, employers and workers of 187 Member States to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programs promoting decent work for all.
  - Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime and its Business and Government Forum:
    - The Bali Process is co-chaired by Indonesia and Australia and has 49 members, as well as a number of observer countries and international agencies. It is a forum for policy dialogue, information sharing and practical cooperation to help the Asia-pacific region address migrant smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime.
  - Ad hoc Working Group on the *Principles to Guide Government Action to Combat Human Trafficking in Global Supply Chains*:
    - The Governments of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom and the United States, among others, endorsed a Call to Action to End Forced Labour, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. Following this endorsement, they developed [guiding principles](#)<sup>9</sup> to provide a framework on which all countries can build a strategy to take effective action to prevent and eradicate human trafficking from public and private sector supply chains.
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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/app-acq/ma-bb/principes-principles-eng.html>



# Critical Success Factors

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The National Strategy is focused on three critical factors that will ensure its successful implementation, and make significant inroads to combatting human trafficking.

## Effective Governance and Accountability

Strong governance and accountability are key components contributing to the successful delivery of the National Strategy. With numerous federal departments undertaking anti-human trafficking activities, an effective governance structure allows for strong strategic direction and oversight. This also ensures linkages are made between human trafficking and other horizontal issues such as efforts to address online child sexual exploitation, gender-based violence, and disproportionate violence against Indigenous women and girls. Recognizing the important role that provinces and territories, Indigenous communities and civil society have in combatting this crime, a strong approach to governance also ensures that roles and responsibilities are clear and a whole-of-government approach is achieved.

## Establishing Strong Governance Mechanisms

The Human Trafficking Taskforce, which was first established under the 2012-2016 National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking, will continue to advance efforts to implement a wide range of anti-human trafficking activities under the National Strategy. The Human Trafficking Taskforce brings together almost 20 federal departments and agencies to address all aspects of human trafficking. In 2020-21, standing working groups under the Human Trafficking Taskforce continued to meet regularly to advance efforts in key policy areas, for example, Research, Information Sharing and Data Collection; Labour Trafficking and Emerging Issues; and International Engagement.

## Evidence-Based Approach

Empirical evidence, reliable data and data collection mechanisms are crucial in our response to human trafficking, particularly for funding, prevention and intervention efforts. The National Strategy invests in data-gathering mechanisms to improve data collection, and ensures policies and programs to combat human trafficking are evidence-based and responsive to new evidence.

## Closing Knowledge Gaps

While enhancing knowledge of human trafficking is a key activity under the prevention pillar, it is also a critical success factor to ensuring the overall success of the National Strategy. The Government of Canada is investing up to \$920,000 over four years to enhance research and data collection efforts under the National Strategy. This will complement research funding

opportunities available through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and Social Services and Humanities Research Council.

Public Safety Canada continues to lead efforts with federal and provincial partners to improve human trafficking data collection and reporting, including consistency and comparability. The goal is to develop a robust approach that improves how human trafficking data is collected, used, managed and shared among federal and provincial partners, stakeholders and with Canadians. This includes continued work with Statistics Canada's Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics (CCJSCCS)<sup>10</sup> to undertake relevant and needed studies and analysis of human trafficking in Canada. In 2020-21, there were two funded projects finalized by Statistics Canada: the 2019 Trafficking in persons in Canada Juristat, and the 2020 Preliminary national estimates on police-reported human trafficking incidents.

#### Cooperation and Collaboration

A national approach, across all sectors and levels of government, is required to effectively combat human trafficking. The National Strategy builds on existing anti-human trafficking efforts and develops meaningful partnerships between federal-provincial-territorial governments, civil society, private sector and research sectors. It also ensures closer work with international partners to share our lessons and insights.

### **Working together with Provinces and Territories to improve collective response**

The Government of Canada continues to coordinate and collaborate with provincial and territorial governments through the Public Safety Canada-led Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Working Group to support Canada's response to addressing human trafficking, as well as through the Justice Canada-led FPT Coordinating Committee of Senior Officials Working Group on Human Trafficking. These meetings facilitate inter-jurisdictional collaboration and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned to inform policy, programs, and criminal justice responses. A priority for the Federal Government is to address gaps in human trafficking data in order to improve knowledge of this crime and understand the full picture of human trafficking across Canada, recognizing that this must be done in collaboration with provincial and territorial partners.

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<sup>10</sup> The CCJSCCS, a division of Statistics Canada, is responsible for the development, collection, integration and analysis of data that reflect trends in Canada and on the development of national- and jurisdictional-level indicators.

## Moving Forward

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As the scope and nature of human trafficking in Canada changes, the Government of Canada continues to refine its efforts. These efforts are informed by engagement with partners, stakeholders, survivors, and experts across the country, on an ongoing basis toward combatting human trafficking in all its forms.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to bring challenges to our fight against human trafficking. The pandemic has made it even harder to detect and has left victims struggling to obtain help and access to justice. Furthermore, the economic slowdown has amplified existing socio-economic disadvantages for at-risk populations, making them more susceptible to sex and labour trafficking. We will continue to work with civil society to ensure that victims and survivors are receiving the support and services they need.

While significant work has been achieved, the Government of Canada recognizes that more needs to be done, including supporting victims and survivors in marginalized communities, particularly Indigenous Peoples, 2SLGBTQQIA+ persons and migrants. The Government of Canada will continue to build upon its responses and look for ways to prevent human trafficking through effective and targeted awareness and intervention, to protect and meet the needs of victims and to prosecute offenders.