

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: IT HAPPENS IN THE LAURENTIANS, TOO

SUMMARY SHEET

Research Team

Cégep de Saint-Jérôme

Édith de la Sablonnière (M.Sc.)
Marie-Josée Morin (M. Ps.)
Roxana Staiculescu (Ph.D.)
Éloïse Gravel (student)
Loukina Lapalme (student)

Le Phare des Affranchies (Beacon of the Freed)

Nathalie Khlát (LL.B.)
Chloé Gilbert-Vanasse (M.A.)



WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking means: “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 [...] of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.¹”

Human trafficking can take **various forms**, such as sexual exploitation, labour exploitation, forced begging, domestic servitude, or organ removal.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

General objective: To document the reality of human trafficking in the Laurentians.

Specific objectives:

1. To document the profile of the victims
2. To explore the needs of victims
3. To determine the level of awareness of the issue
4. To examine the services that are both offered and absent in relation to trajectories of services

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study targeted individuals working in various organizations likely to come into contact with a victim of trafficking **who resides in or was exploited in the Laurentians.**

- The participants came from organizations across the eight territories of the Laurentians.
- A total of 185 people completed an **online questionnaire**, and seven of them participated in **group interviews**.
- **Quantitative and qualitative analyses** were performed.

RESEARCH RESULTS

PROFILE OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IN THE LAURENTIANS

- **53** participants indicated that they had been in contact with one or more victims who had been exploited in or resided in the Laurentians.
- **315** victims of trafficking were identified* and **80** cases of trafficking are suspected.
- Human trafficking in the Laurentians **mainly involves women (64.8%) and minor girls (30.8%)**.
- The most highly reported form of human trafficking is sexual exploitation.
- The victims are primarily Canadian citizens who live in the region, and 62.2% of them were exploited in the Laurentians.

*A victim may be counted more than once, as they may use multiple services according to their various needs.

NEEDS OF VICTIMS AND SERVICES OFFERED

Main needs*: mental health care and psychosocial support (81.1% of participants), basic needs (43.4%), socio-legal support (43.4%), emergency shelter (39.6%).

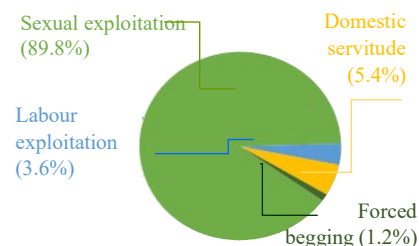
Main services: assistance and intervention (75.0%), awareness and prevention (34.6%), socio-legal support (30.8%), crisis intervention (26.9%).

*The participants identified the needs, but the victims themselves were still those most able to determine them.

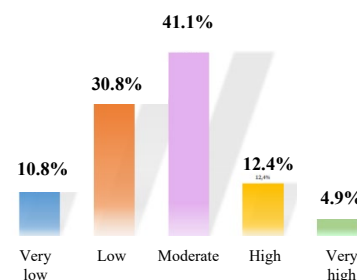
PERCEIVED LEVEL OF PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT TRAFFICKING

- Almost 42% of participants consider their level of knowledge to be low or very low.
- Almost **half (48.0%)** of people likely to come into contact with a victim of trafficking say **they have not received any training**, awareness-raising workshops, or courses on human trafficking.

Types of trafficking



Breakdown of participants according to their perceived level of knowledge about trafficking



CONCEPTUALIZING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- When participants were asked to write a definition of trafficking based on their personal knowledge, almost **25% did not mention the notion of exploitation**.
- Only a third reported more subtle means of gaining and sustaining control over victims (deception, fraud, abuse of authority and emotional abuse).

LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE IN RECOGNIZING A VICTIM

- **Almost 50%** of participants felt that they had little or no confidence in identifying a victim of trafficking.
- Over half of **psychosocial or healthcare workers** are in this situation.

ISSUES RAISED THAT AFFECT THE TRAJECTORIES OF SERVICES

Participants raised the issue of not having enough:

- knowledge of the phenomenon of trafficking;
- knowledge of resources available or of specialized services in the area of trafficking;
- time to, among other things, assess the victim's needs in depth or refer her to other services.

The victim's entry into their trajectories of services:

- **Identification problems:** The victim does not identify as such, or the social worker does not recognize the trafficking situation.
- **Intervention problems:** Many participants feel caught off guard when a victim of trafficking asks for help.
- **Reference problems:** Over 40% of participants said they didn't know what reference to turn to if they had concerns, or preferred not to answer the question.

Consultation and collaboration

Participants mentioned the need to improve consultation and collaboration mechanisms. They criticized the cumbersome, rigid bureaucracy and the waiting times in the current referral process.

Meeting the victim's main needs

- Participants highlighted that each victim's **trajectory of services** is **unique, non-linear** and involves some **back and forth** use of support resources.
- Some of them were concerned that it proved **difficult to meet the needs of some victims**, such as those who speak a language other than French or who are illegal immigrants.

Main elements present in the definition of human trafficking by participants

Purposes : 76.7%	Types of exploitation (e.g. sexual, for labour purposes, domestic servitude)
Means: 62.3%	To lure or keep the victim in a trafficking situation (e.g. abduction, physical abuse, threats)
Acts: 21.6%	Typical of human trafficking (e.g. recruitment, transportation, transfer)

These definitions were compared to the main definitions of trafficking, including that of the Palermo Protocol.

"A trajectory of services allows for optimal coordination of services and systematic client follow-up. [...] The trajectories of services [...] identify the most effective and efficient route for people to get quick access to the services they need in a coordinated fashion while ensuring a seamless passage between the different levels of services and the various organizations."²

The goal of consultation and collaboration between the different organizations is to ensure effective follow-up for the victim over time.

A FEW RECOMMENDATIONS

Elected officials and government officials

- Set up awareness-raising campaigns in collaboration with organizations that specialize in issues related to human trafficking.
- Provide the funds necessary to equip the resources in the region, allowing them to increase their capacity to rapidly accommodate victims of trafficking.

Managers

- Offer basic training adapted to the realities of the different workplaces.
- Promote the establishment of resource people within the organizations most affected by the issue.
- Support existing multi-sectoral collaboration initiatives, and participate in them where appropriate.

People likely to work with or provide assistance to a victim

- Commit to ongoing training, enabling them to develop a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of human trafficking.
- Ensure that you are aware of the resources specializing in trafficking and refer victims of trafficking to them, if needed.

Resources: To contact the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline: 1-833-900-1010 or <https://www.canadianhumantraffickinghotline.ca/>

To visit the website of Le Phare des Affranchies (Beacon of the Freed), and read the full research report: <https://www.affranchies.ca/>

Bibliography: ¹United Nations. (2000). *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*.

²Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport et Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux. (2013). *Two Networks, One Objective: The Development of Youth. Government of Quebec*. http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/education/adaptation-scolaire-services-comp/Entente_MSSS_MELS_cadre_EN.pdf