

# TRAFFICKING FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION FACT SHEET

## Definition

- Human trafficking is the movement of a person from one place to another into conditions of exploitation, using deception, coercion, the abuse of power or the abuse of someone's vulnerability. Although human trafficking often involves an international cross-border element, it is also possible to be a victim of human trafficking within your own country. Our primary concern in this strategy is with trafficking for sexual exploitation, which includes prostitution, child sexual exploitation, escort work and pornography (although people are also trafficked for domestic servitude, forced labour and other purposes).
- The relationship between smuggling and trafficking is complex. In cases of smuggling, the relationship between the person entering the country and the agent who smuggled them comes to an end once the cost of the journey has been paid and they have arrived. In cases of trafficking, this relationship continues after they have arrived in the country. Trafficking can occur alongside smuggling but not every victim of trafficking is smuggled. Trafficked victims can enter the country with the correct legal documents, often at the promise of potential job opportunities that turn out to be different to those expected by the victim.
- Regardless of the route of entry, most women and children trafficked for sexual exploitation suffer extreme violations of their human rights, including the right to liberty, the right to dignity and security of person, the right not to be held in slavery or involuntary servitude, the right to be free from cruel and inhumane treatment, the right to be free from violence, and the right to health.
- The UN Trafficking Protocol states that if the consent of a victim of trafficking is obtained through prohibited means (threats, force, deception, coercion or through abuse of power) then the consent is negated. A child is not capable of consenting to such conduct, regardless of whether it was obtained improperly, because the law affords them special status due to their position as vulnerable persons.
- Trafficking under 18 year olds for sexual exploitation is Child Sexual Exploitation.

## Key Drivers and Risk Factors

- Poverty, gender-based discrimination and a history of sexual and physical violence are all factors that can make women and children vulnerable to traffickers. Those who traffick for sexual exploitation are generally motivated by financial gain and the wish to control their female victims.
- Some women are abducted and sold, some are deceived into consenting by the promise of a better life or a better job, and some feel that entrusting themselves to traffickers is the only economically viable option. Some will enter the country willingly, in the belief that they will be found legitimate employment, only to become trapped in prostitution.

## Local and National Picture

### National

- The Home Office estimates that between 1,000 and 10,000 women and girls are trafficked into the United Kingdom each year for sexual exploitation, many are trafficked to or through London. The House of Commons Home Affairs Committee estimated that around 6,000 of the 8,000 women involved in off-street prostitution in London's brothels, 'saunas' and 'massage parlours' are foreign nationals; it is believed that a significant number of them have been trafficked.

- There were 447 offences of trafficking for sexual exploitation reported to the Metropolitan Police Service in 2012/13, a significant increase from 32 offences five years ago (2007-08).
- Project Acumen, an Association of Chief Police Officers investigation, identified 2,600 female victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in England and Wales and 9,600 who are considered to be vulnerable (falling short of the trafficking threshold but having cultural or financial factors that prevent them from exiting prostitution).
- In 2014, the National Referral Mechanism identified 671 potential victims of trafficking under the age of 18. Of these, 157 were trafficked for sexual exploitation, 66 of which were UK citizens and 141 were girls.

### Local

- Partnership activity to identify prostitutes within the Royal Borough identified 8 individual women working in brothels, three of whom disclosed that they had been trafficked to the UK. The intelligence gathered during this work identified a further 38 potential brothels, suggesting that there are approximately 150 active sex workers in the Royal Borough. Work in other London Boroughs suggests that at least 10% of these sex workers will have been trafficked into the United Kingdom.
- Analysis for Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board showed that there were 75 children identified at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation between 1st April 2012 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013.
- In 2014, 3 females under the age of 18 were referred by Royal Greenwich to the National Referral Mechanism.

### Resources for Professionals

- Crown Prosecution Service Action Plan on Human Trafficking and Slavery: Action plan agreed at a meeting held by the Director of Public Prosecutions. Available [here](#).
- National Referral Mechanism: a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking and ensuring they receive the appropriate protection and support. Available [here](#).
- National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) Helpline: 24 hour helpline offering advice and support for anybody with concerns about a child. 0800 5000 or [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

### Services for Victims

- Children and Families Across Borders: The only non-government organisation in the United Kingdom set up specifically to deal with child protection cases which involve the United Kingdom and one or more countries. Provides guidance, counselling and practical support on a range of complex international child protection issues. [www.cfab.org.uk](http://www.cfab.org.uk)
- Eaves' Poppy Project: Provides high-quality support, advocacy and accommodation to trafficked women. [\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_](#)
- Housing 4 women – RePlace: Provides second stage accommodation to women who have been trafficked to the United Kingdom from outside the European Union (after their initial stay in safe houses). [\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_](#)
- Salvation Army: Works with any sex workers or victims of trafficking identified through the Metropolitan Police Service SO7 team. Available [here](#).
- Stop the Traffik: Works to inspire, inform, equip and mobilise communities to know what trafficking is, how to identify it and how to respond, and how to protect themselves and others. [www.stopthetraffik.org](http://www.stopthetraffik.org)

- Childline (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children): 24 hour helpline for young people. 0800 1111 or [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- Greenwich Domestic Violence and Abuse Services: Provides a specialist Information Line, outreach and accommodation services for women and children experiencing domestic abuse. [www.gdva.org.uk](http://www.gdva.org.uk)
- Her Centre: Provides support and advocacy for victims residing in Royal Greenwich. 0203 260 7772 or [www.hercentre.org](http://www.hercentre.org)
- Metropolitan Police Service Community Safety Unit: Every London borough has a team of specially trained officers whose task is to investigate crimes of domestic abuse. Available [here](#).
- Victim Support: Provides emotional support and practical information for all victims of crime. 0808 1689 111 or [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

### **Further Information**

This information has been taken from the Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2015-18. For more information contact the Safer Communities Team on 020 8921 8396 or [community-safety@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:community-safety@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)