Prostitution statistics by country

In 2012 it was estimated that there were between 40 and 42 million prostitutes in the world.[1] The list of countries below provides an estimate for the number of people working as prostitutes in each country.

Methodology

There are a number of difficulties involved in collecting meaningful prostitution statistics. For example, the greater visibility of some forms of prostitution, such as street prostitution, makes statistics on these forms easier to collect. However, in some countries street prostitution forms a much smaller part of the sex industry than indoor prostitution. Similarly sex workers with health, addiction and other support needs are more likely to be known to the authorities and hence easier for researchers to contact, but may not be representative of prostitution as a whole. National Ugly Mugs, a support organisation for sex workers in the United Kingdom, has identified several factors making it difficult to collect statistics for the sex industry, including low response rates, the small scale of research compared to the size of the sex industry, and the diversity of the industry. As a result published statistics are often conflicting and contested.[2]

In countries where prostitution is illegal, the use of arrest data to create general prostitution statistics can be misleading. The majority of prostitutes are never arrested, and those who are, can often be charged with other offences instead. Class bias may be introduced into the statistics as a result of police officers being more likely to arrest street prostitutes than high-class call girls. In comparing one area with another there may be differences in the definition of a crime, the police enforcement rate, and the possibility of the inflation of arrest figures or the under-reporting of crime.[3]

Due to the unregulated and often illegal nature of the work, only estimates are available for the number of prostitutes in a country. The numbers for a country can vary considerably dependent on the source. Some countries' numbers may suffer from poor methodology. In other cases, results may be influenced by whether the organisation producing the numbers is for or against the nature of the work. Where available, figures are taken from Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS 2016 "Sex Workers: Size Estimates."

Numbers of prostitutes

Country	Number of prostitutes Source: UNAIDS 2016 - 2018 Sex Workers: Size Estimates[4][5]	Number of prostitutes Other sources and year	Population[6]	Prevalence (prostitutes per 10,000 population)
Afghanistan	12,500 (2016)		34,656,032	4
Albania		5,000 - 30,000 (2006)[7]	2,926,348	17 - 103
Algeria			41,390,000	
Angola	54,000 (2017)		28,813,463	19
Antigua and Barbuda		800 (2014)	100,963	79
Argentina		74,900 (2014)	43,847,430	17
Armenia	9,000 (2018)		2,924,816	30
Australia	20,500 (2016)	20,000 (2017) [9]	24,125,848	8
Austria		30,000 (2013)[10]	8,712,137	34
Azerbaijan	31,900 (2018)		9,725,376	32
Bahamas	3,035 (2016)		391,232	78
Bahrain		13,500 (2007)[11]	1,425,171	95
Bangladesh	140,000 (2016)		162,951,560	1
Belarus	22,000 (2016)		9,480,042	23
Belgium		26,000 (2015)[12]	11,358,379	23
Benin	28,800 (2017)		10,872,298	26
Bhutan	400 - 500 (2017)[13]		797,765	5 - 6
Bolivia	31,000 (2016)		10,887,882	29
Bosnia and Herzegovina	4,000 (2016)		3,516,816	11
Botswana	4,200 (2016)		2,250,260	19
Brazil	550,000 (2016)		207,652,865	26
Bulgaria	10,000 (2016)		7,131,494	14
Burkina Faso	31,000 (2016)		18,646,433	17
Burundi	51,000 (2016)		10,524,117	49
Cambodia	34,000 (2016)		15,762,370	22
Cameroon	110,000 (2016)		23,439,189	47
Canada		No data	36,289,822	-
Cape Verde	1,400 (2016)		539,560	26
Central African Republic	782 (2016)		4,594,621	2
Chad	1,200 (2016)		14,452,543	1
Chile		No data	17,909,754	-
China		2,800,000 - 4,500,000 (2010)[14]	1,403,500,365	14 - 32

Colombia	7,200 (2016)		48,653,419	2
Comoros	200 (2016)		795,601	3
Congo		No data	5,125,821	-
Costa Rica		15,000 (unknown)[15]	4,857,274	31
Croatia		21,066 (2006)[16]	4,213,265	50
Cuba	89,000 (2016)		11,475,982	78
Cyprus		No data	1,170,125	-
Czech Republic	13,000 (2016)		10,610,947	12
Democratic Republic of the Congo	2,900,000 (2016)		78,736,153	368
Denmark		6,000 (2009)[17]	5,711,870	11
Djibouti	2,900 (2016)		942,333	31
Dominican Republic		60,000 - 100,000 (2013)	10,648,791	56 - 94
East Timor	1,700 (2016)		1,268,671	13
Ecuador	34,000 (2016)		16,385,068	21
Egypt	23,000 (2016)		95,688,681	2
El Salvador	20,000 (2016)		6,344,722	32
Equatorial Guinea	5,800 (2016)		1,221,490	41
Eritrea	1,600 (2016)		4,954,645	3
Estonia	1,000 (2016)		1,312,442	7
Ethiopia	19,000 (2016)		102,403,196	2
Federated States of Micronesia	290 (2016)		104,937	29
Fiji	857 (2016)		898,760	10
Finland		4,000 (2009)[17]	5,503,132	7
France	30,000 (2018)[18]		64,720,690	5
Gabon	368 (2016)		1,979,786	2
Gambia	3,100 (2016)		2,038,501	15
Georgia	6,500 (2016)		3,925,405	17
Germany		300,000 (2009)[17]	81,914,672	37
Ghana	52,000 (2016)		28,206,728	18
Greece		10,500 –15,000 (2009)[17]	11,183,716	9 - 13
Guatemala	26,000 (2016)		16,582,469	16
Guinea	8,400 (2016)		12,395,924	7
Guinea-Bissau	3,100 (2016)		1,815,698	17
Guyana	5,300 (2016)		773,303	69
Haiti	70,000 (2016)		10,847,334	65
Honduras	23,000 (2016)		9,112,867	25

Hungary		20,000 - 25,000 (2006)[19]	9,753,281	21 - 26
India	660,000 (2016)		1,324,171,354	5
Indonesia	230,000 (2016)		261,115,456	9
Iran		91,500 (2015)[20]	80,277,428	11
Iraq		No data	37,202,572	-
Ireland	1,000 (2016)		4,726,078	2
Israel		12,000 (2015)[21]	8,191,828	15
Italy		60,000 (2009)[17]	59,429,938	10
Ivory Coast	9,200 (2016)		23,695,919	4
Jamaica	19,000 (2016)		2,881,355	66
Japan		No data	127,748,513	-
Jordan		No data	9,455,802	-
Kazakhstan	19,000 (2016)		17,987,736	11
Kenya	167,900 (2018)		48,461,567	35
Kiribati	114 (2016)		114,395	10
Kuwait		No data	4,052,584	-
Kyrgyzstan	7,100 (2016)		5,955,734	12
Laos	13,000 (2016)		6,758,353	19
Latvia		29,558 (2006)[16]	1,970,530	150
Lebanon	4,200 (2016)		6,006,668	7
Lesotho	6,300 (2016)		2,203,821	29
Liberia	1,800 (2016)		4,613,823	2
Libya		No data	6,293,253	-
Lithuania		1,000 – 3,000 (unknown)[22]	2,908,249	3 - 10
Luxembourg		300 (2009)[17]	575,747	5
Macedonia	3,600 (2016)		2,081,206	17
Madagascar	170,000 (2016)		24,894,551	68
Malawi	9,300 (2016)		18,091,575	5
Malaysia	21,000 (2016)		31,187,265	7
Maldives		1,139 (2013)[23]	427,756	27
Mali	36,000 (2016)		17,994,837	20
Marshall Islands	250 (2016)		53,066	47
Mauritania	315 (2016)		4,301,018	1
Mauritius	6,200 (2016)		1,262,132	49
Mexico	240,000 (2016)		127,540,423	19
Moldova	12,000 (2016)		4,059,608	30
Mongolia	1,300 (2016)		3,027,398	4
Morocco	7000,000 (2017)		36,276,786	21

Mozambique	14,000 (2016)		28,829,476	5
Myanmar	66,000 (2016)		52,885,223	13
Namibia	8,100 (2016)		2,479,713	33
Nepal	67,000 (2016)		28,982,771	23
Netherlands	25,000 (2016)		16,987,330	15
New Zealand		5,932 (2005)[24]	4,660,833	13
Nicaragua	18,000 (2016)		6,149,928	29
Niger	47,000 (2016)		20,672,987	23
Nigeria		103,500 (2015)	185,989,640	5
North Korea		25,000 (2014)[25]	25,368,620	10
Norway		3,000 (2009)[17]	5,254,694	6
Oman		No data	4,424,762	-
Pakistan	230,000 (2016)		193,203,476	12
Palestine		No data	4,790,705	-
Panama	5,200 (2016)		4,034,119	13
Papua New Guinea		No data	8,084,991	-
Paraguay	3,400 (2016)		6,725,308	5
Peru	67,000 (2016)		31,773,839	21
Philippines	152,600 (2016)		103,320,222	15
Poland		19,000 (unknown)[15]	38,224,410	5
Portugal		28,000 (2005)[26]	10,371,627	27
Qatar		No data	2,569,804	-
Romania		158,225 (2006)[16]	19,778,083	80
Russia		3,000,000 (2006)[27]	143,964,513	208
Rwanda	12,000 (2016)		11,917,508	10
Samoa	400 (2016)		195,125	21
São Tomé and Príncipe	89 (2016)		199,910	5
Saudi Arabia		No data	32,275,687	-
Senegal	21,000 (2016)		15,411,614	14
Serbia	3,900 (2016)		8,820,083	4
Seychelles	586 (2016)		94,228	62
Sierra Leone	240,000 (2016)		7,396,190	325
Singapore		No data	5,622,455	-
Slovakia		21,777 (2006)[16]	5,444,218	40
Slovenia		29,090 (2006)[16]	2,077,862	140
Somalia	11,000 (2016)		14,317,996	7
South Africa	24,000 (2016)		56,015,473	4

South Korea			50,791,919	98-197
South Sudan	5,000 (2016)		12,230,730	4
Spain	70,000 (2016)		46,347,576	15
Sri Lanka	14,000 (2016)		20,798,492	7
Sudan	210,000 (2016)		39,578,828	53
Suriname	2,200 (2016)		558,368	39
Swaziland	4,000 (2016)		1,343,098	30
Sweden		2,500 (2009)[17]	9,837,533	3
Switzerland	20,000 (2016)		8,401,739	24
Syria	25,000 (2016)		18,430,453	14
Taiwan		100,000 (2011)[28]	23,556,706	43
Tajikistan	14,000 (2016)		8,734,951	16
Tanzania	160,000 (2016)		55,572,201	29
Thailand	144,000 (2016)		68,863,514	20
Togo	10,000 (2016)		7,606,374	13
Tonga	1,000 (2016)		107,122	93
Tunisia	25,000 (2016)		11,403,248	22
Turkey	100,000+ (2016)[29]		79,512,426	13+
Turkmenistan		5,663 (2006)[16]	5,662,544	10
Tuvalu	10 (2016)		11,097	9
Trinidad and Tobago	1000 (2016)		1,353,895	7.3
Uganda		No data	41,487,965	-
Ukraine	80,000 (2016)		44,438,625	18
United Arab Emirates		30,000 (unknown)[15]	9,269,612	32
United Kingdom	72,800 (2016)[30]		65,788,574	11
United States		1,000,000 (2010)[31]	322,179,605	31
Uruguay	8,200 (2016)		3,444,006	24
Uzbekistan	22,000 (2016)		31,446,795	7
Vanuatu	2,000 (2016)		270,402	74
Venezuela		473,523 (2006)[16]	31,568,179	150
Vietnam	72,000 (2016)		94,569,072	7
Yemen	54,000 (2016)		27,584,213	20
Zambia	9,300 (2016)		16,591,390	6
Zimbabwe		12,383 (2013)[32]	16,150,362	8

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