

Special Issue

International Counter-Trafficking: A Zero-Sum Game?

Message from the Guest Editor

“Human trafficking” is widely considered to be a fundamentally global issue, with counter-trafficking efforts having consolidated in many countries over the past two decades. Despite a large amount of public attention and widespread condemnation of the exploitation of individuals who move within and between nation-state boundaries, the mobilization of the idea of trafficking remains inherently problematic. One reason is that the motivations that have animated activists, non-governmental organizations and states to mobilize against trafficking differ, with some parties having sought the abolition of prostitution or attempted to exert more control over international mobility. Other considerations relate to the power gained and the business opportunities opened up for “legal” actors within counter-trafficking apparatuses, bringing few benefits to victims who often face abuses and violence within counter-trafficking.

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