

## IMUN Research Report 2024

### **Economic and Social Council Issue #1: The question of the role forced labor plays in economic growth.**

Forced or compulsory labor is: "all work or service which is exacted from any person under the threat of a penalty and for which the person has not offered himself or herself voluntarily" ("What Is Forced Labour? | International Labour Organization").

The main causes of forced labor include lack of education, discrimination, gender inequality, corruption, weak legal frameworks, and cheap labor. Ongoing conflict, political instability, and forced displacement increase exposure of many people to exploitation.

An estimated 27.6 million people are currently in forced labor. 23.6 million being privately imposed forced labor, and 3.9 million being state imposed. 39.4% are women and girls and twelve percent are children. The Asian and Pacific region has the highest number of forced laborers at an estimated 15.1 million. While Arab states have the highest prevalence of 5.3 people per one thousand people ("Data and Research on Forced Labour | International Labour Organization").

Many governments have ratified or adopted Human Rights and forced labor policies promoting the respect for fundamental rights. Forced labor and its similar practices exist in the operations of numerous businesses and are generally more common in developing countries. Although forced labor is considered to have been prohibited in developed countries, a recent study done by the International Labour Organization (ILO) indicates that it continues to occur. Forced labor has also been rising in the developed world. Almost all European countries have seen an increase in the number of cases of forced labor in recent years ("Just in"). According to the global slavery index the top ten countries with the highest prevalence of forced labor are North Korea,

Eritrea, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Tajikistan, United Arab Emirates, Russia (“Walk Free”).

Organizations profit from forced labor by using it to reduce the cost of business. The ILO has estimated that profits illegally obtained from the use of forced labor in the private economy worldwide amounted to roughly \$236 billion, with developed economies generating 31.6% of the total annual profit, which are increasing by almost forty percent each year (“Data and Research on Forced Labour | International Labour Organization”). Forced labor may seem highly profitable to the economy at first sight but it may cause economic stagnation in the long run.

In privately imposed force labor outsourcing and the subcontracting of temporary staff lead to companies often not knowing where their workers are coming from. Paying suppliers strikingly low salaries, demanding products too quickly and in short notice, and delaying payments all create an environment for the fruition of forced labor. Lack of oversight of third parties, vague policies standards and unaccountability play key roles in sustaining forced labor practices (“Forced Labour”). In the world of fast-paced consumerism forced labor is increasingly being seen.

In 2017 the United Nations (UN) Security Council passed resolution S/RES/2388 which calls upon calls upon UN system organizations to strengthen their protections against labor violations. They agreed to develop and implement a common approach to combat human trafficking and forced labor in UN supply chains (“Combatting Human Trafficking and Forced Labour in UN Supply Chains | United Nations - CEB”). The UN also formed the ILO, which is “devoted to promoting social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights” (“United Nations”).

## Works Cited

- “Combatting Human Trafficking and Forced Labour in UN Supply Chains | United Nations - CEB.” *Unsceb.org*, [www.unsceb.org/combatting-human-trafficking-and-forced-labour-un-supply-chains#:~:text=The%20UN%20Security%20Council%20Resolution](http://www.unsceb.org/combatting-human-trafficking-and-forced-labour-un-supply-chains#:~:text=The%20UN%20Security%20Council%20Resolution). Accessed 14 June 2024.
- “Data and Research on Forced Labour | International Labour Organization.” *Www.ilo.org*, 28 Jan. 2024, [www.ilo.org/topics/forced-labour-modern-slavery-and-human-trafficking/data-and-research-forced-labour](http://www.ilo.org/topics/forced-labour-modern-slavery-and-human-trafficking/data-and-research-forced-labour).
- “Forced Labour Is Big Business: States and Corporations Are Doing Little to Stop It.” *OpenDemocracy*, [www.opendemocracy.net/en/beyond-trafficking-and-slavery/forced-labour-is-big-business-states-and-corporations-ar/](http://www.opendemocracy.net/en/beyond-trafficking-and-slavery/forced-labour-is-big-business-states-and-corporations-ar/).
- “Just in - Latest News Timeline - International News Feed in Direct.” *Euronews*, [www.euronews.com/just-in](http://www.euronews.com/just-in). Accessed 14 June 2024.
- United Nations. “ILO: International Labour Organization – Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth.” *United Nations*, [www.un.org/youthenvoy/2013/08/ilo-international-labour-organization/#:~:text=The%20International%20Labor%20Organization%20\(ILO](http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2013/08/ilo-international-labour-organization/#:~:text=The%20International%20Labor%20Organization%20(ILO).
- Walk Free. “Global Findings.” *Walk Free*, 2023, [www.walkfree.org/global-slavery-index/findings/global-findings/](http://www.walkfree.org/global-slavery-index/findings/global-findings/).
- “What Is Forced Labour? | International Labour Organization.” *Www.ilo.org*, 28 Jan. 2024, [www.ilo.org/topics/forced-labour-modern-slavery-and-trafficking-persons/what-forced-labour#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20ILO%20Forced](http://www.ilo.org/topics/forced-labour-modern-slavery-and-trafficking-persons/what-forced-labour#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20ILO%20Forced). Accessed 14 June 2024.