

# TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN<sup>1</sup> IN THE LATIN – AMERICAN REGION.

Norma Sanchís<sup>23</sup>

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## 1. The problem

Trafficking in women is not a new phenomenon in the LA region. At the end of the 19th century, the trafficking of European women (“trata de blancas”) for the purpose of sexual exploitation became frequent. The accelerated trend was related to the feminization of migration inside Europe, as well as from Europe to other destinations, like Asia, America and Africa. For example, between 1860 and 1901, 75% of the registered sex workers in Buenos Aires, came from European countries and Russia (Guy, 1994)<sup>4</sup>. Most of them came from rural areas. There is evidence that America has an abundant (and under recorded) history around this topic. After the First World War, the League of Nations started a three year investigation focused on trafficking in women around the world. The conclusion of this investigation was that “Latin America is the market of trafficking in the world...”<sup>5</sup>.

Mainly, the cases investigated showed the exploitation of vulnerable and poor women, through tricky and restrictive machinery. The intensification of this phenomenon strengthened the voices that promoted the penalization of prostitution from a moral perspective that ignored women’s conditions or their own desire to practice prostitution.

After decades of the minimization of this problem, the trafficking in women for sexual exploitation has worsened in almost every region of the world since the 1980’s, in conjunction with the strengthened dynamic of globalization. Certainly, many other factors contributed to this phenomenon. Poverty, social and military conflicts, and political instability are a few, all grounded in gender subordination that provokes discrimination and disregards women and children’s rights. Still, the role of neoliberalism and economic globalization have played in the acceleration of Latin American traffic in women – and worldwide – appears increasingly dominant. Structural adjustment policies in Latin America have effectively debilitated whatever democracy had existed prior, subjugating the power of governments and civil society to the “invisible hand” of the market. Inversely, the debilitation of democracy and political participation has permitted the operation of neoliberal policy unchecked. The result has been widespread incapacitation of regulatory frameworks, which facilitate illicit activity in general, and particularly the traffic of women (Sanchís, 2005).

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<sup>1</sup> In this case, the word “women” covers all female ages (adults, teenagers and also little girls).

<sup>2</sup> Co-coordinator of the Latin American Gender and Trade Network (IGTN – LA)

<sup>3</sup> I want to thank Marina Méndez and Regina Szczesniak for their collaboration on this proyect.

<sup>4</sup> Guy, 1994 in “La trata de personas en Paraguay. Diagnóstico exploratorio sobre el tráfico y/o trata de personas con fines de explotación sexual”, 2005

<sup>5</sup> H. Wilson Harris, *Human Merchandise: A Study of the International Traffic in Women* 187 (1928), quoted in CIM, OEA, 2002.

The role of globalization in worsening the worldwide traffic in women is well-established. A document from the Interamerican Women's Commission of the Organization of American States (CIM 2002) states that "the arrival of globalization has aggravated the problem, building what are named as market opportunities for traffickers of human beings and for those who exploit them. The liberalization of countries' borders and the flexibilization of people's movement through borders, have increased the opportunities for illegal migration, and, when this illegal smuggling of human beings through borders is connected with their sale for sexual exploitation, the activity becomes significantly more income producing. The trafficking of people is an international delinquent activity that occupies the third position, for the profits it generates, behind narcotics trafficking and weapons commerce".

The same report (CIM, 2002) shows that "many experts have linked market liberalization, through the structural adjustment strategies of the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank, with the erosion of human rights guarantees." Globalization has been implicated as a factor that contributes to the trafficking of people as well. In 2001, the General Secretary of the UN, required information about globalization and its effects on the exercise of Human Rights in member countries. This requirement included a question about the perception of the relationship, if there is a relationship, between "the process of globalization and the negative aspects caused by international commerce, such as trafficking of people, weapons, and the increase in international crimes".

Thus, economic globalization, the liberalization of the market and financial flows, and the growth of communication technologies, have created conditions that propitiate a greater fluidity of organized crime through countries' borders. It is therefore necessary to look for the connections between trafficking in women and mainstream macroeconomic policies, as well as the particular mode in which the actual globalization is being shaped.

All these factors create a complex phenomenon that integrates different types of roots, and mandates a multidisciplinary analysis.

Despite the importance of this phenomenon in the region, the IMO recognizes the lack of analysis and data on these issues in Latin America, in comparison with other regions<sup>6</sup>. Also lacking are data on other forms of traffic, which have similarly accelerated in the region with the help of structural adjustment policies and neoliberalism on whole. While this paper focuses on the issue of women's traffic for the purpose of sexual exploitation, it should be noted that, in growing numbers, people in the region are trafficked and forced to work in conditions of slavery. Though traffic for other purposes will not be addressed in this paper, many parallels probably exist between these phenomena.

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<sup>6</sup> One response to the lack of information was the study assigned by the International Human Rights L (IHRL) , DePaul University and the Organization of the American States in nine Latin American countries, between 2000-2002, with the purpose of evaluating the existence of sexual trafficking in Latin America and the Caribbean, investigating policies and programs existing in response to the problem and identifying local and regional necessities in order to formulate effective strategies to struggle against this crime.

The aims of this paper, then are to address some questions on the relationship between trafficking in women and neoliberal globalization, by analyzing the Latin American situation, with a focus on MERCOSUR, and also offers research and advocacy recommendations. One additional aim is to bring visibility to a problem that in Latin America has been silenced and for which there is a lower level of information and fewer case studies, little social consciousness, and that is even naturalized in some poor and rural regions (Meléndez y Mallqui, ).

## **2. Conceptual framework**

In December 2000, the United Nations approved the International Convention Against Organized Trans-national Crime, which includes a Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. As it contemplates all the modes and purposes of trafficking in people and includes sexual exploitation, forced work and organ extirpation, this Protocol is the most complete and elaborate international instrument at the moment (CIM XXXI Delegate's assembly, 2002).

As a basic framework, this article adopts the general definition referred to in the Protocol, which identifies this activity as:

“The recruitment, transport, transfer, shelter or reception of people, by means of a threat, or by the use of force or other restraining methodologies, kidnapping, fraud, swindle, power misuse or vulnerable people abuse, or by the supply or acceptance of payments or profits to obtain consent for the control of one person over another, with the purpose of exploitation.”

It also states that “the victim's consent for the trafficking of people with the purpose of exploitation... will be irrelevant in the cases where threat or the use of force or other restraining methodologies, kidnapping, fraud, swindle, power misuse or vulnerable people abuse, or by the supply or acceptance of payments or profits to obtain the consent for the control of one person over another, with the purpose of exploitation” (UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, 2000).

### **2.1 Conditions for the Traffic in Women**

Throughout the world, trafficking in women for the purposes of sexual exploitation or women's forced work constitutes a “hidden economy” with enormous profits. Its dimensions can be compared to those of the traffic in drugs or weapons, though traffic in women poses relatively less risk to those who perpetrate it. Like that of drugs or weapons, the traffic in women is executed by means of national and international networks of traffickers, who take advantage of women searching for ways to alleviate poverty with false promises of opportunities and jobs.

Though poverty and unemployment are essential to traffickers' success in recruiting victims, they do not constitute causes of trafficking, but rather conditions for it. Not all poor communities will become recruiting ground for traffickers. The presence of the networks through which the traffic will take place is critical; the existence of trafficking networks is a fundamental condition in facilitating the crime. Generally speaking, the conditions that enable and facilitate the crime of traffic are many and varied. A great portion of these conditions can be linked to the recent trend toward economic globalization.

The conditions that enable and facilitate traffic can be summarized as follows. The presence of these conditions individually and in combined forms enhances the

probability that a country or region will be prone to trafficking, to operating as an export zone, as a passage point between other destinations, or as a receptor of victims.

- **Conditions of Possibility:** The characteristics of globalization that promote transnational interconnections comprise an important condition for the possibility of traffic. Commercial and financial liberalization, advances in transportation, the communications revolution, and the increasing economic disparity between developed and underdeveloped countries (promoting the desire to migrate) are all conditions that enable perpetrators to traffic. As mentioned above, the existence of organized crime networks is essential to the execution of traffic.

“There is little institutional development in Latin American in relation to the perfected practices of traffic networks, which are aided by the development of new technologies. The Internet, for example, with scarce crime legislation that is little known and of difficult application, and the improvement in world trade”. (interview with Assorati).

- **Conditions of Facility:** Institutional fragility in “exporting” and intermediary countries, the debilitation of the State’s regulatory capacity and corruption in administrative and judicial bureaucracies and in security mechanisms are all conditions that facilitate the work of traffickers. Inefficient regulatory frameworks, weakened by neoliberal economic and structural adjustment policies, limit the ability of affluent countries to manage the free transit of people and provoke illegal migration, creating passageways that facilitate traffic in women. Especially where migration regulations are tightened, states create the opportunity for traffickers and smugglers to operate. States can also facilitate traffic by failing to pass or to enforce effective labor legislation, creating a niche in which criminal networks can easily exploit women or other laborers. Wars and consequent forced displacement also facilitate traffic.
- **Conditions of Opportunity:** Neoliberal and structural adjustment policies have been critical to creating opportunity for traffickers to recruit victims in Latin America. Such policies have not only deepened poverty worldwide, but also have had dramatic effects on labor markets. Increased flexibilization of labor and a growing precariousness in work conditions are two major trends, both of which are more pronounced in the cases of women. There is a parallel trend of feminization of labor markets.

The feminization of labor markets is related to the global trend towards the feminization of survival, whereby families rely increasingly on women’s paid labor for sustenance. In turn, academics also note a feminization of migration, as more and more women search for labor opportunities in foreign markets, hoping to support families through remittances. The process as a whole has created vast opportunity for the recruitment of traffic victims, who are generally lured by promises of work in foreign markets.

As illustrated above, structural adjustment policies and the implementation of the neoliberal model on a world scale, create many such conditions for the implementation of traffic. As Hughes (2000) notes, “The growth of shadow economies and transnational criminal networks ... are negative manifestations of globalization, arising from expanding economic, political and social transnational linkages that are increasingly beyond local and state control. An important component of globalization is the transnational linkages created by migration. Increased migration also serves as a cover for traffickers in transporting women to destinations in the sex industry”.

It should be noted that Latin American governments have accepted almost without resistance the implementation of structural adjustment policies proposed by the Washington Consensus, such as the opening of the economies and deregulation of capital flows, which have spearheaded economic globalization. The consequences have been increasing poverty, unemployment and, above all, unequal distribution of resources with a high level of wealth concentration that makes Latin America the most economically inequitable region of the world.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, in that globalization creates conditions for traffic, Latin America is a prime target for traffic networks.

## 2.2 The Value Chain of the Traffic in Women

Despite its implications, the trafficking in women is neither considered in trade debates nor is it incorporated in international trade agreements, although such agreements are increasingly more comprehensive (for example, they not only consider commodities transactions but also investments and services, including professional services). Nevertheless, the economic circuit of this modern gendered slave market includes a process of production (recruitment) in exporting countries or regions, a demand in importing countries, and local and trans-national distribution channels.

The analysis of trafficking in women requires the consideration of all the links that increase value from ‘exporting’ countries or regions to ‘importing’ countries or regions and means to study economic, political, social and cultural linkages between the places concerned. Durano (2005), in her work about migration in the Asian Pacific region, utilizes the concept of value chains, and the relationship between migration systems with the international provision of care services, as a form of international trade. This article purports to apply a similar methodology to identify the relevant components of the hidden market of trafficking.

Kurian (2004) suggests that a value chain approach, similar to that used in production networks, can offer insights into the analysis of “the benefits and costs of this global trade in care services”<sup>8</sup>. “One of the challenges to using the value chain approach is that many of these services have not attained “industry” status or, in some instances, achieve “industry” status<sup>9</sup> in a notorious sense for many policymakers, for

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<sup>7</sup> Eclac, *Panorama Social de América Latina*, 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Kurian, 2004 Qtd in Durano, Marina (2005), *Women in International Trade and Migration: Examining the Globalized Provision of Care Services*, Grant from the Ford Foundation to the International Gender and Trade Network-Asia.

<sup>9</sup> The concept of “industry” status is related to the level of formality surrounding the organization of industrial production, that is, whether the production of a service is formal or informal or whether the production of a service is a market activity or a non-market activity. However, the concept of status is not limited to these organizational forms.

example, “sex industry”. Indeed, this lack of status inhibits the formulation of economic policy that recognizes the relationship between production and reproduction” (Durano, 2005).

Compared with the valuation in the commerce of goods, the recruitment networks and the local and transnational traffickers are the merchandisers that work to satisfy a market demand, that could be national (from rural to urban zones, from poor to rich regions) or international (from underdeveloped or developing countries to developed countries, from south to north). Taking into account this demand-driven mechanism, the recruitment and trafficking agencies select their victims according to stereotypes preferred in the final destination market. The demand of a particular race or ethnic stereotype promotes offers and is a condition that propitiates the traffic in countries that can satisfy this demand.

It is possible to identify the main links of the value chain and to analyze its main characteristics. The description of these links and of their key actors allows the identification of eventual points of vulnerability, which could facilitate the definition of action and policies to unlink the chain.

- **The First Link**: is the family, community or place that provides the human resources (women traded) as the initial step in the value creation.

The trafficked women proceed frequently from the lowest economic and social status of their society, and their families have no economic or political power ability to appeal to authorities or to confront powerful networks (drugs cartels, for example) to stop the crime. Recruiters take advantage of this vulnerable situation to coerce victims with threats that involve their families. Not all women are physically forced or kidnapped. In many cases, women agree to be transferred after deception or false promises.

Such coercion is made possible by the low quality of work available to women in the Latin American region. Though women’s participation in the paid labor force increased in the last decades of the twentieth century throughout the region, the posts created were and are of low quality. Women’s options are generally underpaid, unstable, without benefits, and often dangerous. Such conditions are particularly evident in export-driven sectors, which have grown substantially due to trade liberalization (Infante and Vega-Centano, 1999).

That the percentage of Latin American women working for wages has increased over time does not imply economic parity between the genders. Women’s participation remains strikingly lower than men’s. In fact, statistics in the region show women’s unemployment has been significant in recent decades. As one might anticipate, the majority of Latin American countries have higher figures for women’s unemployment than those for men. The gendered disparity in income in Latin America is similarly disturbing (ECLAC, Gender Unit).

Structural adjustment policies have been central to the creation of such a precarious and flexibilized labor market for Latin American women. In turn, families build survival strategies to confront the resulting poverty that incorporate women’s migration in search of better or any paid work. With minimal access only to unstable,

dangerous and underpaid employment in communities of origin, women's migration for work becomes a last resort for family survival. Some families even resort to the sale of young children.

“As a result of desperate economic conditions or because of the hope of finding better levels of life, women and children are driven to believe through swindles that the work offered in other countries is legal. The attraction of relatively well paid jobs abroad, that don't require language skills or other abilities, like domestic work, is sufficient for a number of children and women to fall naively into the hands of recruiters and traffickers”. (CIM, 2002)

According to the CIM Coordinator of the Project “The Fight Against the Traffic of People,” Mercedes Assorati, “Latin America is a paradise for trafficking because it has corrupt governments, weak institutions, illiteracy, and familial and gendered violent situations, which create a climate in which potential victims feel ‘there is nothing to lose.’ To these circumstances, it is necessary to add short temporal horizons, where people are predisposed to emigrate. On the other hand, inadequate legislation and short penalties, add up to the naturalization of these practices that increases their tolerance in civil society, preparing the ground for the recruitment in Latin America”. (interview with Assorati)

Cultural factors in the origin communities of the trafficked women can encourage them to accept the offers. In fact, in some societies, feminine migration, relative autonomy, and a disposition to find labor opportunities away from home have a social legitimacy. This factor provides an additional explanation for the differences between countries: In the Dominican Republic the predisposition to emigrate is much more common than in more restrictive countries. Some regional cultural patrons propitiate a naturalization of prostitution and of gendered violent situations, that not only help women to see prostitution an option for means of subsistence, but also discourage them to ponder the risks of migration.

- **Second link:** Recruitment Agencies

Recruitment Agencies are the connection between local recruiters, women that are seeking opportunities and work outside their communities of origin. Normally, the recruitment is made according to particular characteristics or abilities of women, related to the preferences of the demand market in the final destination, whether the purpose is forced work (needlework, for example) or work in the sex or entertainment industry (age, physical characteristic, racial or ethnic characteristics) . When talking about illegal recruiters, risks are plainly much more.

Recruitment agencies and local officials obtain profits from this link to the destination market. The weakness of the local bureaucracy and corruption facilitate the transit through countries' borders even in apparently legal conditions by helping to obtain visas, study permissions, etc. As aforementioned, such bureaucratic inefficiency and corruption are symptoms of debilitated regulatory frameworks, made weak in order to accommodate neoliberal agendas.

“Prosecutors and judges are in contact. They themselves grant permissions to leave the country, in the case of a minor, paying 100 U\$S for passage to Posadas, entering Argentina as a tourist”<sup>10</sup>.

In many countries, recruitment networks operate with almost complete impunity, with officials entrusted with the enforcement of the law frequently facilitating and profiting from this link. In some cases, even if the victim manages to escape, the police or the migration authorities will return the victim to her captors.

The more frequent conditions of recruitments include deceit and false promises of a decent job as workers in factories and maquilas, or in service work at restaurants, bars, hotels, houses and other locales. After promises of prosperity, women are forced into sexual slavery to repay transport costs and other debts. “Control is maintained through violence and threats, debt and fines, restricted access to incomes, physical restrictions and the use of armed guards, and demonstrations of impunity by means of open cooperation with authorities. The initial investment in migration and the lack of visible alternatives once in a foreign place, leave women and children without options. The risk of deportation, devolution or institutionalization (in the case of children) maintain many victims’ silence about their situation”. (CIM, 2002)

A journalistic report in Argentina found that recruiters and kidnappers, linked to the perpetrators of document falsification, transporters and owners of prostitutes, making a living through the buying and selling women, adolescents and children, are functioning as trade alliances between families (family mafia) that allow importation and exportation as an internal traffic from province to province. There are mothers that delegate the power of their “business” to their sons, married couples that enlarge the network by employing their brothers in law, and even ex-couples, some separated for years, that maintain a commercial link through the business of sexual exploitation<sup>11</sup>.

- **Third link:** Trafficking Networks.

This link establishes the nexus between the local recruiting agent and the agent located in richer regions and industrialized countries. The conditions of contemporary globalization and trade liberalization propitiate the strengthening and expansion of national and transnational trafficking networks, with relatively low risk and high profits.

“Privatization and liberalization of markets have created wider and more open marketplaces throughout the world. Another important component of globalization, computer communication technologies, has enabled an increased volume and complexity of international financial transactions, which increases opportunities for transnational crime and decreases the probability of detection and apprehension. This technological aspect of globalization enables the money gained through illegal activities, like trafficking in women, to be transferred and laundered”. (Hughes, 2000)

The networks that traffic women are modern slave traders. Transnational traffickers take advantage of the increasing trends in women’s migration. In the receiving country, women are more vulnerable because they lack family and friends, and also because of the illegality of their situation. If the police discover her, a woman

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<sup>10</sup> Paraguayan Informant, qtd. in Grupo Luna Nueva, 2005

<sup>11</sup> Clarín Journal: “Tráfico de mujeres: un negocio de mafias familiares”, Special Report

is arrested and deported. The trafficked women can be exploited to make a large profit. Research by the IMO show that since trafficked women receive little of the money they earn, the profits for traffickers are enormous.

Hughes (2000) points out that the corruption of officials through bribes and even the collaboration of officials in criminal networks enables traffickers to operate in communities and states. “As the influence of criminal networks deepens, the corruption goes beyond an act of occasionally ignoring illegal activity to providing protection by blocking legislation that would hinder the activities of the groups. As law enforcement personnel and government officials become more corrupt and members of the crime groups gain more influence, the line between the state and the criminal networks starts to blur. This merging of criminal networks and the government seems to have occurred in many of the states that have emerged out of the Soviet Union.<sup>12</sup> Under these circumstances it is difficult to intervene in the succession of corruption, collaboration, crime and profit<sup>13</sup>”. Hughes (2000)

- **Fourth link:** The Demand

When the traffic of women is analyzed, often one of its principal components is overlooked: the existence of the demand for trafficked women, with actors willing to pay for entertainment or sex services by their own disposition and free will. Hughes (2000), points out that although trafficked women can be found almost anywhere, even in quite unexpected places, the destinations for most trafficked women are countries and cities where there are large centers of sex industry and where prostitution is legalized or widely tolerated.

The demand for prostitution is heavily dominated by men, while the majority of victims of traffic are women. Many theorists on prostitution have noted a relationship between men’s inclinations toward buying sex and social constructions of masculinity, so that the consumption of commercial sex becomes, in many circumstances, an expression or assertion of masculinity (Anderson and Davidson, 2002). As such, the relationship between supply and demand in sex work is absolutely gendered and grounded in relationships of hierarchy and power between women and men and has acquired new dimensions with the advent of neoliberal globalisation. While there are indications of an increasing traffic in trans-sexual people, this trend would not indicate a challenge to gender power relations, which do not have an automatic association to biologic sex.

Though clearly connected to gender subordination, the demand for trafficked women is a challenging subject for analysis. In their 2002 study on the demand for trafficked sex and domestic workers, Bridget Anderson and Julia Davidson emphasize the factors which complicate their analysis. For example, the blurred line between trafficked persons and other exploitable persons makes studying the demand for trafficked women as a separate category difficult. Analysts must also struggle to draw conclusions from sparse and complicated data because of the difficulties in studying illicit activity and few complete studies on the subject.

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<sup>12</sup> Brunon Holyst, “Organized crime in Eastern Europe and its implications for the security of the Western world,” in *Organized Crime-Uncertainties and Dilemmas*, eds. Stanley Einstein and Menachem Amir (Chicago, Illinois: The Office of International Criminal Justice, 1999): 67-93.

<sup>13</sup> Vladimir Isachenkov, “Soviet women slavery flourishes,” *AP Online*, 6 November 1997.

Anderson and Davidson also note that the demand for any commodity, and particularly that of commercial sex, is much more complex than a simple reflection of consumer need. Rather, demand is constructed out of social norms and stigmas and is influenced heavily by the actions and inactions of the State and other powerful players, who can affect consumer desire or make the sale of certain commodities possible or profitable. Furthermore, there is ample evidence that demand for a commodity often increases *in response to* an abundance of the product and not *vice versa*. This reverse trend is particularly evident in the work of exploitable persons, who often perform labor that did not exist prior to the supply of an abundant and vulnerable labor force (Anderson and Davidson, 2002).

In the case of trafficked women, the reverse trend is also evident. The authors note that the demand for commercial sex appears to increase where the price of commercial sex decreases due to an abundant supply of vulnerable and cheap prostitutes. In her study of sex tourism in Latin America, Adriana Piscitelli (2005) draws a clear connection between poverty and increased interest in sex tourist sites. Particularly evident in Argentina, an incredibly important site for Latin American traffic, Piscitelli notes an extreme hike in the interest of sex tourists surrounding the economic collapse of 2001.

Therefore, by enacting neoliberal economic policies that lead to poverty and unemployment, states may influence the demand for trafficked women by enabling an increase in the supply of vulnerable women. States can also influence demand by structurally facilitating the traffic in women. For example, by tightening migration restrictions, states create incentive for the operation of illegal traffic and smuggling where there may not have been. By de-prioritizing labor protections, states create a “safe” space for the exploitation of people. The relationship between inadequate labor protections and traffic in women is evident. Where states enforce labor laws, traffic does not occur. (Anderson and Davidson, 2002).

The valuation of particular types of female bodies is another important component for analysis of the demand for trafficked women. Traffickers do not deem profitable any type of female body; the value of a trafficked woman to her exploiters is determined by the demand for certain ages or physical characteristics.

“It must be taken into account that diverse actors and people operate and contribute to traffic for the purpose of sexual exploitation, such as the direct demanders of these people, brothels and organizations that need a particular kind of person for prostitution” (Interview with Assorati).

The preference for certain characteristics is determined by a complicated formula incorporating race and gender hierarchal stereotypes and beliefs. Often consumers of commercial sex in the developed world express a preference, reminiscent of the exploitation of colonized women, for women deemed “Other,” whose bodies are exoticized and coded as more wildly sexual. At the same time, consumer preferences can also reflect racial hierarchies by placing more value on women with European attributes – light skin and hair (Anderson and Davidson, 2002). Piscitelli found in her study that Argentine women were preferred by sex tourists for reportedly having a more European look, combined with a Latin (Othered) sexuality.

### **2.3 Trafficking in women: an open chain.**

In the analysis of migration, there is a fifth link that is the nexus between migrants and their homes in origin communities, which benefit through remittances, closing the circuit of the chain. But this is not the case with traffic in women, where profits do not bring benefits for the community of origin. On the contrary, the “dirty money” is laundered to buy legitimate business and properties for traffickers.

One point that requires more exploration and investigation is the fate of victims when the amount of gain and benefit that kidnappers can extract from them starts to decrease because of old age, illness or physical deterioration. It is possible that they are transferred to poorer networks or even returned to their communities of origin. According to some testimonies of returned women, they are received with resentment by their communities, who ignore the lived experience of the women, expecting them to arrive with profits obtained in the work abroad<sup>14</sup>.

### **2.4 International Trade and Sex Industry**

Durano (2005) finds a relationship between the increasing trends in female migration, transnational care services and trade agreements. The agreement around service transactions, which addresses the supply of highly skilled professionals, explicitly excludes permanent migration to another country and the guarantee of citizenship, employment or residence on a permanent basis.

Nevertheless, the author notes that: "A differentiation between recruitment, smuggling and trafficking is necessary, especially in the entertainment and tourism industries. ... The nature of work in the entertainment industry, especially for women migrant workers, can include dangers, such as being pushed into prostitution and violence ... Confusions arising from the inability to differentiate among these movements can lead to the formulation of policies that deny opportunities of work for women" (UNIFEM).

In WTO negotiations around the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), the entertainment industry is classified under professional occupational services (Mode 4). But in many cases, the entertainment industry hides prostitution and commercial sex work. It is difficult to assess if the liberalization in trade in services may exacerbate the trafficking in women.

The situation describes a global market that is strictly regulated through immigration policy. At present, immigration policies are implemented as separate and autonomous from the trends towards economic integration (Durano, 2005). Restrictive policies facilitate the illegal trafficking in women. Sassen (2000) argues that the view towards immigration has to change in recognition of the linkages between migration and integration and the related linkages between state sovereignty and multilateral economic agreements.

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<sup>14</sup> Interview with M. Assorati

### 3. Mapping Latin American Traffic

Latin America has a long history of migration flows within and outside the region. However, the rate of migration has accelerated in recent years due to a wide spread deterioration in the quality of life. This phenomenon is especially evident in MERCOSUR, where borders are particularly permeable for migrants.

The large number of Latin American and Caribbean women working as prostitutes in Europe, Japan and the United States is evidence of the existence of trafficking (Phinney, 2000). An estimated 50,000 women from the Dominican Republic and 75,000 women from Brazil are currently working in the sex industry abroad, mainly in Europe. However, the proportion of those prostitutes that are victims of trafficking is unclear.

Nevertheless, the IMO recognizes that despite the prevalence of trafficking in Latin America, the data on trafficking for that region is lacking<sup>15</sup>. In the case of Colombia alone, there are indicators that 500,000 women and children are currently being exploited through forced prostitution and other forms of forced labor abroad. The problem is worsening daily because of the large number of displaced persons victimized by Colombia's internal war, many of whom are willing to emigrate in whatever way possible. Interpol, which currently assists victims of traffic in both South Korea and Honduras, calculates that each year 35,000 women are "exported" for sex work from Colombia.

In general, according to the IMO, the principal countries of origin for victims of trafficking in Latin America are Brazil, Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Peru and Colombia; the principal receiving countries are Argentina, Ecuador, Panama, as well as European and North American countries (principally Spain, USA and Canada).

While the majority of Latin American migrants have traditionally been male, recent years have shown a general feminization of migration throughout the region.

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<sup>15</sup> Interview with M. Assorati.

Percentage of Female Migration		
Area	1970	2000
Global poccentage	47,2	48,6
Development countries	49	51
Undevelop countries (without ex URSS)	49	50,6
Undevelopment countries	45,7	44,6
Africa	42,7	46,7
Asia	46,6	43,3
Latin America and Carribbean Region	46,8	50,2
Northamerica	51,1	50,3
Oceania	46,5	50,5
Europe	48	51
Ex. URSS	48	52,1

Source: United Nations Organization: Trends in Total. Migrant stock: The 2003 Revision.

### 3.1 The Central America Region

Central America is unique in that the countries of the region share numerous economic, historic, social and political characteristics. The region also has a number of intergovernmental organs and forums, which have been negotiating economic and commercial integration since the beginning of the 1990's. Within the hemisphere, Central America is one of the poorest regions, with over 70% of the population living under the poverty line<sup>16</sup>. Natural disasters have exacerbated these deeply routed economic problems, as in the case of Hurricane Mitch, which devastated Nicaragua and Honduras in 1998, and a series of earthquakes in El Salvador in 2001.

Economic conditions are intimately related to migratory flows. As discussed earlier, impoverishment and unemployment, deepened by neoliberal structural adjustment and accompanied by militarization led by the US government, are driving forces for migration, and therefore increase vulnerability to traffic. "Exporting" countries (Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua) have relatively low GDP's compared to receiving countries (Costa Rica, Panama, and Belize). Furthermore, countries of origin have the highest rates of illiteracy among young people and the lowest rates of attendance for girls in primary school in the region<sup>17</sup>. Here again, structural adjustment policies, which force cuts in budgets for social services all over Latin America and prioritize the payment of debt services, are culpable in creating populations of women vulnerable (through lacking education) to traffic. In Central America, where structural adjustment is often implemented in parallel

<sup>16</sup> Luis Solís y Patricia Solano, Central America: The Difficult Road Towards Integration and the Role of Canada, Focal Policy Paper (May 2001) [http://www.focal.ca/summary/summary\\_central.htm](http://www.focal.ca/summary/summary_central.htm).

<sup>17</sup> Interamerican Women's Commission, Organization of American States: "Trafico de Mujeres y Niños – Conclusiones de la Investigación y Seguimiento" (Punto IV c. del Diálogo de Jefas de Delegación), XXXI Assembly of Delegates, August 17, 2002.

with militar actions, there may be an added incentive for migration, the need for refuge.<sup>18</sup>

The police force of Guatemala City reports that in that city alone, there are 2,000 girls prostituted in over 600 brothels and that many of these girls are Honduran and Salvadoran children orphaned by Hurricane Mitch. The NGO Casa Alianza estimates that in San Jose, Costa Rica there are 2,000 female child prostitutes. Other sources estimate that 25,000 girls in the Dominican Republic and an additional 500,000 in Brazil, are forced to prostitute. Most of these victims have been trafficked internally.

One study from the ILO in Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and Panama (ILO, 2003) points to sexual tourism as a driving force in the trafficking of women in these countries. As such, it is necessary to combat the internal demand for prostitution and therefore the promotion of such places as receiving countries for victims of traffic.

In the region, Costa Rica has a relatively high prevalence of sexual tourism. Because it is quite easy to obtain falsified documents in Nicaragua, that country has become important as a provider of prostitutes for Central America. Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico operate as passageways for those prostitutes destined for the USA and Canada. A major provider country for both Europe and the USA is Jamaica.

The most important characteristic of trafficking routes is that they are always directed from undeveloped countries into comparatively rich countries. One report out of the International Human Rights Law Institute (2002) notes that Central American routes of traffic can be divided generally into those that flow North and those that flow South, with Nicaragua as a joint point of origin. A hypothetical victim could be transported initially from Nicaragua and later pass through Honduras or El Salvador to eventually remain in Guatemala, Belize or the south of Mexico. On the other hand, from Nicaragua to the north of Mexico, there are various land routes used by traffickers. The North is made a more desirable destination point due to the free transit agreements currently in effect between Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, which have lead to lax border control. Because of greater economic development in the North, as well as the common perception of opportunity in that region, the traffickers can make feasible job offers, that are quite attractive to victims.

An important strategy of the traffickers is to constantly change the routes of traffic in order to evade discovery. Also, the victims are moved approximately every 21 days within a country or province in order to avoid the possibility of victims establishing affectionate relationships with clients or fellow victims, which may facilitate escape.

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<sup>18</sup> The current Bush administration's willingness to employ militarism has aroused fear throughout Latin America. The administration has recently secured new bases in Paraguay and Ecuador, where mercenary armies are being trained (Hallinan, 2005).



This map was taken from the work of **Elías Carranza, Ronald Woodbridge** “Trata de seres humanos especialmente, mujeres, niñas y niños.” **ILANUD, Presentación en la XII Sesión de la Comisión de las Naciones Unidas sobre Prevención del Delito y Justicia Penal, Viena, 2003.**

### 3.2 The Caribbean Region

More than any other country in the region, the Dominican Republic has a strong history of feminized migration. Studies identify three distinct periods of feminine migration in the Dominican Republic since the 1960’s<sup>19</sup>:

- ?? Between 1961 and 1973, women’s emigration to the United States was principally motivated by internal political turmoil.
- ?? From 1974 to 1984, women migrants began to move to other destinations.
- ?? From 1985, women’s migration has been oriented toward Europe because of economic crisis, as well as diminishing opportunity to emigrate to the US due to changes in immigration legislation. Spain has been the most common destination, while Argentina has become more and more prevalent.

According to diverse studies, women make up about 60% of the migratory flow out of the Dominican Republic. The IMO did a case study on Dominican migrants in Argentina (IMO, 2003). This case is particularly interesting because of the important migratory flow of Dominicans to Argentina, which was a result of the establishment of the rule of convertibility in the 1990’s in Argentina<sup>20</sup>. The fixed one to one exchange of pesos to dollars facilitated the remittance of dollars to the Dominican Republic. As such, the Dominicans were visible as a community around 1995, particularly in Buenos Aires. Nevertheless, the migrants had no precise information about the characteristics of the society to which they would travel, nor about the state of the job market at the time of their emigration. The community was unable to consolidate a visible Dominican network, which might have facilitated insertion into the labor market, or to create migrant associations that were integrated with other organized communities; both

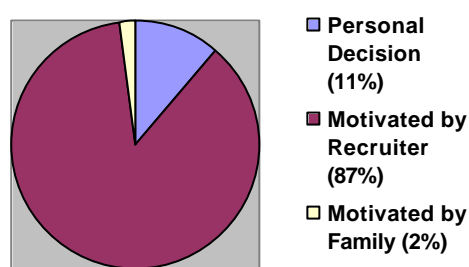
<sup>19</sup> Gina Gallardo, Tráfico de mujeres y explotación sexual en la agenda de República Dominicana, 1999.

<sup>20</sup> The convertibility law fixed the equivalence of peso and dólar : 1=1.

are important elements in relating to civil society and in creating government accountability in relation to migrant communities. These factors together increased the vulnerability of the Dominican community in Argentina.

For traffickers, a common strategy is to identify a potential victim, not because of her possibilities for insertion into the labor market, but rather because of the possession of property which could be held as collateral against the loan required to finance her trip. In this way, the recruiter becomes essential in the identification of women who are able to take out a loan, and to convince her of the advantages of migration and of resorting to his or her own services. The recruiters have a fundamental weight in a woman's decision to migrate (IMO, 2003).

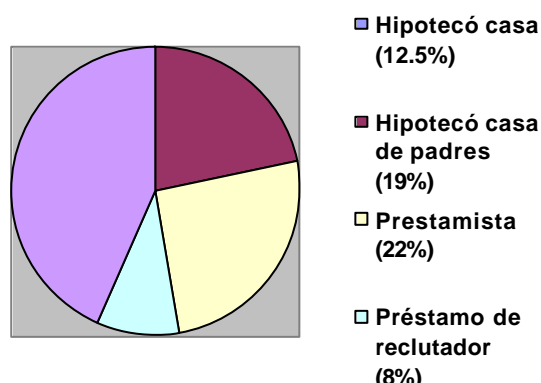
### Decision to Migrate



Source: Interviews OIM

The recruiter could be one or more than one person working in conjunction: one might establish initial contact with the victim, convincing her of the benefits of migration, while another is entrusted with the task of obtaining documents and loans. One of the principal characteristics of these recruiters is their mobility, as much in the Dominican Republic as in Argentina.

### Financing of Migration



Source: interviews OIM

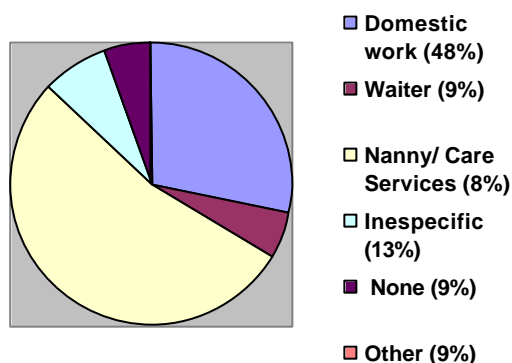
The recruiters take advantage of many factors that work in their favor: the low level of female literacy, women's distrust and misunderstanding of institutional and administrative organs and their lack of information from reliable networks (familial or

friendship) about obtaining documentation, the characteristics of the labor market, the cost of living in the country of destination, etc.

The migrants make the decision to travel under the premise of a job in Argentina; in the majority of cases, the women are convinced that the work offered is related to domestic service or in their own professions (for example, nursing). It is important to consider that the women being sexually exploited abroad hide the reality of their situations from their families, so that new migrants do not realize that the work they are destined for in Argentina is prostitution. The dispersion of migrants in both their countries of origin (as perpetrators travel to different locales to recruit them) and in their places of residence in Argentina, becomes an obstacle for the creation of networks and connections between them.

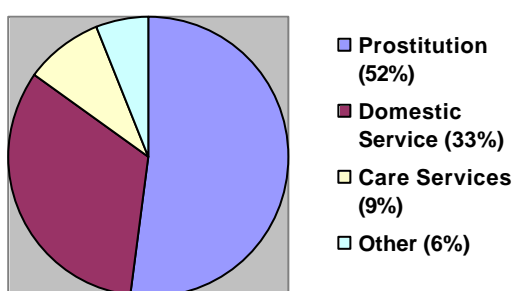
The jobs promised have no relation to the actual work done in destination countries. In general, migrants remain undocumented and in illegal situations, which increase their vulnerability.

### Work Promised in Argentina



Source: Interviews OIM

### Actual work in Argentina



Source: Interviews OIM.

### 3.3 The MERCOSUR Region

Historically, the MERCOSUR region had a migration system with its epicentre in Argentina. In the 1990's, with the opening and structural transformation of these economies, migration acquired new features: migration in general became more feminized while the absorption of migrated workers in the service sector increased, although in very precarious and overexploitative conditions. Argentina kept its role as a receptor country of populations from neighbouring countries, with a preponderance of migrant women<sup>21</sup>, especially from Bolivia and Paraguay, but also from other Latin-American countries.

During those years, thousands of women entered in the country. While Argentina was recovering from the 2001 crisis, it became again a frequent destination, because of the low level of state control, active trafficking networks, public agents, judges and police corruption chains. The U.S. Department of State 2004 report on trafficking in people<sup>22</sup>, highlights the LA countries with higher rates of recruitment of women and children aimed for the sex trade or forced work. While Argentina was positioned in the middle in terms of recruiting, it was one of the most important destinations of trafficked women (in particular from Paraguay, Bolivia and Brazil) not only to be settled within the country, but also as a temporary place in route to Europe, especially to Spain. In that report, it is also recognized that the Argentina's internal traffic is very important, particularly that of women who are moved from rural to urban areas.

The National Office of Migration of the Republic of Argentina estimates that between 1995 and 2002, between 12,000 and 15,000 Dominicans entered the country through Ezeiza International Airport. It is important to consider that only 16 % of those included in these statistics are male. Therefore, a majority of the migrant population is female. In this country there are more or less 850,000 migrants from neighboring countries (Bolivians, Chileans, Paraguayans and Uruguayan) registered in the National Census.

The Dominican population in Argentina was not necessarily an unemployed population in their country of origin. Generally, males would work in occupations requiring middle levels of qualification, while women did work requiring middle to low levels of qualification (IMO). The type of work done or the terms of contracts coincide with the gendered segregation of the labor market. Women without specific qualifications tend to work in the lowest skilled and most precarious jobs. Additionally, save some exceptional cases, these jobs neither comprise the first step in career advancement, nor serve to improve the worker's initial level of qualification (domestic service and independently contracted work are the most clear examples).

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<sup>21</sup> Among immigrants, 56% are women and 44% are men, what is equal to a migrated women rate of 1,28. In the case of Peru's immigrants, that rate is still more stressed, even though, it is shown a reversion since the 2001 crisis.

<sup>22</sup> After a CIA report calculated that 50,000 women had been illegally trafficked into the United States for the purpose of sexual exploitation, Congreso reacted with new legislation aimed at penalizing traffickers, protecting victims and preventing future criminal activity of this type. The Law for the Protection of Victims of Traffic that resulted from this action was instated in 2000. Subsequently, the U.S. Department of State has established a new office which employs experts in the control of this activity and creates mechanisms to combat it. (XXXI)

It is necessary to clarify that in the case of women, many were not unemployed but rather dissatisfied with their incomes and with the low expectations of Dominican society for women. Most of these women are between 20 and 40 years old.

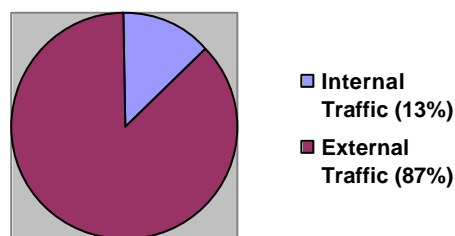
### **Paraguay: A Case Study**

Within the MERCOSUR region, the IMO sponsored an important study on the traffic of women in Paraguay, carried out by the New Moon Group in Spain (IMO, 2005). It is critical to note that in this country, gender and age oppression are accompanied by a class oppression suffered by a large percentage of the population living under the poverty line. This oppression must be understood broadly, not only as an economic disadvantage, but also as a deprivation of rights. “The difficulty in accessing the health care system, or in accessing information about sexual and reproductive rights, the absence of public policy, and a social budget that does not cover a third of the countries in the zone, serves to only deepen the poverty that generates economic deprivation” (IMO, 2005).

“All is because of the misery the country suffers. There is no solution nor will there be a solution if we continue with this government policy, a policy of hunger. The people have no other choice, (...) the people migrate because of necessity, there is no other thing.” (Informant from Pacu Cua, Encarnación, IMO, 2005).

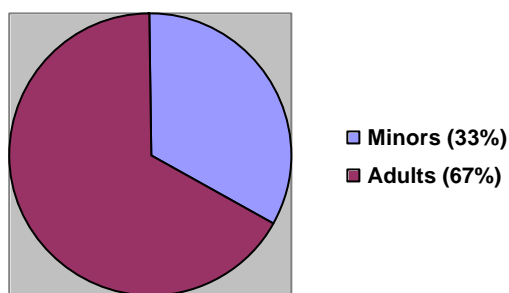
In many cases, the victims are affected by various processes of traffic. In general, the external traffic is preceded by internal traffic. It is important to note the proportion of internal traffic with respect to external traffic, because generally the first is made invisible through the media, government institutions, and also the communities affected. The internal traffic for the purpose of sexual exploitation exists and happens frequently and invisibly. This type of traffic is naturalized and also does not exist as a legal category in the Paraguayan penal code. Meanwhile, the public institutions, the media and society in general place the blame for traffic on the victims. “The fact that they are “voluntary” prostitutes is used to minimize the human rights violations and forget that, because of their age and their consent, the State and society are not excused from their role in protecting and reinstating rights.” (IMO, 2005)

### **Proportion of Internal and External Traffic in Paraguay**



Source: IMO, 2005

## Proportion of Victims of Traffic that are Adults and Minors in Paraguay



Source: IMO, 2005

This table shows the incidence of cases per year, and also the number of women and adolescents affected by the processes of traffic in Paraguay.

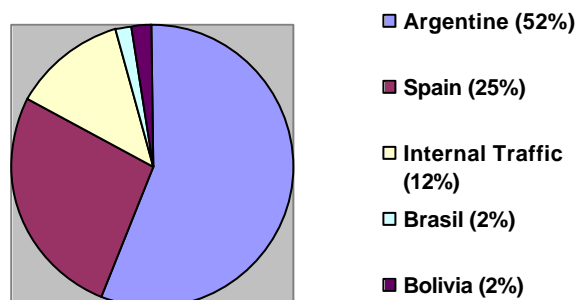
### Number of Cases, Women and Minors by Age per Year. 2000-2004

Year	Nº of Cases	Nº of Women	Minors victims	More than 18 years old	% of minors victims
2000	11	70	47	23	32
2001	6	16	0	16	100
2002	8	42	30	12	28,5
2003	29	109	72	37	50
2004	61	236	180	56	24
Total	115	473	329	144	38

Source: IMO, 2005

The following graphic shows the principal destinations. The small number of cases destined for Brazil indicates an important discrepancy between official counts and the actual incidence of traffic in border regions, in that people from that zone note a “constant flow of children and adolescents working in prostitution in Foz de Iguazu and other nearby zones. Likewise, the Triple Border is identified by the ILO as a large nucleus of sexual exploitation.” (IMO, 2005)

### Proportion of Women per Destination Country



Source: IMO, 2005

Although there is a heterogeneity in the destinations of traffic victims that includes distinct countries in Europe, Asia and South America as destinations in the traffic circuit, Argentina and Spain are the principals.

In Argentina, the principal destinations are the Capital City and Buenos Aires Province (58%). Within this province, one of the principal destinations is the city of La Plata, with 30 % of the cases. Other destinations which are also significant from a quantitative perspective are Santa Fe and Cordoba followed by Rio Negro and Catamarca. Those women that travel to Spain are principally concentrated in Castilla, La Mancha, and the Canary Islands, making up 34% of the cases and 65% of the women affected. (IMO, 2005).

#### Number of Cases, Women and Age per Country of Destination.

Country	Nº cases	Nº women	< 18 years old	> 18 years old	% of < 18 years
Argentine	62	259	90	62	40
Spain	32	169	6	4	55
Brazil	3	4	3	2	1
Bolivia	3	5	1	1	1
Internal	15	48	40	28	3
Others	3	10	5	3	1
Total	118	495	145	100	101

Source: IMO, 2005

#### Routes and Destinations:

Traffic networks select their victims based on certain characteristics, such as age, socio-economic status and physical appearance. However, Europe presents obstacles for the transit of minors so that the traffic of children and adolescents is principally directed toward neighboring countries because it is easier to avoid border controls. On the other hand, because physical appearance and socio-cultural factors are important for prostitution in Europe, there are instances where Argentina acts as a temporary training ground for those women who initially do not have the characteristics necessary to be trafficked to Europe.

“I heard that many of the girls that work in Argentina are offered the chance to travel to Spain where they can earn much more money, but they were not eager to go, first because of the distance and second because from Argentina, they can visit periodically their families, for these reasons they prefer to remain in Argentina.” (Informant Ita Paso, Encarnacion) (IMO, 2005).

On the other hand, the selection of the destinations is related to the characteristics of these countries: the similarity in the language and culture are important. Another advantage of Spain is that it is the world center for the sex industry, in terms of consumption and distribution, and there is no visa requirement for Paraguayans, so they can easily enter as tourists.

Some other principal destinations are Greece, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Switzerland, Finland, Canada and Japon.

It is necessary to clarify that particular routes of traffic are usually used to take women and adolescents to their final destinations. In an international context, where migratory restrictions for developed countries are each time more stringent and where migratory flows are also increasing, routes are dynamic and are designed with the objective of evading border controls. With respect to Paraguay, the routes for entry into neighboring countries are Route 2, which links Paraguay with Brazil, Route 1, which links Paraguay with Argentina, and Route Transchaco, that links Paraguay with Bolivia. The following table gives the principal international routes:

International Trafficking Routes (by plain)			
Origin	Transit	Temporary destination	Final destination
Asunción	San Pablo	Madrid	Palmas de G. Canarias
Asunción	San Pablo/ Paris	Madrid	
Asunción	San Pablo/ Paris	Bilbao	Arabian Countries
Asunción	San Pablo/ Lisboa	Madrid	
Asunción	San Pablo/ Milan	Milan	
Asunción	Buenos Aires	Madrid	
Asunción	San Pablo/ London	Madrid	
Asunción	Buenos Aires	Madrid	
Asunción	San Pablo	Madrid	

Source: IMO, 2005

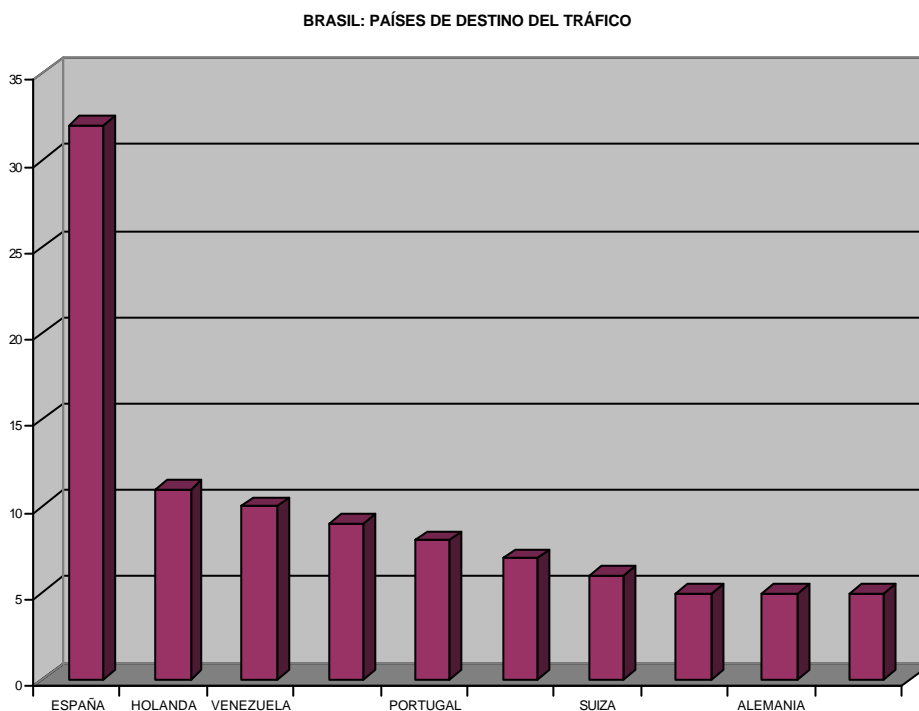
Paraguayan International Trafficking Routes (land ways)		
Origin	Temporary destination	Final Destination
Ciudad del este		Foz de Iguazú
Asunción		Sta. Cruz
Asunción		Perú
Ciudad del este		San Pablo
Asunción		Curitiva
Ciudad del este	Foz de Iguazú	Cascabel
Asunción		Porto Alegre
Asunción		La Paz
Pedro Juan Caballero	Bonito/ Campo Grande	San Pablo

Source: IMO, 2005

International Trafficking Routes Paraguay- Argentine (land ways)		
Origin	Temporary	Destination
Asunción		Buenos Aires
Asunción	Posadas-Buenos Aires	La Plata
Encarnación	Posadas-Buenos Aires	Córdoba
Encarnación	Posadas-Buenos Aires	Mar del Plata
Encarnación	Posadas-Buenos Aires	Bahía Blanca
Encarnación	Posadas-Buenos Aires	Dolores
Encarnación	Posadas	Mendoza
Encarnación	Posadas	Corrientes
Encarnación	Posadas	Sta. Fe
Encarnación	Posadas	Rosario
Asunción	Formosa	Bahía Blanca
Pedro Juan Caballero	Buenos Aires	San Martín
Santani	Buenos Aires	Punta Alta

Source: IMO, 2005

In the case of Brazil, with thirty-two identified routes, Spain is the most frequent destination, followed by Holland, Belgium (with ten routes) and Venezuela (eleven routes).



Source: Elías Carranza, Ronald Woodbridge<sup>23</sup>

In this point, it is important to consider the diversity in the destinations of Latin American victims is determined by the victims' profiles. Those that are destined for Europe usually have high levels of formal education, certain physical characteristics, are of a particular age and are from urban backgrounds, while those destined for Latin America usually have low levels of formal education and are from rural backgrounds.

<sup>23</sup> Elías Carranza, Ronald Woodbridge: "Trata de seres humanos especialmente, mujeres, niñas y niños." ILANUD, Presentación en la XII Sesión de la Comisión de las Naciones Unidas sobre Prevención del Delito y Justicia Penal, Viena, 2003

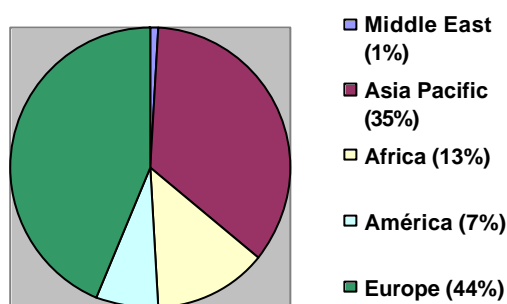
The migrants' professional qualifications are diverse, spanning from those with no education to those with university education.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. Research

Latin America is a region lacking in work around human trafficking (IMO, 2005), although, in general, studies have become more frequent and voluminous.

#### Regional distribution of studies on trafficking



Note: N=260 titles

Source: “Human trafficking bibliography”, IMO, Geneva.

“The Latin American and Caribbean regions are two of the most under-researched and under-funded regions in the world on trafficking in persons. The official data is extremely insufficient, and the available information on smuggling cases is scarce and does not provide much help to the researchers. Until very recently, governments have been reluctant to acknowledge the existence of trafficking, and in most cases the focus never moves beyond sexual exploitation. While this type of exploitation is extremely damaging to the mental and physical health of victims, and violates a number of human rights, there are other forms of trafficking for exploitation less visible but also severe: domestic servitude and labour exploitation” (IMO, 2005).

In light of this reality, it would be appropriate to take into account the following suggestions:

- To pay more attention to the need of researching case studies and collecting data of human trafficking. Universities, governments as well as international organizations should focus this theme as a priority for research<sup>24</sup>.
- To involve governmental and non-governmental organizations and agencies of the UN system in the building of an updated database.

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<sup>24</sup> It has to be said that in the recent past years efforts have increased, specially the IMO research in the region, but also ILO, UNFPA, UNIFEM, OAS, ECLAC.

- To promote international cooperation among countries to share information and common studies.
- To use action oriented approaches with studies that can facilitate prevention and assistance interventions.
- To make “baseline studies” that include conditions and factors that propitiate trafficking in exporting countries as well as the existence of markets for trafficking, networks, entertainment and sex industries in importing countries.
- To include a diversity of topics:
  - the dynamics of demand-supply in sex industry
  - internal trafficking
  - sex tourism
  - forced labor and domestic servitude.
- To study the connections between corruption and weak institutions and trafficking.

## **B. Public Policies**

“Governments and civil society must recognize the existence of trafficking in persons as a form of labour exploitation, more than just as the movement of migrants” (IMO, 2005). There is unequivocal evidence that neoliberal globalisation is exacerbating trafficking in Latin America. As such, policies and strategies against trafficking must take into account the complexity of the neoliberal context, rather than simply focusing one or another isolated cause. This perspective opens a broader view for public policies, which include legislation and governmental interventions.

The most frequent analysis of this theme is from the perspective of human rights violations. The focal point has been to sensitize political decision-makers and civil society in general and to promote practical action on the part of the government and social organizations to inhibit traffickers. In Latin American, the principal actions include widespread campaigns to raise consciousness around this issue. In the case of Colombia, prevention and assistance programs have developed, which provide support for victims during their return and reinsertion, as well as protection for them and their families and legal and psychological counselling.

The perspective of the conditions (of possibility, of facility and of opportunity) and the identification of principal actors and the dynamic of each of the links in the chain of value, widen the range of possible action, the efficiency of design, and the end results in policy. Research and coordinated action out of public and private organs are the keys to identifying the conditions and actors of traffic, and to therefore enable work against those conditions and actors. Efficiently directed action would permit the breaking of the chains and conditions that make traffic possible.

Some of the main recommendations in these areas are:

- **Legislation:**
  - To create adequate anti-trafficking legislation including the explicit definition of trafficking as a crime.

- To reinforce the existing laws against recruiters, traffickers and facilitators.
- **Governmental policies:**
    - To fortify public institutions at national and multilateral levels in order to ensure their position above the laws of the market and to strengthen their capacity to regulate liberalization of markets and financial flows.
    - To strengthen the role of Ministries of Labor, particularly labor inspectors, to identify situations of exploitation in a variety of workplaces.
    - To pay special attention to the authorization of work premises in entertainment areas.
    - To strengthen anticorruption policies at all levels
    - To reinforce migratory controls in borders and airports.
    - To promote orderly and legal migration.
    - To create institutions for help trafficked women to go back to their communities of origin
    - To provide assistance to victims, such as legal, social or health services, protection and places to be safe from traffickers.
    - To develop programs for national and local public agents in capacity building and awareness.
    - To design public campaigns to raise consciousness on this issue and its prevention.
    - To develop gender equality programs at local and national levels.
  - **NGO's actions:**
    - To develop training and prevention programs addressing young women and the community level in general.
    - To give assistance and shelter to the survival victims to help the reinsertion in their communities.
    - To promote local, national and international NGO networks to strengthen prevention and women's counselling.
    - To develop campaigns and training programs aimed at sensitizing the public to and raising consciousness around the problem of traffic.

## **ANEXO**

### **IMO Actions**

The IMO states their ultimate objective as an end to the trafficking of migrants and the protection of those that are already being trafficked. According to this organization, the achievement of these objectives depends on the adoption of a strategic perspective that considers certain questions. In the first place, the response to the traffic of persons should be global and integrated, in a mode that treats the problem of migration in general terms and that creates prevention programs with the goals of sensitizing the population to the problem of traffic and also fortifying institutions that could work against it.

According to the IMO, the prevention effort needs to focus on consciousness-raising campaigns that are directed towards vulnerable populations, as well as the clients of prostitutes and policy makers. According to this organization, the protection and assistance programs should be developed with a focus on human rights, the security and confidentiality of victims contemplating voluntary return, assistance for reintegration in the country of origin or assistance in maintaining residence in the destination country. This reintegration should include medical, psychological and legal assistance, and the guarantee of security and job orientation for victims.

With respect to institutional environment, the IMO understands the development of regional and subregional strategies as optimal, as they allow the problem to be addressed from a multilateral perspective and generate spaces where countries with similar problems can find solutions with regional applicability. The application of the programs should be done with the cooperation of other NGO's and international organizations.

In Latin America, the IMO has two twelve month programs that are being implemented in Colombia and one project in Argentina. The Argentine project aims to sensitize governmental authorities and non-governmental organizations, carrying out investigations that should increase knowledge of the phenomenon and elaborate practical operations for helping victims.

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Mercedes Assorati, Coordinadora del " Programa de Actualización para la Lucha contra la Trata de Personas", OIM, Argentina..

Eugenio Ambrossi, representante regional de la **OIM** para el Cono Sur de América Latina.