

*Trafficking in human beings (THB) is an extremely serious offence that is often committed with the broader framework of organized crime. It constitutes a grave violation of human rights and dignity. THB can be defined as the exploitation of one trafficked person through distinct forms of exploitation: sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.*

*Assessing the true magnitude of a global phenomenon such as THB is extremely difficult as it is an underground crime associated with the informal economy. The available statistics estimate that around 40 million people (International Labour Organization, 2017) are trapped in modern forms of slavery. More than 500 different trafficking flows were detected and people from 137 nationalities were identified as victims. Regarding THB for sexual exploitation, 96% of the victims are women or girls.*

*The gravity of this kind of exploitation derives from the ways in which the lives and bodies of women and girls are abused. It provokes severe harm and put at risk their physical and psychological health. Even though there is currently little knowledge on the consequences of THB on the victims' health, and less even on the psychological impact it has on their mental health, it is known that victims suffer from serious health problems resulting from violent situations and from the trafficking and exploitation conditions they have lived.*

*All studies show that the prevalence of problems related to physical, mental and sexual health is very high among women who have been trafficked and sexually exploited. However, it remains necessary to keep carrying out in-depth analysis and studies on this matter.*

*This article seeks to provide an approach and a review of the studies that already exist on the health impact (and especially the mental health impact) of THB for sexual exploitation on trafficked women to highlight the resulting damage of this extreme form of human rights violation.*