

Selling Desperate Syrian Refugees' Body Parts: Israeli Man arrested in Turkey for Organ Trafficking

Trafficking is on the rise in largest refugee crisis since WWII. Struggling Syrians have resorted to selling organs

By [Ben Norton](#)

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The situation in Syria today is nothing short of catastrophic. More than half of the entire population has been displaced in a civil war now approaching its fifth year, and almost 4.3 million Syrian refugees are [registered with the U.N.](#) Millions are crowded into densely populated refugee camps in neighboring Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon. Many live on the street, and few have access to basic resources or job prospects.

Traffickers have taken advantage of Syrian refugees' desperation, in hopes of making money.

An Israeli man was arrested in Turkey today for organ trafficking. He came to Istanbul to try to convince impoverished Syrian refugees to sell their organs, in a story first reported by Turkey's Doğan News Agency, and later by Israel's [YNet](#) and Germany's [Deutsche Welle](#).

According to Turkish and Israeli media, he was making plans to perform illegal surgeries on struggling Syrian refugees in small Turkish hospitals.

The alleged trafficker was identified in the Turkish media as Boris Walker, but YNet reports that the man is likely Boris Wolfman, a wanted criminal who fled Israel after being indicted for organ trafficking.

Wolfman was wanted by Interpol, the international police organization, for past organ trafficking.

Patients illegally receiving an organ had to pay between €70,000 and €100,000, according to the indictment, whereas refugee organ donors received just tens of thousands of euros, resulting in tens of thousands of euros in profit for each transplant.

Previously, Wolfman was charged with organ trafficking and organizing illegal transplants in Kosovo, Azerbaijan, and Sri Lanka, in a series of alleged offenses committed between 2008 and 2014.

The organ trafficker had put ads in Russian newspapers to attract potential donors. YNet reported that Wolfman "did not explain to the donors about the physical and mental risks they face, denying them of the information they needed to make the decision."

In Kosovo, organ donors were allegedly released without any medical supervision, explanation about needed medical treatments, or critical health advice. At least one teenage boy, who had his kidney removed, was paralyzed after not receiving proper treatment.

A Turkish court ruled Wolfman will be extradited back to Israel after a 40-day arrest period.

The [black market for organs has been flourishing](#) in the Middle East in the past few years, with the influx of millions of refugees. In 2013, Lebanese smugglers told Der Spiegel that, because of the desperation in which many refugees live, there are “more sellers than buyers.”

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the U.N. refugee agency, has been overwhelmed by the worst refugee crisis the world has seen [since World War II](#). It drastically lacks the funds it needs to adequately address the needs of millions of refugees. The UNHCR is in such great need of funding that it, with the White House, [resorted to creating a Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign](#) to raise money.

With 60 million people driven from their homes, trafficking and enslavement are on the rise, [the U.N. warned](#) this week.

Many refugees have lost everything, and have [given smugglers their life savings](#) and even sacrificed their lives in dangerous voyages in hopes of seeking asylum in a European continent that has been largely hostile to their arrival.

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