



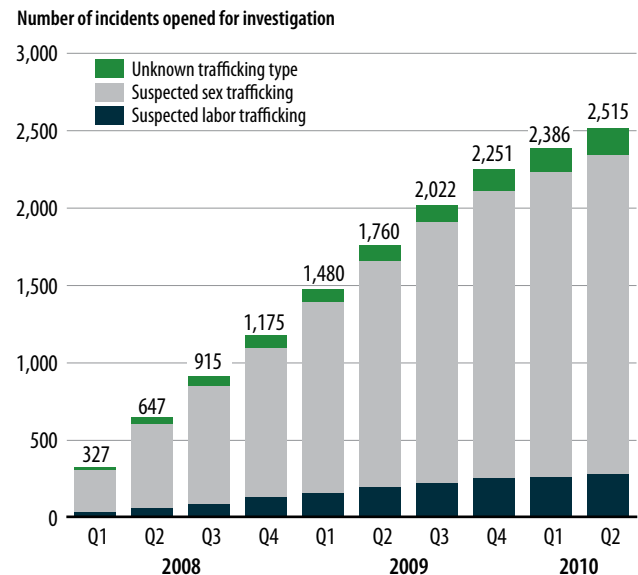
# Characteristics of Suspected Human Trafficking Incidents, 2008-2010

by Duren Banks and Tracey Kyckelhahn, *BJS Statisticians*

Federally funded human trafficking task forces opened 2,515 suspected incidents of human trafficking for investigation between January 2008 and June 2010 (figure 1). Most suspected incidents of human trafficking were classified as sex trafficking (82%), including more than 1,200 incidents with allegations of adult sex trafficking and more than 1,000 incidents with allegations of prostitution or sexual exploitation of a child. Eleven percent of the suspected incidents opened for investigation were classified as labor trafficking, and 7% had an unknown trafficking type.

Data in this report are from the Human Trafficking Reporting System (HTRS), which was designed to measure the performance of federally funded task forces. HTRS is currently the only system that captures information on human trafficking investigations conducted by state and local law enforcement agencies in the United States. This report is the second in a Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) series about the characteristics of human trafficking investigations, suspects, and victims. It reports about case outcomes, including suspect arrests and the visa status of confirmed victims, and describes the characteristics of incidents entered into the HTRS prospectively by the task forces beginning in 2008. The *Methodology* details the HTRS data collection procedures and data quality issues.

**FIGURE 1**  
Cumulative number of incidents of human trafficking between January 2008 and June 2010, by suspected trafficking type and reported investigation start date



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Federally funded task forces opened 2,515 suspected incidents of human trafficking for investigation between January 2008 and June 2010.
- About 8 in 10 of the suspected incidents of human trafficking were classified as sex trafficking, and about 1 in 10 incidents were classified as labor trafficking.
- Federal agencies were more likely to lead labor trafficking investigations (29%) than sex trafficking investigations (7%).
- Among the 389 incidents confirmed to be human trafficking by high data quality task forces—
  - There were 488 suspects and 527 victims.
  - More than half (62%) of the confirmed labor trafficking victims were age 25 or older, compared to 13% of confirmed sex trafficking victims.
  - Confirmed sex trafficking victims were more likely to be white (26%) or black (40%), compared to labor trafficking victims, who were more likely to be Hispanic (63%) or Asian (17%).
- Four-fifths of victims in confirmed sex trafficking incidents were identified as U.S. citizens (83%), while most confirmed labor trafficking victims were identified as undocumented aliens (67%) or qualified aliens (28%).
- Most confirmed human trafficking suspects were male (81%). More than half (62%) of confirmed sex trafficking suspects were identified as black, while confirmed labor trafficking suspects were more likely to be identified as Hispanic (48%).
- Among trafficking incidents opened for at least one year, 30% were confirmed to be human trafficking, 38% were confirmed not to be human trafficking, and the remaining incidents were still open at the end of the study period.
- The confirmed human trafficking incidents open for at least a year led to 144 known arrests.

## The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 is the first comprehensive federal law to combat human trafficking and help victims.

Under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA, 2000), human trafficking is defined as the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for one of three purposes:<sup>1</sup>

- Labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.
- A commercial sex act through the use of force, fraud, or coercion.
- Any commercial sex act, if the person is under 18 years of age, regardless of whether any form of coercion is involved.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (TVPRA, 2005) requires biennial reporting on the scope and characteristics of human trafficking in the U.S., using available data from state and local authorities.<sup>2</sup> As part of an effort to meet these congressional mandates, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), in partnership with the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Northeastern University (NEU), and the Urban Institute (UI), developed the Human Trafficking Reporting System (HTRS).

The HTRS system is designed to capture information on human trafficking incidents investigated by federally funded task forces, and is the first to focus specifically on state and local human trafficking investigations in the U.S. BJA provides support for state and local law enforcement to work more collaboratively with victim services organizations, federal law enforcement, U.S. Attorneys' Offices, and the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice in the identification and rescue of human trafficking victims who are in the United States. This report is based on information collected from these BJA-funded task forces through the HTRS.

The first report developed from HTRS information, *Characteristics of Suspected Incidents of Human Trafficking*,

<sup>1</sup>Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, Pub. L. No. 106-386, 114 Stat. 1464.

<sup>2</sup>Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005, Pub. L. No. 109-164, 119 Stat. 3566.

2007-2008, described characteristics of cases entered into the system between January 1, 2007, and September 30, 2008.<sup>3</sup>

Since 2008, HTRS has captured information from 42 jurisdictions covering nearly 25% of the U.S. resident population at midyear 2010. Although the task forces are not representative of the entire nation, they are widely dispersed geographically.

The HTRS is an incident-based data collection system:

- An incident is any investigation into a claim of human trafficking, or any investigation of other crimes in which elements of potential human trafficking were identified.
- An investigation is any effort in which members of the task force spent at least one hour investigating (e.g., collecting information, taking statements, and writing reports).

Each incident is uniquely identified by an incident date (date of occurrence) and incident number. Once entered into the system, an incident upon further investigation may or may not be determined to involve human trafficking. All incidents, regardless of outcome, are retained in the HTRS.

To be confirmed as human trafficking—

- The case must have led to an arrest and been subsequently confirmed by law enforcement, or
- The victims in the case must 1) have had a "continuing presence" requested on their behalf, or 2) have received an endorsement for a T or U visa application.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup>In this report, case, incident, and investigation are used interchangeably.

<sup>4</sup>Congress created the T and U nonimmigrant classifications with the passage of the TVPA, 2000. The T nonimmigrant status was created to provide protection to victims of severe forms of human trafficking. The U nonimmigrant status was designated for victims of certain crimes who had suffered mental or physical abuse and who were willing to assist in the investigation of human trafficking activity.

## Most suspected incidents of human trafficking involved allegations of prostitution of an adult or child

Federally funded human trafficking task forces opened a total of 2,515 suspected incidents of human trafficking for investigation between January 1, 2008, and June 30, 2010. These suspected incidents include allegations that, through subsequent investigation, may or may not be determined to meet the definition of human trafficking according to the TVPA, 2000. (See box on page 2.)

Nearly half of all incidents investigated between January 1, 2008, and June 30, 2010, involved allegations of adult prostitution (48%). Forty percent involved prostitution of a child or child sexual exploitation (table 1). Elements of sexualized labor, including exotic dancing and unlicensed massage parlors, were found in 6% of the incidents reported.

Fourteen percent of cases contained allegations of labor trafficking, including 9% with suspected labor trafficking in potentially unregulated industries, such as day labor, drug sales, forced begging, roadside sales, or domestic workers (e.g., nannies). Approximately 5% of the incidents involved suspected labor trafficking in more commercial industries, such as hair salons, hotels, and bars.

Nine percent of incidents involved allegations of an unknown human trafficking type or allegations that could not be defined as either labor or sex trafficking, such as mail order brides, child selling, and unspecified Internet solicitations.

Task forces may have entered multiple types of human trafficking per incident. Among the incidents described in this report, up to six different types of trafficking were identified per incident, although most (77%) incidents involved allegations of one type of human trafficking.

Cases were classified by whether they included allegations of sex trafficking or labor trafficking. Cases that had elements of both sex and labor trafficking (72 cases, or 3% of the total) were classified as sex trafficking cases for analysis purposes. Cases that did not include allegations that could be defined as sex or labor trafficking were classified as an unknown trafficking type and reported in total statistics throughout the report. Most investigations were classified as suspected sex trafficking (82%), followed by 11% as suspected labor trafficking and 7% unknown (table 2).

The types of trafficking cases differed between task forces located in a vice unit and those located in another type of unit within the law enforcement agency. (Vice units in law enforcement commonly pursue crimes related to prostitution, pornography, gambling, alcohol, and drugs.) Task forces classified as located in vice were in units either dedicated solely to investigating vice crimes or in units focused on vice and other crimes, such as sexual assault or domestic violence. Those task forces not located in vice units were located in divisions specializing in human trafficking, intelligence units, or units dedicated to investigating organized crime. Eighty-nine percent of incidents reported by task forces located in a vice unit were incidents of suspected sex trafficking, compared to 73% of incidents reported by task forces located outside of vice units.

784 cases not trafficking

**TABLE 1**  
Human trafficking incidents opened for investigation between January 2008 and June 2010, by type of trafficking

Type of trafficking <sup>a</sup>	Number	Percent <sup>b</sup>
All incidents	2,515	100.0%
<b>Sex trafficking</b>	2,065	82.1%
Adult prostitution/commercial sex act	1,218	48.4
Prostitution or sexual exploitation of a child	1,016	40.4
Sexualized labor	142	5.6
Other	61	2.4
<b>Labor trafficking</b>	350	13.9%
Commercial industry labor	132	5.2
Unregulated industry labor	230	9.1
Other	26	1.0
<b>Other suspected trafficking</b>	65	2.6%
<b>Unknown</b>	172	6.8%

<sup>a</sup>Type of trafficking is identified as the type of suspected incident reported to or investigated by the law enforcement agency. The type of trafficking investigated is not necessarily the same type of trafficking that may be confirmed, charged at arrest, or prosecuted. Where the type of alleged trafficking may suggest elements of sex or labor trafficking, BJS classified the type through an analysis of the other characteristics of those cases, as identified by the investigative agencies. For example, sexualized labor was categorized as a type of alleged sex trafficking after further analyses found that investigations into sexualized labor were most commonly associated with characteristics of sex trafficking as opposed to labor trafficking.

<sup>b</sup>Percent will add to more than 100 because incidents may involve more than one type of trafficking.

**TABLE 2**  
Human trafficking incident cases opened for investigation between January 2008 and June 2010, by type of trafficking and task force location

Type of trafficking	Total incidents		Task force located in—			
			Vice unit		Another unit	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total incidents	2,515	100.0%	1,377	100.0%	1,138	100.0%
Sex trafficking	2,065	82.1%	1,230	89.3%	835	73.4%
Labor trafficking	278	11.1	92	6.7	186	16.3
Unknown	172	6.8	55	4.0	117	10.3

**Federal agencies were more likely to lead labor trafficking investigations (29%), compared to sex trafficking investigations (7%)**

A law enforcement agency was identified as the lead agency for nearly all suspected sex trafficking cases (98%). Among suspected labor trafficking cases, 88% had a law enforcement lead agency, and 11% had a victim advocacy lead agency (table 3).

In sex trafficking cases, 92% involved a lead agency identified as a state, local, or territorial level government agency, while 7% of lead agencies were identified as federal agencies, such as the FBI, U.S. Attorneys' Offices, or Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Labor trafficking investigations were more likely to have a federal lead agency (29%) than sex trafficking investigations (7%).

The number and type of task force agencies involved in suspected human trafficking incidents varied more for labor trafficking cases than for sex trafficking cases. Among suspected labor trafficking incidents, 82% involved multiple agencies as part of the task force team; 49% of suspected sex trafficking incidents involved multiple agencies.

In a review of all types of agencies involved in the case, 99% of sex trafficking cases included a law enforcement agency, and 16% included a victim advocacy agency. Most labor trafficking incidents also included a law enforcement agency in the case (91%); however, labor trafficking incidents were more likely to include a victim advocacy agency (40%) and a regulatory agency (10%), such as a code enforcement or professional licensing agency, when compared to suspected sex trafficking cases.

**TABLE 3**  
**Agencies involved in human trafficking investigations between January 2008 and June 2010, by type of trafficking**

Type of agency	Total <sup>a</sup>		Sex trafficking		Labor trafficking	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Number of incidents</b>	2,515	100.0%	2,065	100.0%	278	100.0%
<b>Lead agency</b>						
Law enforcement/prosecution/corrections	2,425	96.9%	2,018	98.1%	242	88.3%
Victim advocacy	63	2.5	30	1.5	29	10.6
Human services agency	3	0.1	3	0.1	0	0.0
Regulatory agency	11	0.4	7	0.3	3	1.1
Unknown	13	:	7	:	4	:
<b>Lead agency level</b>						
State, local, or territorial	2,204	88.1%	1,885	91.6%	167	60.9%
Federal	235	9.4	143	6.9	78	28.5
Nongovernmental organization/private	63	2.5	30	1.5	29	10.6
Unknown	13	:	7	:	4	:
<b>Number of agencies</b>						
1	1,161	46.3%	1,039	50.4%	49	17.7%
2-3	1,009	40.2	781	37.9	143	51.6
4-6	304	12.1	215	10.4	77	27.8
7 or more	33	1.3	25	1.2	8	2.9
Unknown	8	:	5	:	1	:
<b>Type of agencies involved<sup>b</sup></b>						
Law enforcement/prosecution/corrections	2,462	97.9%	2,040	98.8%	254	91.4%
Victim advocacy/defense	465	18.5	334	16.2	112	40.3
Human services agency	25	1.0	23	1.1	2	0.7
Regulatory agency	44	1.7	14	0.7	28	10.1
<b>Level of agencies involved<sup>b</sup></b>						
State, local, or territorial	2,377	94.5%	2,002	96.9%	216	77.7%
Federal	688	27.4	484	23.4	157	56.5
Nongovernmental organization/private	464	18.4	334	16.2	111	39.9

<sup>a</sup>Percent not calculated for missing or unknown data.

<sup>b</sup>Includes incidents with an unknown trafficking type.

<sup>c</sup>Percents add to more than 100% because more than one type of agency could be involved.

## Data quality and consistency in reporting

The HTRS project team identified a number of data quality issues despite efforts to ensure consistent and complete reporting.

The most significant issues were—

- Missing individual-level information about suspects and victims, and
- Failure to update cases as the investigations progressed.

The type of trafficking suspected and the agencies involved were entered into the system because this information was typically available at the outset of an investigation (figure 2). The availability of information on case confirmation, victims, and suspects was not necessarily a function of the length of time the case was open, and was missing for a significant number of the incidents (table 4).

Cases observed for 12 or more months generally had more valid data about whether the incident was confirmed to be human trafficking. Among all cases opened for investigation between January 2008 and June 2010, confirmation of the outcome was pending for 39% of the incidents at the conclusion of the study period (June 2010). Among cases open for at least 12 months in task forces that consistently updated case information and provided individual-level data, 38% had not reached a confirmation outcome at the conclusion of the study period. However,

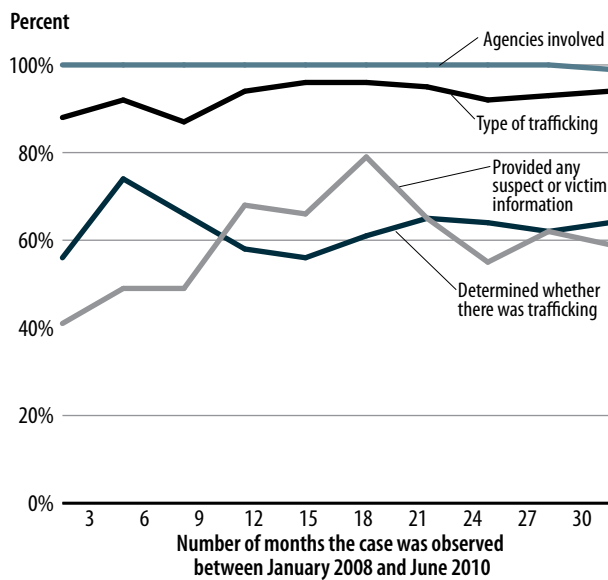
83% of the cases that ultimately reached an outcome were able to do so within 12 months.

Identifying the characteristics of individuals involved in human trafficking was problematic overall. The quality of the data was associated more with the task force itself than with the date the case was opened or the type of suspected trafficking. Valid suspect and victim data were clustered in certain task forces identified as providing high data quality.

- High data quality task forces (18 of 42) met three criteria: 1) regularly entered new cases into the system, 2) provided individual-level information for at least one suspect or victim, and 3) updated case information on a regular basis. Individual-level information for at least one suspect was available for 75% of the confirmed human trafficking investigations open for at least one year in selected task forces.
- Low data quality task forces (24 of 42) did not meet any of the three criteria listed above.

Case confirmation outcomes and individual-level statistics are therefore restricted to data provided by selected task forces (18 of the 42). These task forces regularly entered new cases into the system, provided individual-level information for at least one suspect or victim, and updated case information on a regular basis.

**FIGURE 2**  
Percentage of cases with valid data for critical variables, by number of months the cases were observed



**TABLE 4**  
Percentage of incidents with valid information entered between January 2008 and June 2010, by quality of task force data

Type of information	Quality of task force reporting identified as—	
	Low	High
Type of trafficking	91%	95%
Human trafficking confirmed (or not)	61%	62%
Incident status is closed or inactive	57%	65%
Agencies involved	100%	100%
<b>Information associated with the incident</b>		
Any individual-level information (suspect or victim)	35%	88%
Any suspect information	20	62
Any victim information	30	75

Note: High data quality task forces (18 of the 42) regularly entered new cases into the system, provided individual-level information for at least one suspect or victim, and updated case information on a regular basis. Low data quality task forces (24 of 42) did not demonstrate one or more of these data quality indicators.

**Confirmed victims of labor trafficking were more likely to be male, older, and foreign than confirmed victims of sex trafficking**

Federally funded high data quality task forces entered 389 confirmed incidents of human trafficking during the study period. These cases had consistently complete reporting on case outcome and individual-level information. The selected task forces identified 527 confirmed human trafficking victims in the 389 confirmed incidents. Confirmed sex trafficking victims were overwhelmingly female (94% of victims with known gender). Of the 63 confirmed labor trafficking victims, 20 were male and 43 were female (table 5).

Confirmed labor trafficking victims were more likely to be older than confirmed sex trafficking victims. Sixty-two percent of confirmed labor trafficking victims were identified as 25 years of age or older, compared to 13% of confirmed sex trafficking victims, based on victims with known age.

**TABLE 5**  
Victim characteristics in cases confirmed to be human trafficking by high data quality task forces, by type of trafficking

Victim characteristic	Total <sup>a</sup>	Sex trafficking	Labor trafficking
<b>Sex</b>			
Male	49	27	20
Female	477	432	43
<b>Age</b>			
17 or younger	257	248	6
18-24	159	142	17
25-34	68	46	22
35 or older	27	12	15
Unknown	16	12	3
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>			
White <sup>b</sup>	106	102	1
Black/African American <sup>b</sup>	167	161	6
Hispanic/Latino origin	129	95	34
Asian <sup>b,c</sup>	26	17	9
Other <sup>b,d</sup>	35	23	11
Unknown	63	61	2
<b>Citizenship</b>			
U.S. Citizen/U.S. National	346	345	1
Permanent U.S. resident <sup>e</sup>	6	6	0
Undocumented alien <sup>f</sup>	101	64	36
Qualified alien <sup>e</sup>	19	1	15
Temporary worker	2	0	2
Unknown	50	41	9
<b>Number of victims identified</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>63</b>

Note: Analysis restricted to cases opened and observed between January 2008 and June 2010 in high data quality task forces. See definition of high data quality task forces on page 5.

<sup>a</sup>Includes cases of unknown trafficking type.

<sup>b</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic or Latino origin.

<sup>c</sup>Asian may include Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders or persons of East Asian or Southeast Asian descent.

<sup>d</sup>Includes persons of two or more races.

<sup>e</sup>Permanent residents and qualified aliens are legal residents in the U.S., but do not have citizenship.

<sup>f</sup>Undocumented aliens reside in the U.S. illegally.

In addition, confirmed labor trafficking victims were more likely to be identified as Hispanic (63% of victims with known race) or Asian (17%) compared to sex trafficking victims, who were more likely to be white (26%) or black (40%). Four-fifths of victims in confirmed sex trafficking cases were identified as U.S. citizens (83%), while most confirmed labor trafficking victims were identified as undocumented aliens (67%) or qualified aliens (28%).

**More than half of confirmed sex trafficking suspects were black, while confirmed labor trafficking suspects were more likely to be Hispanic**

Overall, individual information was collected for 488 suspects in confirmed human trafficking incidents in high data quality task forces (table 6).

**TABLE 6**  
Suspect characteristics in cases opened between January 2008 and June 2010 and confirmed to be human trafficking by high data quality task forces, by type of trafficking

Suspect characteristic	Total <sup>a</sup>	Sex trafficking	Labor trafficking
<b>Sex</b>			
Male	368	314	54
Female	88	71	17
Unknown	32	25	7
<b>Age</b>			
17 or younger	11	10	1
18-24	147	145	2
25-34	114	105	9
35 or older	100	65	35
Unknown	116	85	31
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>			
White <sup>b</sup>	24	22	2
Black/African American <sup>b</sup>	224	219	5
Hispanic/Latino origin	119	89	30
Asian <sup>b,c</sup>	28	18	10
Other <sup>b,d</sup>	20	5	15
Unknown	73	57	16
<b>Citizenship</b>			
U.S. Citizen/U.S. National	276	269	7
Permanent U.S. resident <sup>e</sup>	12	2	10
Undocumented alien <sup>f</sup>	44	39	5
Qualified alien <sup>e</sup>	8	2	6
Unknown	148	98	50
<b>Number of suspects identified</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>78</b>

Note: Analysis restricted to cases opened and observed between January 2008 and June 2010 in high data quality task forces. See definition of high data quality task forces on page 5.

<sup>a</sup>Includes cases of unknown trafficking type.

<sup>b</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic or Latino origin.

<sup>c</sup>Asian may include Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders or persons of East Asian or Southeast Asian descent.

<sup>d</sup>Includes persons of two or more races.

<sup>e</sup>Permanent residents and qualified aliens are legal residents in the U.S., but do not have citizenship.

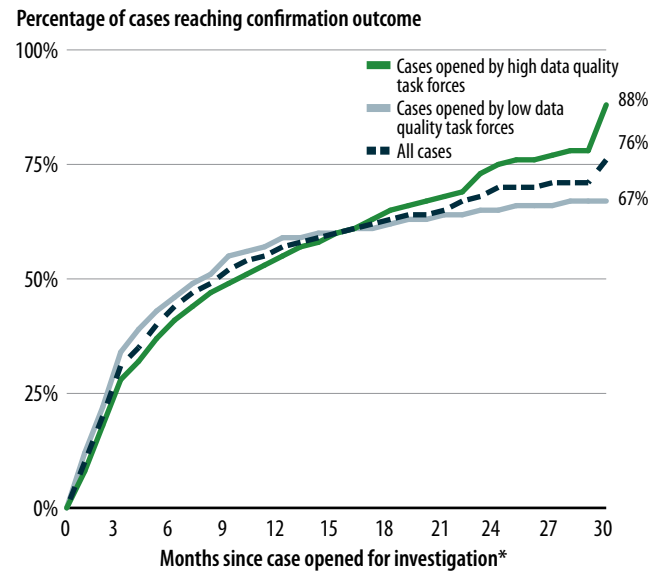
<sup>f</sup>Undocumented aliens reside in the U.S. illegally.

Most confirmed human trafficking suspects were male (81%), while 19% were female. Based on cases in which race was known, nearly two-thirds (62%) of confirmed sex trafficking suspects were identified as black. Confirmed labor trafficking suspects were more likely to be identified as Hispanic (48%). Most suspects in confirmed sex trafficking incidents were between the ages of 18 and 34 (77%) and were U.S. citizens (86%).

**Analysis of case outcomes was restricted to incidents opened by high data quality task forces and observed for one year**

Seventy-six percent of human trafficking cases had reached a confirmation outcome at the conclusion of the study period, including 88% of cases opened in high data quality task forces and 67% in the remaining task forces (figure 3).

**FIGURE 3**  
Percentage of cases reaching confirmation outcome, by months observed and by task force data quality



Note: See box on page 5 for definition of high data quality task forces.  
\*Fewer than 50 cases were observed for at least 29 months and still pending confirmation outcome.

**Victim service providers report serving more labor trafficking victims than sex trafficking victims.**

The HTRS collects information on human trafficking cases opened for investigation by state and local law enforcement agencies that received federal funding to support task force activities. The data described in this report reflect the information that was available to, and entered by, these state and local law enforcement agencies, which receive support from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) in the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), also in the Office of Justice Programs, provides grant funding to victim service agencies in many of the BJA-funded task force locations. The OVC funds support comprehensive services to human trafficking victims. Between January 2008 and June 2009, OVC awarded grants to 32 task force agencies to provide services to foreign national victims of human trafficking.

OVC data are compiled through the Trafficking Information Management System (TIMS). Between 2003 and June 2009, the OVC initiative provided services to a total of 2,699 pre-certified foreign national suspected victims of trafficking.

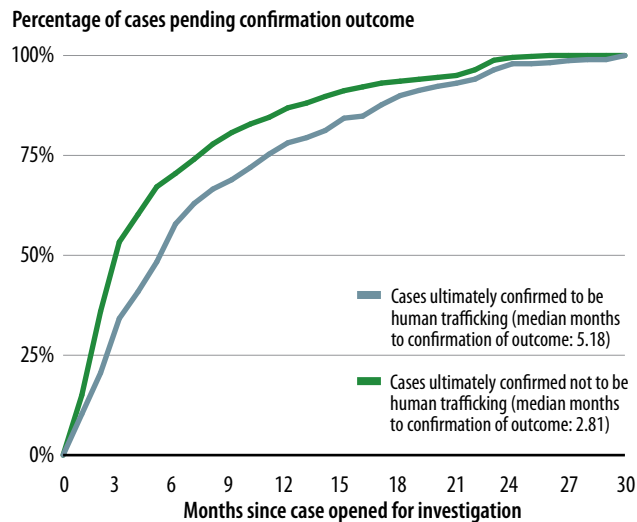
TIMS data consistently show that the majority of victims served are classified as labor trafficking victims. Between January 2008 and June 2009, 64% of the victims served by OVC-funded service providers were identified as victims of labor trafficking only, 22% as victims of sex trafficking only, and 10% as victims of both labor and sex trafficking.

Among confirmed victims of human trafficking identified by high data quality task forces in the HTRS, approximately 43% of undocumented aliens and qualified aliens were victims of labor trafficking, compared to 64% of the foreign national suspected victims of human trafficking served by the OVC task forces.

OVC expanded the victim services initiative to include U.S. citizens who are minors beginning in late 2009, and in 2010 began to include all victims of trafficking, regardless of citizenship or age. In 2010, BJA and OVC began joint support of an enhanced collaborative task force model that included support for victim service agencies and law enforcement agencies to take a comprehensive approach to investigating all trafficking crimes and providing services to trafficking victims regardless of citizenship or age.

Cases that were ultimately confirmed to be human trafficking in high data quality task forces were open for a median of five months before the case was confirmed. Cases that were ultimately confirmed not to be human trafficking in these selected task forces were open for a median of 3 months before the allegations were determined to be unfounded (figure 4).

**FIGURE 4**  
Percentage of cases reaching confirmation outcome, by months observed and ultimate confirmation status



Most (83%) of the cases that ultimately reached an outcome were able to do so within 12 months of observation (not shown in table). Statistics about the outcomes of cases are therefore restricted to incidents observed for at least 12 months in the study period, and opened by task forces that reliably updated information.

**Approximately a third of cases opened for investigation were confirmed to be human trafficking**

Among cases opened for at least one year in selected task forces, 30% were confirmed to be human trafficking and 38% were confirmed not to be human trafficking as defined in the TVPA, 2000. Nearly a third of the cases had a pending confirmation outcome (table 7).

Any commercial sex act if the person is under 18 years of age, regardless of whether any form of coercion is involved, is defined as human trafficking by the TVPA, 2000. (Adult prostitution is not considered human trafficking unless it is proven that the victim was coerced.) Of cases confirmed to be human trafficking, 64% involved allegations of prostitution or sexual exploitation of a child, and 42% involved allegations of adult prostitution. Most cases confirmed not to be human trafficking (64%) or pending confirmation status (66%) involved allegations of adult prostitution (table 8).

**TABLE 7**  
Outcome of human trafficking incidents opened for at least 12 months by high data quality task forces, by type of trafficking

Outcome	Total		Sex trafficking		Labor trafficking	
	Number*	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
All human trafficking cases	849	100.0%	714	100.0%	101	100.0%
Confirmed	257	30.3%	218	30.5%	39	38.6%
Not confirmed	322	37.9	267	37.4	32	31.7
Pending or unknown confirmation status	270	31.8	229	32.1	30	29.7

Note: Analysis restricted to cases opened and observed between January 2008 and June 2009. See definition of high data quality task forces on page 5.  
\*Includes cases of an unknown trafficking type.

**TABLE 8**  
Human trafficking incidents opened for at least 12 months by high data quality task forces, by outcome

Incident type	Confirmed to be human trafficking		Confirmed not to be human trafficking		Pending confirmation	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total</b>	257	100.0%	322	100.0%	270	100.0%
<b>Sex trafficking</b>						
Adult prostitution	108	42.0	205	63.7	178	65.9
Prostitution or sexual exploitation of a child	164	63.8	80	24.8	83	30.7
Sexualized labor	6	2.3	18	5.6	19	7.0
Other	1	0.4	4	1.2	3	1.1
<b>Labor trafficking</b>						
Labor trafficking in commercial or public industry	24	9.3	19	5.9	16	5.9
Labor trafficking in unregulated industry	37	14.4	24	7.5	28	10.4
<b>Other/Unknown</b>	7	2.7	33	10.2	38	14.1

Note: Analysis restricted to cases opened and observed between January 2008 and June 2009. See definition of high data quality task forces on page 5.



## About a quarter of foreign nationals confirmed as victims received U.S. visas

Nearly 90 victims identified in confirmed human trafficking incidents open for at least a year were described as undocumented or qualified aliens. Of these 87 foreign victims, 21 received T visas, while 46 visa applications were still pending or had an unknown status. (See footnote 4 on page 2.) Most confirmed victims in cases open for at least a year were described as U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals, or permanent U.S. residents (67%)(not shown in table).

## Nearly 150 arrests were reported by law enforcement agencies in confirmed human trafficking incidents

Law enforcement agencies in the selected task forces reported arresting 144 suspects in confirmed human trafficking incidents open for at least a year during the study period, including 139 sex trafficking suspects and 5 labor trafficking suspects (table 9). Most sex trafficking arrests occurred at the state level (114), while all 5 labor trafficking arrests occurred at the federal level.

The HTRS relies primarily on local law enforcement to update information about arrests. Local law enforcement may not always have current or complete information about arrests made by other agencies. (See *Methodology*.)

**TABLE 9**  
Victim and suspect outcomes in incidents opened between January 2008 and June 2009 and confirmed to be human trafficking by high data quality task forces, by type of trafficking

Type of incidents	Total	Sex trafficking	Labor trafficking
Number of selected confirmed incidents	257	218	39
<b>Victims in confirmed incidents</b>			
Foreign victims identified	87	43	44
T or U visa status <sup>a</sup>			
Yes	21	9	12
No	20	8	12
Pending/unknown	46	26	20
<b>Suspects in confirmed incidents</b>			
Suspects identified	343	279	64
Suspects arrested	144	139	5
State arrest	114	114	0
Federal arrest	21	16	5
Both	9	9	0
Suspects not arrested	19	13	6
Unknown	180	127	53

Note: Analysis restricted to cases opened and observed between January 2008 and June 2009 in high data quality task forces. See definition of high data quality task forces on page 5.

<sup>a</sup>Congress created the T and U nonimmigrant classifications with the passage of the TVPA, 2000. The T nonimmigrant status was created to provide protection to victims of severe forms of human trafficking. The U nonimmigrant status was designated for victims of certain crimes who had suffered mental or physical abuse and who were willing to assist in the investigation of human trafficking activity.

## Methodology

This report relies on information from task forces receiving federal support from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). Since the Human Trafficking Reporting System (HTRS) was implemented in 2008, a total of 45 jurisdictions have received funds from BJA to provide support for state and local law enforcement to work more collaboratively with victim services organizations, federal law enforcement, U.S. Attorneys' Offices, and the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice in the identification and rescue of human trafficking victims who are in the United States. The HTRS was designed to facilitate incident-level management and tracking of human trafficking investigations opened by BJA-funded task forces.

Between January 1, 2008, and June 30, 2010, 42 of the 45 federally funded human trafficking task forces reported at least one human trafficking incident in the HTRS. The task forces involve partnerships with varying coverage areas, including entire states/territories and regions, multiple counties, single counties, and metropolitan areas. Combined, the task forces operated in jurisdictions that were home to nearly 25% of the nation's resident population at midyear 2010. Although the task forces are not representative of the entire nation, they are widely dispersed geographically.

## Collection procedures

Each task force designated a person for data collection and reporting. Reporters were responsible for adding new human trafficking incidents on a monthly basis, updating information for existing records with new activity, and submitting data automatically through an online data portal. Reporters were provided training and follow-up technical assistance via phone or onsite as needed by Northeastern University (NEU) and Urban Institute (UI) staff. Task forces began entering data in January 2008.

Task force reporters enter information about investigations into the HTRS if they have spent at least one hour of investigation time on a potential trafficking case. At the time that data are originally entered into the system, many investigations are still ongoing. As investigations proceed, additional information may become available or the original information may be updated. As a result, the HTRS provides a snapshot of information currently known and reported.

Once an investigation has progressed to the point of having information about potential suspects or victims, task force reporters are instructed to enter this information into the HTRS. Information for each suspect and each victim is then added by completing automated data entry screens identified as a *Suspect Information Form* or a *Victim Information Form*. As more information becomes available, task force reporters are asked to update the information on each screen. (For additional details, see the Human Trafficking Reporting System User's Manual at <https://www.humantrafficking.neu.edu>.)

## Data quality

Every effort was made to ensure consistency and completeness in task force reporting to the HTRS. NEU and UI developed a detailed HTRS Users' Guide to introduce the platform to task forces and promote consistency in reporting. Training and onsite technical assistance was provided to all task forces. An advisory board made up of task force representatives helped guide the development and implementation of the data management system. Three sites were also funded to provide immersion training to task forces that did not update the HTRS regularly. NEU and UI also conduct random data quality audits and provide quarterly data quality reports to BJS.

Finally, random audits are conducted to compare paper files from closed human trafficking investigations with the data that are reported to the HTRS. BJS and its partners continue to implement enhancements to the HTRS to improve data reliability and consistency in reporting.

Despite these efforts, consistency and completeness in reporting vary across task forces (see text box on page 5). The statistics described in this report should be examined

in light of this variability. Although all task forces received federal funding during the study period from BJA, the ability to collect and report data varied by task force. Some task forces indicated that they were unable to provide individual-level information due to the sensitivity of the information, and others stated that they did not have access to many of the case outcome measures collected through HTRS. The volume of incidents reported varied between task forces (ranging from 1 to 483). Seven of the participating task forces reported fewer than 10 cases of suspected human trafficking between January 2008 and June 2010, while six task forces reported 100 or more cases during this same period.

Task forces that were classified as having high data quality (18 of 42) regularly entered new cases into the system, provided individual-level information for at least one suspect or victim, and updated case information on a regular basis. Task forces classified as having low data quality did not meet any of these three criteria. High and low data quality task forces reported similar information with respect to human trafficking type, lead investigative agency level, and lead investigative agency type. High quality task forces were more

**TABLE 10**  
**Human trafficking case characteristics by quality of task force data**

Case characteristic	Quality of task force reporting identified as—			
	Low		High	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total number of cases opened for investigation</b>	1,209		1,306	
<b>Type of trafficking</b>				
Sex trafficking	978	80.9%	1,087	83.2%
Labor trafficking	127	10.5	151	11.6
Unknown	104	8.6	68	5.2
<b>Location of human trafficking task force in law enforcement agency</b>				
<b>Vice unit</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>66.4%</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>44.0%</b>
Criminal intelligence, organized crime, or human trafficking-dedicated unit	406	33.6	732	56.0
<b>Lead investigative agency level</b>				
State/local territorial	1,061	87.8%	1,143	87.5%
Federal	93	7.7	142	10.9
Private/NGO	48	4.0	15	1.1
Missing/unknown	7	0.6	6	0.5
<b>Lead investigative agency type</b>				
Law enforcement/prosecution/corrections	1,149	95.0%	1,276	97.7%
Victim advocate	48	4.0	15	1.1
Health/human/education services	1	0.1	2	0.2
Regulatory agency	4	0.3	7	0.5
Missing/unknown	7	0.6	6	0.5
<b>Number of agencies involved</b>				
1	733	60.6%	428	32.8%
2-3	376	31.1	633	48.5
4-6	89	7.4	215	16.5
7 or more	7	0.6	26	2.0
Unknown	4	0.3	4	0.3
<b>Any victims identified</b>	362	29.9%	982	75.2%
<b>Any suspects identified</b>	247	20.4%	814	62.3%
<b>Confirmation outcome</b>				
Confirmed to be human trafficking	146	12.1%	389	29.8%
Confirmed not to be human trafficking	589	48.7	420	32.2
Pending confirmation	474	39.2	497	38.1

likely to be located in criminal intelligence, organized crime, or human trafficking-dedicated units (56%) than low quality task forces (34%). Low quality task forces were typically in vice units (66%) compared to high quality task forces (44%). High data quality task forces also reported a greater percent of cases that involved multiple agencies, had at least one victim identified, had at least one suspect identified, and were confirmed to be human trafficking (table 10). Analyses that included any data on victims, suspects, or confirmed cases were restricted to information provided by selected task forces.

As of June 30, 2010, the HTRS included information on more than 3,100 cases of suspected incidents of human trafficking. However, this report covers cases opened in January 2008 to minimize variations in reporting over time due to changes in data collection methodology. The HTRS project team collected retrospective case information on investigations opened prior to the launch of the system in 2008.

Analyses of the retrospective data collected by the project team prior to 2008 found that this information was not consistently updated by the task forces once prospective data collection began. Therefore, the characteristics of these incidents (652) are fully described in the previous report, *Characteristics of Suspected Human Trafficking Incidents, 2007-2008*. There is an overlap of cases opened between January 2008 and September 2008 between the previous report and the current report, as many of these incidents were entered prospectively by the task forces, and were updated following the release of the previous report.

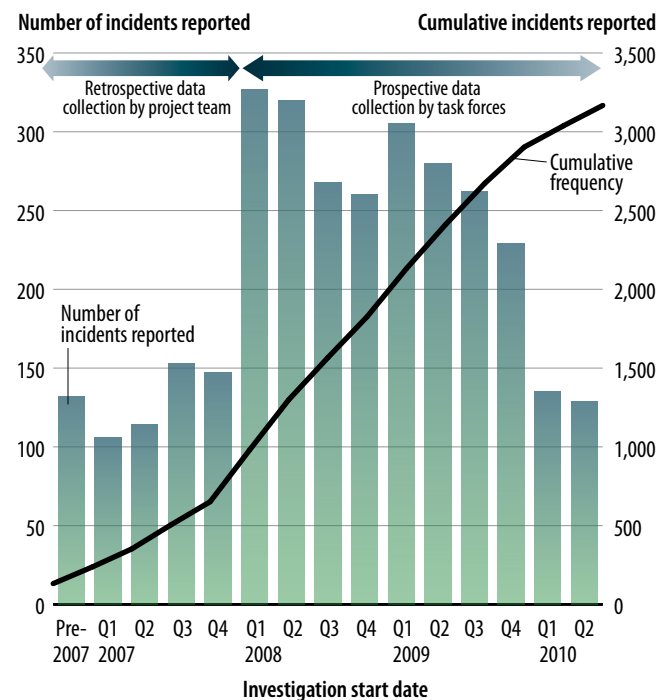
During the first year (2008) of prospective voluntary data collection, task forces opened at least 250 suspected cases of human trafficking for investigation in each quarter. This volume of new cases continued well into 2009, yet dropped to less than 150 new cases per quarter in 2010 (figure 5).

Modifications designed to help alleviate many of the data quality issues described in this report went into effect in October 2009. Participation in HTRS became a requirement of continued federal funding from BJA. Several HTRS fields were converted from “non-required” to “required” data elements. Additionally, a task force is unable to close a case unless individual-level information about victims and suspects is entered for those incidents with identified

numbers of victims and suspects in investigation records. Open cases that have not been updated during the previous six months are now automatically flagged for task forces whenever they log into the system. Not only does this new feature facilitate the updating of open investigations for task forces, it also helps project staff track the number of open but inactive cases for each task force, which could affect the quality of data extracted from the HTRS.

The requirement to update cases once they have been entered into the system may in part explain the decrease in new cases entered in quarters one and two of 2010. In addition, six of the 42 task forces had let their funding expire as of December 31, 2009. The project team continues to work with these task forces to update information on cases already entered into the HTRS, but no new cases were entered into the HTRS from these six task forces as of January 1, 2010.

**FIGURE 5**  
Suspected incidents of human trafficking, by reported investigation start date



U.S. Department of Justice  
Office of Justice Programs  
Bureau of Justice Statistics  
Washington, DC 20531  
Official Business  
Penalty for Private Use \$300



PRESORTED STANDARD  
POSTAGE & FEES PAID  
DOJ/BJJS  
Permit No. G-91

Office of Justice Programs • Innovation • Partnerships • Safer Neighborhoods • <http://www.ojp.gov>

The Bureau of Justice Statistics is the statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Justice. James P. Lynch is the director.

This report was written by Duren Banks and Tracey Kyckelhahn. Ron Malega verified the report.

Vanessa Curto and Jill Thomas edited the report, Tina Dorsey and Barbara Quinn produced the report, and Jayne Robinson prepared the report for final printing, under the supervision of Doris J. James.

April 2011, NCJ 233732

This report in portable document format and in ASCII and its related statistical data and tables are available at the website: <http://bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=2372>.