



# United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC)



Topic:

# The Vulnerability of Undocumented Immigrants Making Them Easy Targets for Traffickers Exploiting their Fear of Deportation

**Committee:** United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

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## **I. Quorum**

- Argentina
- Australia
- Bangladesh
- Brazil
- Canada
- Colombia
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Honduras
- India
- Italia
- Malaysia
- Mexico
- Morocco
- Nicaragua
- Pakistan
- Philippines
- South Africa
- Spain
- Thailand
- Turkey
- United Kingdom
- United States
- Vietnam

## **II. Committee Background**

The United Nations International Drug Control Program and the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention combined to form UNODC in 1997. The Secretary-General of the UN formed it to create a spot in the organization to focus and expand its capacity to manage and reach a conclusion in the interrelated concerns of drug control, crime, and international terrorism in all its forms. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe are among the 11 nations that make up UNODC



Southern Africa, which was established in the same year. The community's ongoing support is necessary to fund UNODC's programs.

The dangers posed by the power of illicit trafficking and associated criminal activities to public health, governance, security, and economic growth necessitate a concerted international response that avoids that growth and keeps decreasing the power those bands have on drugs and crimes in general. The mission of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is to assist member nations in addressing the complex issues of international terrorism, drug control, and crime.

UNODC mainly aims to increase international action against the production, trafficking, and use of illicit drugs, as well as drug-related crime. To accomplish these goals, UNODC has started several projects, such as monitoring illicit crops, developing alternatives for the cultivation of illegal drugs, and implementing money laundering prevention programs. As well as aims to educate people worldwide about the risks associated with drug usage. Successful campaigns about drug prevention have been promoted by UNODC in the important contexts of the workplace, the community, and the criminal justice and education systems. As a result of this effort, customized drug prevention packages were developed and successfully piloted to take care of all the drug smuggling and crime issues in the main nations of this organization in 2009 and 2010.

### **III. History of Topic**

In 1999, two years after the foundation of the committee, they started collaborating with the Republic of Iran; for six years, they had an office there and helped out the country with the problems of corruption, drugs,



and criminals. After that, they created the program "NOROUZ." Their goal is mostly to emphasize drugs and to minimize the effect they generate in the country. In the consecutive years, the UNODC has effectively accomplished the planned objectives of improving the quality and quantity of preventive efforts in the country, advocating for a lower level of drug demand, empowering non-governmental organizations, and creating national and regional cooperation between 2005 and 2010. Effective operations have been conducted, and a vast network of crucial alliances has been established.

Due to the great number of undocumented people in countries like the US and many European and Midwest countries, smugglers and drug dealers have found a gap of opportunity in offering these people the job of trafficking in exchange for what they most need, which is money. They found it easy to do it this way, and the UNODC makes the protection for them to control the trafficking not only of drugs but also of the undocumented people that travel on those jobs. This creates a problem for the government in two specific ways: drug dealing and usage of these, making them highly scattered around the country and reaching more people. Also affects undocumented people in excess due to the more and more people getting there with the opportunity of finding the way into a life.

On many of these occasions, traffickers are only trying to get benefits to these people by using them to smuggle in the drug in the places they need it. These persons, after being used many times, are tricked, and they never

get anything in exchange on many occasions; they keep only using them, giving them a pretty miserable life and abusing them. The UNODC is trying to keep up with this, and what they want to prevent is for these people to fall into the temptation of the smugglers by offering a better choice of life. Many people in this situation are frightened to get deported to their country and find the easiest way to find a life by getting into drug jobs and trafficking, getting themselves into bigger problems.



Even though in some cases it results good for the undocumented people and they get decent money for the job, they still live with the worries of getting caught as illegal immigrants, and added to that, they also have the worries of getting caught smuggling drugs, which is a double problem, and many people never get out of this situation. This, unfortunately, has been going on for many, many years, and it has had highs and lows, but the smuggling and trafficking of people to do this job is always there. This is where the UNODC enters and does its job.

#### **IV. Topic Information**

Day-to-day campaigns are created to combat this problem, like the one Brazil created in 2023 and is still going on since Brazil is one country where the problem has been going on for decades and not only on human trafficking but also on drug trafficking and abuse of immigrants to traffic. Even though the authorities have had trouble making this possible, the plan consists of addressing the issue on a municipal level and solving the issue little by little. But many of the abused are located outside, like gold miners, of whom 40% are meant to be forced and illegal immigrants.


On some of the most recent updates on this topic and goal, we have that the creation of four specialized anti-trafficking units to stop, detect, and combat human trafficking was announced by the Federal Prosecutor's Office of Brazil on July 31, 2024. The new groups of federal prosecutors will supervise investigations and bring cases related to trafficking in different parts of the nation. To combat trafficking on a global scale and destroy transnational criminal organizations, the units are also anticipated to assist in the formation of Joint Investigation Teams with other nations.



Recently, in the previous months (September and October), there were some operations to rescue immigrants from being trafficked to other countries and used for illegal work. UNODC has in mind that they are searching for a better life, and they bring help to those people who have been used and exploited. On these previous operations, they worked in 116 countries, and in total, they identified more than 17,000 irregular immigrants. Of course, the United States was one of the more affected countries, where more of the immigrants were caught. The problem is that if the smugglers get caught, they are not only going to get deported; they are also going to have criminal consequences.

Much of this trafficking of people to the new country and the new jobs comes from the main leaders, who are the ones that smuggle the people into the country and the ones in charge of all the jobs. The persons who get the people into the country also get charged, and many of them get caught with the undocumented immigrants. Many of these people accumulate different charges with their desperation of getting money and a life; they do whatever it takes. The harsh reality is that many of these cases end in the worst way, and many people end with success.

All of this is not possible only by the UNODC; many other organizations help nationally or internationally, like the International Organization for Migration (IOM) or nationally, like the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Also, the UNHCR has helped with some aspects of this problem with the in-defense victims.






## V. Current Issues

**India:** This is the country with the most undocumented and outside migrants being illegally located in the country; in consequence, it is one of the countries with the most trafficking in the world. Mostly, the ones who perform these jobs are poor people and immigrants who do not have another choice to maintain their lives. Most of these people leave everything behind to obtain a better life and leave all their families in their past countries to bring them joy after work. The reality of this is that after getting involved in it many times, they can not leave it, and their conditions and economic situation neither grow, and their family situation gets worse.

**U.S:** The United States is one of the countries with the most undocumented immigrants. They do not only experience drug trafficking mainly by organizations, who contract with undocumented migrants who fear being returned to their country. Upon that, they also receive many of the drugs that come from the south of the continent, making it one of the countries with the highest consumption. Due to this fact, many of the undocumented immigrants think of this business as a profitable one, and the gangs take advantage of it and get those people into worse situations.

This makes this country is one of the ones who takes advantage of the vulnerability of the immigrants and take advantage of their fear to make money to them and then offered them a very poor life, at the end they do not get anything on change and their lives keep getting into problems due to their undocumented instability and to the possibility of being deported in any moment.







**Malaysia:** This country does not only use the migrants to traffic drugs; they use them to illegally traffic animals and fuel, and they use the migrants in intensive work in very poor conditions. Most of the undocumented migrants came from the countries of Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand, which are their neighbors.

Some of these people suffer this because these criminal groups force them to get involved in drug trafficking, and they get treated badly, not getting paid and getting abused by all the groups. This makes their life hard, and after getting involved in this drug issue, their world keeps getting harder and harder. This happens because due to their fear of deportation they will do anything that they can to stay there.

## **VI. UN Actions**

UNODC has a plan to address this situation by mainly eradicating extreme poverty and hunger in the countries with the most migrants and where more people get out of the country; this helps by making better conditions in the community and less need for people to get out. Education and reduction of the violence in these countries is fundamental to get a better quality and get for the citizens to stop getting out of the country. With this plan, the numbers of undocumented immigrants in various of the most habited countries. These problems are hard to attend to because there are no officers in charge of this in every country.

The UNODC is also in charge of raising the people who are smug and for the emigrants to be conscious of not making bad decisions and being careful of all the gangs that are out there searching for people to take advantage of them. The mission of this is to have migration offices and reduce the number of people who are illegally in a country and protect them from falling into the drug trafficking problem. The UN is searching for fairness



and a better life on both sides of the countries and to punish the ones that have taken advantage of those people.

Regardless of their immigration status, the UNODC prioritizes the needs of trafficking victims and stresses treating them with dignity. To aid in their recovery from trauma, victims receive prompt assistance, such as secure housing, medical attention, and psychological counseling. Legal safeguards that guarantee that victims are not punished for crimes committed under duress include non-punishment policies and temporary residency permits. To assist survivors in rebuilding their lives and lessening their susceptibility to re-exploitation, empowerment programs provide education, career training, and employment opportunities. Also, reintegration initiatives, such as social support services and family reunification, help victims successfully reintegrate into society.

UNODC uses careful research and detailed data to fight trafficking. Global and regional studies, like the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, show that undocumented migrants are particularly vulnerable to trafficking. The organization works to standardize data collection methods worldwide and foster collaboration through information-sharing networks. Research shows that poverty and restrictive policies make undocumented migrants vulnerable and gives detailed case studies to help improve strategies. These findings inform evidence-based recommendations to governments, ensuring policies are targeted and effective, while ongoing evaluations allow for continuous improvement in fighting trafficking.






## **VII. Conclusion**

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was established in 1997 to address the interconnected issues of drug control, crime, and international terrorism. With a focus on promoting international cooperation, UNODC implements programs to combat drug trafficking, human trafficking, and related crimes while also educating communities about the risks associated with drug use. Initiatives include monitoring illicit crops, creating alternatives to illegal drug cultivation, and preventing money laundering. The organization works globally, including in regions like Southern Africa and Brazil, to support vulnerable populations, particularly undocumented migrants, who are often exploited for smuggling drugs and other illegal activities.

UNODC prioritizes empowering victims of trafficking through legal protection, medical aid, psychological counseling, and educational opportunities. The organization collaborates with governments and other international bodies to address the root causes of trafficking, such as poverty and restrictive migration policies, while promoting fair treatment for victims. By conducting detailed research and publishing data-driven reports, UNODC aims to guide effective policy-making and strengthen.

## **VIII. Guiding Questions**

1. What historical factors have led to the rise in drug trafficking and human trafficking, particularly in regions like South America, Southeast Asia, and the United States?
  2. How have migration policies and the economic conditions in countries of origin contributed to the vulnerability of undocumented migrants to exploitation by traffickers?
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3. How does the exploitation of undocumented migrants in drug and human trafficking impact local communities and economies in destination countries?
4. In what ways do drug and human trafficking networks exploit vulnerable populations, and how does this affect their long-term prospects for recovery and reintegration into society?
5. What innovative strategies can be implemented to raise awareness among potential trafficking victims about the risks they face, and how can these strategies be tailored to specific cultural and socio-economic contexts



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