

Modern Slavery & Exploitation at Sea

EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS AT SEA (EHRAS) COURSE
UNIVERSITY OF MILANO-BICOCCA EU ERASMUS+ JEAN MONNET SCHEME

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MILAN



Core Principle:
Human rights apply at sea, as
they do on land.

Ghost Fleet



Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNwoqLB_wKs

Modern Slavery: Civil Society work

“It takes a village”

- **Change:** Achieved through likeminded groups covering environmental, ecological, labour and human rights perspectives.
- **Lobbying.** Unified and collective globally-focused advocacy and related lobbying activities.
- **Strategic.** Policy and legislative focus is only one aspect.
- **Front-line.** Emerging focus on worker voice and worker engagement.
- **Communications.** Web, national and international media and social media for awareness raising and maintaining the narrative.
- **But** – many organisations in competition for limited funding resources and profile.

Modern Slavery

40 million people are estimated to be trapped in modern slavery worldwide:

- 1 in 4 of them are children.
- Almost three quarters (71%) are women and girls.



UK Definition

Modern slavery is defined as the recruitment, movement, harboring or receiving of children, women or men through the use of force, coercion, abuse of vulnerability, deception or other means for the purpose of exploitation.

Signs of Modern Slavery

- Appear to be under the control of someone else and are reluctant to interact with others.
- Do not have personal identification on them.
- Have few personal belongings, wear the same clothes every day, or wear unsuitable clothes for work.
- May not be able to move around freely.

Modern Slavery: Most Common Forms

Human trafficking. The use of violence, threats or coercion to transport, recruit or harbour people in order to exploit them for purposes such as forced prostitution, labour, criminality, marriage or organ removal.

Forced labour. Any work or services people are forced to do against their will under threat of punishment.

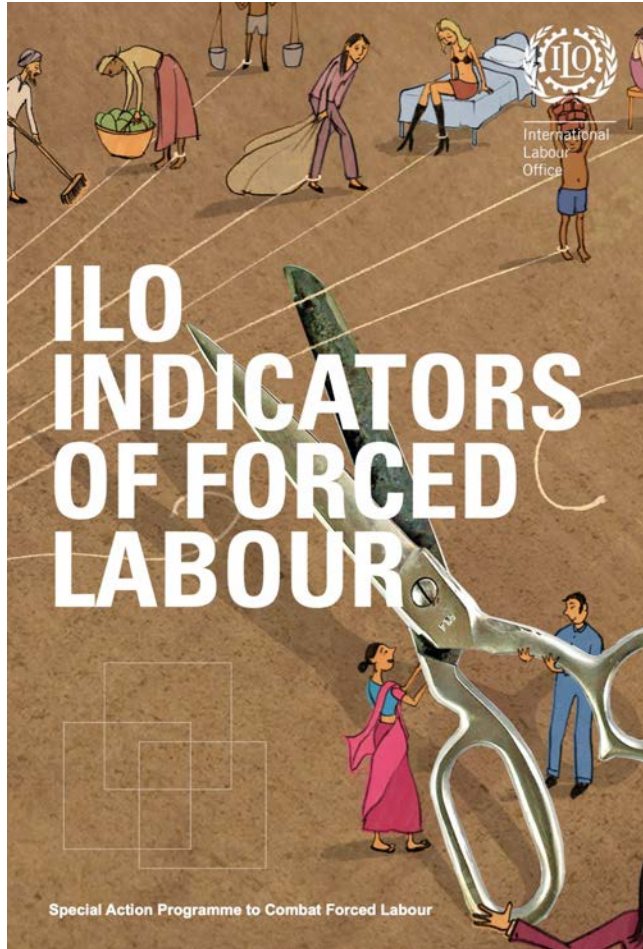
Debt bondage/bonded labour. The world's most widespread form of slavery. People trapped in poverty borrow money and are forced to work to pay off the debt, losing control over both their employment conditions and the debt.

Descent-based slavery. Most traditional form, where people are treated as property, and their "slave" status was passed down the maternal line.

Slavery of children. When a child is exploited for someone else's gain. This can include child trafficking, child soldiers, child marriage and child domestic slavery.

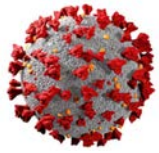
Forced and early marriage. When someone is married against their will and cannot leave. Most child marriages can be considered slavery.

ILO Forced Labour Indicators



1. Abuse of vulnerability
2. Deception
3. Restriction of movement
4. Isolation
5. Physical and sexual violence
6. Intimidation and threats
7. Retention of identity documents
8. Withholding of wages
9. Debt bondage
10. Abusive working and living conditions
11. Excessive overtime

Link: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_203832.pdf

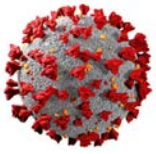


2020 - 2022

COVID-19

Seafarers, Forced Labour & Slavery

At the start of the 2020 pandemic the International Chamber of Shipping estimated that there were over 400,000 seafarers trapped working onboard vessels worldwide



2020 - 2022



“It is a humanitarian issue [...] It is a safety issue [...] It is also an economic issue which could slow or stop trade and hinder economic recovery. Governments must act now.”

Guy Ryder, ILO Director-General

14 September 2020

A humanitarian crisis at sea: all United Nations Member States must resolve the crew change crisis

More calls for Governments to recognize seafarers as keyworkers amidst humanitarian crisis

News: UN agencies urge member states to resolve the humanitarian crew change crisis

18 September 2020

UN agencies and programmes involved in the maritime sector, human rights, trade, travel and transportation have called on all UN Member States, through a joint statement, to take urgent action to resolve the humanitarian crew change crisis faced by the world's seafarers.

Calling it a humanitarian crisis, the Joint Statement issued by IMO, ILO and ITF amongst other UN agencies calls on all Governments to immediately recognize seafarers as “key workers”, and to take swift and effective action to eliminate obstacles for crew changes and ensuring maritime safety and facilitation of economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

General risks of Modern Slavery faced by Seafarers

- **Abandonment:** ILO Database. 703 abandonments in 20 years. 2023 - 142 cases -a new record.
- **Wages withheld:** Consequences of indentured servitude & debt bondage.
- **Seaman's Record Books withheld:** Failure to gain new employment.
- **Vindictive behavior** by owners, manning agents and flag States.

International Labour Organization

SECTOR Database on reported incidents of abandonment of seafarers

Home

Abandonment of Seafarers database

List of all entries - sorted by ship name

AG Bliss[Inactive]
Flag: Panama; Abandoned: 25 November 2009; Notified: 24 February 2010; Port of abandonment: Dakar, Senegal; Reported by: ITF

AG Mars
Flag: Liberia; Abandoned: 16 August 2021; Notified: 26 August 2021; Port of abandonment: Karachi, Pakistan; Reported by: ITF

AQ 01[resolved]
Flag: United Arab Emirates; Abandoned: February 2017; Notified: 4 January 2019; Port of abandonment: Khorfakkan Port, Sharjah, UAE; Reported by: International Chamber of Shipping

ARYBBAS[resolved]
Flag: Liberia; Abandoned: 15 September 2019; Notified: 19 November 2019; Port of abandonment: Port of Djibouti; Reported by: Govt. of Greece

Abdallah[resolved]
Flag: Palau; Port of abandonment: Sharjah OPL anchorage; Reported by: Other

Abdul Razag[resolved]
Flag: United Arab Emirates; Port of abandonment: Sharjah OPL Anchorage; Reported by: Other

Abo Alyssa[disputed]
Flag: Togo; Abandoned: 26 March 2019; Notified: 17 June 2019; Port of abandonment: Memru, Turkey; Reported by: ITF

Adriatica 1[disputed]
Flag: Cyprus; Abandoned: 20 September 2013; Notified: 20 September 2013; Port of abandonment: Porto Empedocle, Sicily, Italy; Reported by: ITF

HUMAN RIGHTS AT SEA

Human Rights at Sea Case Study

Seafarers' Challenges During The COVID-19 Pandemic

The Case of the Crew of MV GULF SKY

www.humanrightsatsea.org



Video Testimony: Master defends COVID-19 Command Decisions for protecting Crew

3rd September 2020 | Abuse, COVID-19, COVID19, Flag State, Harassment, Human Rights, Press Release, Republic of the Marshall Islands

London, UK. Former Master of the MV Tomini Destiny, Captain Rajnish Samuel Shah, has authorised the release by Human Rights at Sea of his personal testimony in defence of his command decisions made during the COVID-19 pandemic for...



RMI Flagged Crew allegedly threatened by Owners for voicing concerns of COVID-19 exposure

1st April 2020 | COVID19, Crew, Disciplinary Action, Press Release, safety, Seafarers, Threats, Welfare

London, UK. "We, the full complement of the Tomini Destiny are under enormous pressure, fatigue and mental stress due to owners and charterers insisting to perform shipboard operations under duress." Human Rights at Sea has been passed...



Four years at sea, now just metres from shore: 'living hell' of stranded UAE ship

Five seafarers are stuck in limbo on a beached tanker after a long, terrifying ordeal of abandonment



▲ The MT Iba tanker beached in Umm Al Quwain. Photograph: Reuters

3346

Views

Seafarer Commits Suicide Aboard Asphalt Tanker off UAE



Sea Princess (file image courtesy Global Tankers Pvt)

BY THE MARITIME EXECUTIVE 01-31-2021 03:35:00

Slavery: Fisheries - Thailand 2014


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Modern-day slavery in focus
Slavery


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About this content
Kate Hodal and Chris Kelly
Tue 10 Jun 2014 12.05 BST


   76

Trafficked into slavery on Thai trawlers to catch food for prawns



Modern-day slavery in focus
Employment

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Burmese migrant workers leave the port at Mahachai after unloading their catch Photograph: Chris Kelly/theguardian.com
Photograph: Chris Kelly/theguardian.com

This article is more than 6 years old

Slavery and trafficking continue in Thai fishing industry, claim activists

Environmental Justice Foundation says abuses in Thai seafood sector persist despite government insistence that new legal measures are working



US Trafficking in Persons Reports



The screenshot shows the top portion of the U.S. Department of State website. At the top left is the Department of State seal and the text "U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE". To the right are navigation menus for "POLICY ISSUES", "COUNTRIES & AREAS", "BUREAUS & OFFICES", and "ABOUT", along with a search icon. Below the navigation is a breadcrumb trail: "Home > Releases – Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons > Trafficking in Persons Report". The main heading is "Trafficking in Persons Report" with three stars above it. A paragraph below explains that the TIP Report is the U.S. Government's principal diplomatic tool to engage foreign governments on human trafficking. At the bottom of the screenshot, a white box highlights a featured report: "7 items" (with "7" in a large font and "items" in italics), "REPORT", "2023 Trafficking in Persons Report", and "JUNE 15, 2023".

Link: <https://www.state.gov/trafficking-in-persons-report>

Justice for Fishers

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ENDING EXPLOITATION RAISING STANDARDS

Without enforceable rights in the workplace and the strength that comes from being represented by a union, labour rights violations and the mistreatment of fishers will continue. The ITF has committed to campaign to improve the wages, working conditions and labour rights of all fishers irrespective of where they come from or what type of boat that they work on.

Learn More

Our Campaigns

BRIEFING PAPER

A ONE WAY TICKET TO LABOUR EXPLOITATION

HOW TRANSIT VISA LOOPHOLES ARE
BEING USED TO EXPLOIT MIGRANT
FISHERS ON UK FISHING VESSELS

ITF

Links: <https://justiceforfishers.org>

<https://www.itfglobal.org/en/reports-publications/one-way-ticket-labour-exploitation>

NGO: ILRF Seafood Working Group

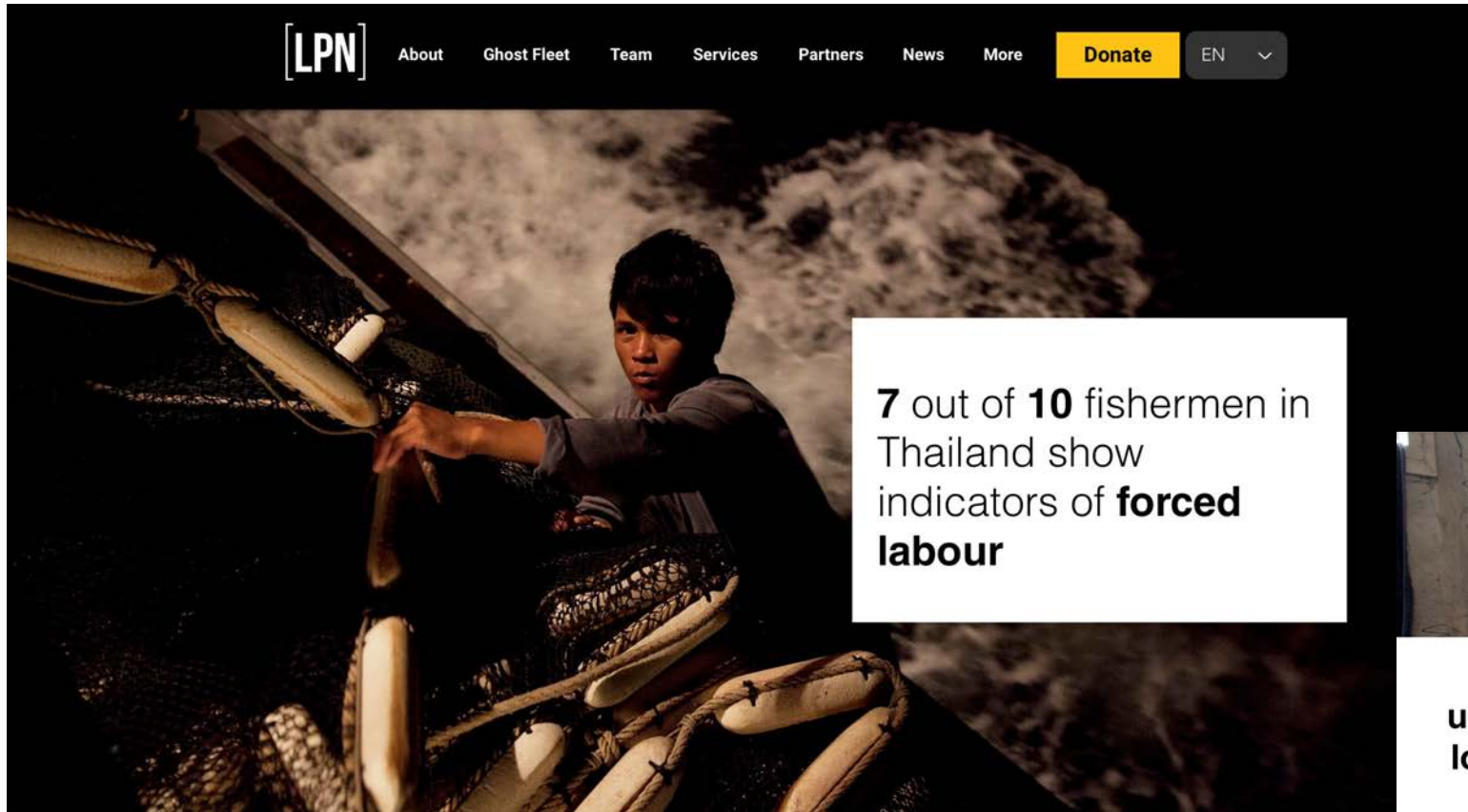


The screenshot shows the ILRF (International Labor Rights Forum) website. At the top, there is a green and black header with the ILRF logo and the text "INTERNATIONAL LABOR RIGHTS FORUM". Below this, a grey navigation bar contains the text "OUR WORK" and "ACTION CENTER". The main content area features the title "The Seafood Working Group" in a large, dark serif font. Below the title is a photograph of several workers in a seafood processing facility, wearing aprons and gloves, working with large quantities of fish in blue and green tubs.

- **Educate, engage, and hold governments and corporations accountable** for ensuring internationally-recognized labor standards and to adopt and progressively implement new standards where there are gaps.
- **Promote advocacy agendas** that are grounded in the priorities of workers, trade unions and worker-led organizations on the frontlines.
- **Foster cooperation** to find solutions to labor, social, and environmental issues in the seafood industry through consensus-building, collaboration and partnership.
- **Promote best practices to end illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and overfishing**, and ensure good governance of oceans and protection of oceans and marine life.

Link: <https://laborrights.org/action-center/seafood-working-group>

NGO: LPN Foundation (Thailand)



7 out of 10 fishermen in Thailand show indicators of **forced labour**



LPN combines **urgent rescues with long term advocacy**

Link: <https://www.lpnfoundation.org>

TRIGGER WARNING

Slavery: Treatment of Migrants and Refugees



Link: <https://vimeo.com/167751473>



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