



The Scale of the Problem

The UK

UK statistics

- Children as young as three have been trafficked into the UK for sexual exploitation. (ECPAT) [2007, ECPAT UK report, "Bordering on Concern: Child Trafficking in Wales", p9](#)
- During 2003 there were an estimated 4,000 victims of trafficking for prostitution in the UK at any given time. (Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights) [Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights report, "Human Trafficking", Twenty-sixth Report of Session 2005-06, p28](#)
- The UK government reported that it identified 2,744 potential trafficking victims in the UK in 2013, a 22% increase since 2012. This included 1,616 (59%) females and 910 (33%) males of which 602 were children, a 10% increase in potential child victims since 2012. [NCA Strategic Assessment: The Nature and Scale of Human Trafficking in 2013, Sept 2014](#)
- 'In 2013, UK authorities reported prosecuting at least 139 trafficking offenders, compared with 148 in 2012, and convicting 148 defendants, compared with 103 convictions in 2012.' [TIP Report, 2014, p395](#)

UK case studies from Hope for Justice

Edward*

"I needed to earn enough money for my daughter for her school, and I was told about a good job in England, so me and two others took it. We were picked up and driven to a port; we went on a ferry to England. When we arrived they said we were going to work for good money, so we worked very hard, for long hours, to finish the job well. But when we finished, we never got paid. Instead we were locked up.

They forced us to do more work. They would beat us and threaten us if we didn't finish the work. We couldn't go anywhere because they took our passports, ID and money. We were stuck. I felt hopeless, totally powerless. We would fix up houses, do gardening...I had to move heavy things that I could not even lift. I had to work from the early morning until very, very late 7 days a week. All we were given was some tobacco, alcohol, bread and butter for the week, so that's how we lived.

At this time, I knew I was a slave.





I felt very sick, hungry and tired all the time. I was sold, from person to person, bartered for right in front of my face. I heard one man say I wasn't even worth £300. I felt worthless. Like rubbish on the floor. I wished that I could die, that it could all be behind. I just wanted a painless death. I finally decided I would rather be killed trying to escape than stay.

I knew one man who lived a long way away. I had no money or transport so I had to walk as fast as I could or they would catch me. My legs are bad because they beat me but I had to keep going. I walked for 10 days straight with no stopping. I walked about 200 miles, but I was very scared and lost so I walked a lot extra. Look! These are the shoes I found, they are the wrong size but they are all I had. When I was walking all I could think about was (the traffickers). They are chasing me, they will find me. I was very worried. I was very worried. I thought of my daughter too. I had let her down so much. I felt shameful. I was very cold, hungry and alone. I couldn't find help anywhere. Eventually I reached the city of my friend, but had no way to find him. I knew this was the end for me.

I was very happy when I met with Hope for Justice. I knew someone was going to help me! They gave me new clothes, food and a very comfortable bed. They took me to London to get a new passport. Hope for Justice have been very good to me. I didn't expect any help, I thought I was finished. I am so happy to be free, to be alive!"

*Names and some details changed to protect identities.

Tobias & Elena's* Family

Tobias, along with his wife Elena and young children, came to UK to do jobs they'd seen on the internet. On arrival they were given accommodation as promised but it was squalid and totally unacceptable for their children.

After working for 4 weeks both Tobias and Elena were paid just £5. For their families' sake they decided to leave, but try as they may they couldn't find alternative work and felt they had no choice but to turn back to the same 'franchise' which had various jobs across the country. At the next place they worked, unreasonable 'expenses' grew into a 'debt' to their employer and they were forced to buy the materials for their work with their own money. The debt spiralled; their captors became increasingly violent. Physical and verbal abuse ended with Tobias being stabbed.

Sitting in the hospital he had every reason to fear further reprisals. Too terrified to make a formal police complaint, he simply returned to their life of exploitation. Two months later the family were reached by the front-line service of an organisation trained by Hope for Justice. Their team had been taught the signs to spot and called in our experts.

Hope for Justice arranged for immediate safe accommodation so that the family never had to go back to exploitation. Tobias' and Elena had nothing but the small amount of possessions





they could carry for themselves and their children in their arms. Our specialist team worked to meet the families' immediate needs including a good meal and plenty of milk for their smallest child. Now they're in aftercare receiving all the support they require and the Hope for Justice investigators have plenty of fresh intelligence for their fight against slavery. This is the end of the families' nightmare; after year on year of fruitless labour, debt, and violence, they are now free and starting the life they deserve.

*Names and some details changed to protect identities.

Routes in to the UK

There are a range of points of entry for victims trafficked into and out of the UK. Hope for Justice has seen smaller airports targeted but also, increasingly, ports used as easy access into the UK particularly from Europe.

Common themes in victim targeting

Hope for Justice have recorded a number of common themes that reoccur in the stories of the victims we've assisted. Victims are targeted overseas and in the UK, those individuals recruited for forced labour are often:

- alcoholics
- homeless
- unemployed
- wanted on outstanding arrest warrants for petty crimes
- unable to speak much or any English

UK Prosecution Rates

- *'In 2013, UK authorities reported prosecuting at least 139 trafficking offenders, compared with 148 in 2012, and convicting 148 defendants, compared with 103 convictions in 2012. While the UK government did not provide comprehensive conviction and sentencing data, it did provide data for certain specific cases that demonstrate vigorous prosecution, conviction, and sentencing of a significant number of traffickers during the reporting period.*

For instance, in March 2013, the trafficker of two teenaged Nigerian girls was sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment. In May 2013, a man and his son were sentenced to eight and five years' imprisonment, respectively, for holding homeless and drug or alcohol-addicted men in forced labor on a paving crew. In June 2013, seven gang members were given sentences totaling 95 years' imprisonment for the sex trafficking of girls in Oxford. In July 2013, a man was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment for buying a Romanian woman from those who had trafficked her into the UK and subsequently enslaving her in prostitution in Manchester; he was extradited from Spain, where he was serving a four-year prison





sentence for human trafficking. In October 2013, a Pakistani man and his wife were sentenced to 13 and five years' imprisonment, respectively, for holding a deaf Pakistani girl in their home for domestic service and benefits fraud; in February 2014 their sentences were increased by the Court of Appeals to 15 and six years' incarceration, respectively, to reflect the severity of the offense. In January 2014, five Hungarians were convicted of sex trafficking following a joint investigation between police in the UK and Hungary.

The Home Secretary publicly called prosecution rates "shockingly low," but maintained that traffickers are being prosecuted for other equally serious offenses. The UK government did not report any investigations, prosecutions, or convictions of government employees complicit in human trafficking.' [TIP Report, 2014, p395](#)

Prosecution rates remain worryingly low in the UK for a number of reasons:

1. Trafficking is a hidden crime and many victims are never identified. This issue is a combination of the covert nature of criminal activity and a lack of awareness on the part of too many staff whose job is to interface with vulnerable people caused by a lack of training.
2. Traffickers often operate across several borders which makes them difficult to detect and means investigations can be highly complex and multi-jurisdictional. Without a coordinated approach to fighting trafficking in which everyone is clear of their own part to play and of whom else they should be communicating with, the traffickers will maintain their upper hand. This is why it remains crucial that frontline staff, like police personnel and social workers, share their suspicions and information with the UK Human Trafficking Centre, local police and with other related parties. If a victim arrives in the port of Dover and is trafficked via London where he is passed from one trafficker (the transporter) to another trafficker (the recipient) and ends up in Bradford, the investigating officer needs to share his intelligence with the UKHTC, constabulary in West Yorkshire, Kent and SCO9 in the Met. There also may be additional agencies who need to know this information e.g. Gangmasters Licensing Authority (if the victim has been working in the food or food related industry), HMRC (in the event of child benefit fraud), Benefit Fraud department of DWP (in the event of other types of benefit fraud).
3. Some victims are too fearful or too traumatised to come forward and identify themselves as trafficked or give evidence because of their experience. In some cases encountered by Hope for Justice, victims actually encountered police officers directly but were too afraid to disclose their situation and passed up the opportunity to exit it because of the violence and threats made against them. In only 15.6% of cases from 2011-2012, did the victim feel confident and safe enough to cooperate with police investigations on the day they exited exploitation (Hope for Justice, 2012). However, after a few weeks in aftercare the number of victims





requesting Hope for Justice advocate for a police investigation and prosecution of their oppressors rises to 78%.

4. Victims that have come forward, or been intercepted by the police, have been prosecuted themselves for offences committed whilst trafficked as a result of desperation or duress. In contravention of the Convention on Human Trafficking and of Crown Prosecution Service Guidance it was found, between 1 April 2009 – 28 February 2010, that a staggering 40% of victims who received a positive Reasonable Grounds Decision (indicating that they were likely trafficked) were in prison at the time of referral (Freedom of Information Request, ref. no. 20100202, Response Date 30 March 2010). A further 29.7% were being held in immigration detention centres at the time of their referral to the Government's National Referral Mechanism which exists to identify trafficking victims. Here in the UK, we may well be convicting or deporting more victims of human trafficking than perpetrators.

Lack of Knowledge and Awareness

Prosecution rates increase where levels of knowledge and awareness is high. The public sector and civil society need to take the same approach to human trafficking as they have to domestic violence over the last 10 years by investing in training on recognising the signs and dealing with it promptly and definitively. Currently, too few frontline workers have knowledge of the law and policies designed to protect trafficking victims. When some of our victims have

presented themselves at the police station their complaint has not been taken seriously, the trafficking offences have not been recognised and the investigation has not been taken forward. This has been the case despite the fact that the law clearly states that failing to identify and protect a victim, or investigate a case of human trafficking, is in breach of obligations under the European Convention on Human trafficking and the European Convention on Human Rights.

Improving knowledge levels amongst frontline professionals is an achievable aim that will have a far-reaching impact. Hope for Justice provide general and tailored made training free of charge on a variety of subjects including spotting the signs of trafficking and administering the National Referral Mechanism Process for identifying victims and entering them into aftercare.

Global Problem

Unlike drugs or arms, a person's labour can be sold again and again. Serious organised criminals know this and recognise the profit available. Our response to their increased interest and investments need to be just as serious and organised. Human trafficking represents a complicated global economy with the same issues of transnational supply and demand that occur in other markets. The UK is largely a destination country for victims trafficked into exploitation as part of this worldwide trade. However, internal trafficking occurs in the UK too.





This is when anybody, including UK citizens and residents, are moved from location to location within the UK by deception or coercion or because of a position of vulnerability for the purpose of exploitation.

Global Statistics

- 29.8 million estimated slaves worldwide. ([Global Slavery Index](#))
- 1.2mn children are being trafficked every year; this is in addition to million already held captive by trafficking. (UNICEF) [2007, Press Release](#)
- People were found to be trafficked from 127 source countries to be exploited in 137 destination countries. (UNODC) – Many nations are both sources and destinations. [2008, UN Office on Drugs & Crime, UN Press Release Note No.6152](#)
- 600,000 to 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders annually, 80% of victims are female, and up to 50% are children. (US State Dept.) [June 2005, US Department of State, 'Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000: Trafficking in Persons Report', quote from 'Introduction: Prostitution and Sex Trafficking'](#)
- In Europe, 95% of women victims experienced physical or sexual violence whilst trafficked. (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) [2006, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, 'Stolen smiles: a summary report on the physical and psychological health consequences of women and adolescents trafficked in Europe', p10](#)
- \$31.6bn is actually made from the forced labour of trafficking victims, with \$15bn of that money being generated within industrialised nations like our own. (International Labour Organisation) [ILO Report 'Forced Labour and Human Trafficking: Estimating the Profits', 2005, p. iii.](#)
- [Click here](#) to find out your own 'Slavery Footprint' and see how many slaves work for you.

Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report

The U.S Department of State explains the position of the TIP report in international anti-trafficking efforts as follows:

The Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report is the U.S. Government's principal diplomatic tool to engage foreign governments on human trafficking. It is also the world's most comprehensive resource of governmental anti-human trafficking efforts and reflects the U.S. Government's commitment to global leadership on this key human rights and law enforcement issue. It represents an updated, global look at the nature and scope of trafficking in persons and the broad range of government actions to confront and eliminate it. The U.S. Government uses the TIP





Report to engage foreign governments in dialogues to advance anti-trafficking reforms and to combat trafficking and to target resources on prevention, protection and prosecution programs. Worldwide, the report is used by international organizations, foreign governments, and nongovernmental organizations alike as a tool to examine where resources are most needed. Freeing victims, preventing trafficking, and bringing traffickers to justice are the ultimate goals of the report and of the U.S Government's anti-human trafficking policy.

In the TIP Report, the Department of State places each country onto one of three tiers based on the extent of their governments' efforts to comply with the "minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking" found in Section 108 of the TVPA. While Tier 1 is the highest ranking, it does not mean that a country has no human trafficking problem. On the contrary, a Tier 1 ranking indicates that a government has acknowledged the existence of human trafficking, made efforts to address the problem, and complies with the TVPA's minimum standards. Each year, governments need to demonstrate appreciable progress in combating trafficking to maintain a Tier 1 ranking.

(July 2012, <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/>)

You can read the full [2014 Report](#) online, highlights include the 'UK Country Narrative' and the 'Topics of Interest' page which explains the cost of a job in different parts of the world. You can also browse editions from [previous years](#).