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”Spain”

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“Spain”, *Slavery in the Modern World: A History of Political, Social, and Economic Oppression* (Junius P. Rodriguez, Edit.), ABC-Clio, 2011, vol. 2: p. 500-501.

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Spain was the last European country to abolish slavery in the 19th Century. The last recorded slave ship that arrived in Cuba did so in 1867 and by 1886 slavery had been abolished throughout the Spanish colonies. Spain does not have any legal provision related to contemporary slavery, other than the standards identified in its criminal code. The articles 311, 312 and 316 of the criminal code, as generally presented, can be applied to any abusive behavior against any person. Slavery is a reality that is not legally recognized in modern Spain. The *Comite Contra la Esclavitud Moderna en el Estado Español* (Committee against Modern Slavery in Spain), created recently, has not yet been able to provide statistics on domestic slavery within the nation, but has assured that this form of slavery is not marginal in Spain.

The *US State Department Trafficking in Persons Report* of 2005 shows that Spain is a destination and transit country for persons trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labor. The victims, mainly women and immigrants, are deprived of their identity card, and primarily come from Colombia, Nigeria, Ecuador, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Bulgaria, and Ukraine. They are often destined to Portugal, France and Germany. The immigrants trafficked into forced labor are primarily found in the agricultural, construction and domestic sectors.

The Spanish government complies with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, insisting on campaigns of tracking and dismantling trafficking networks. Officially the victims receive assistance, protection and rehabilitation services. The severe laws on immigration in most of European countries, in many cases, discourage the victim to reveal cases of labor, domestic and sexual exploitation, because they are afraid of being repatriated to their country of origin.

Regarding the sexual exploitation of women, the city of Madrid launched a program to reduce the demand, with an emphasis on the responsibility of the clients and the rights of the victims. In February 2005, the government modified its Aliens Law, making it easier for the victims of trafficking to obtain residency permits. Reports increased cooperation between the government and NGOs, resulting in more effective training and information exchanges.

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See also: Human Trafficking for Labor Purposes; Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation; Nongovernmental Organization (NGOs).

Further reading:

US. State Department Trafficking in Persons Report, June 2005.

Esclavitud y derechos humanos. La lucha por la libertad del Negro en el siglo XIX, (Francisco de Solano, Agustin Guimerá, eds), Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Centro de Estudios Históricos, 1986.

Gemma López Poveda, *La trata de personas con fines de explotación sexual*, Cáritas española, 2009.