

Modern Slavery - Policy Briefing Paper

Modern slavery affects people from all over the world, including here in the United Kingdom. The government is committed to stamping out this abhorrent crime, building on the UK's strong track record in supporting victims and tackling the perpetrators.

The [Modern Slavery Bill](#) was introduced in the House of Commons on 10 June 2014 and is currently being [debated](#). The bill is currently at the committee stage and the next reading will take place on 14 October 2014.

The bill would provide law enforcement with stronger tools to stamp out modern slavery, ensure slave drivers can receive suitably severe punishments and enhance protection of and support for victims.

The Bill extends to England and Wales and has four main parts:

- Part 1 would largely consolidate the existing slavery and trafficking offences. Part 2 would introduce two new civil orders to enable the courts to place restrictions on those convicted of modern slavery offences, or those involved in such offences but not yet convicted.
- Part 3 would establish a new Anti-Slavery Commissioner to encourage good practice on the prevention of modern slavery offences and the identification of victims.
- Part 4 is based largely on the Joint Committee's recommendations on treatment of victims. It includes a new statutory defence for slavery or trafficking victims compelled to commit criminal offences, and provision for new child trafficking advocates.

Offences - The Bill would:

- consolidate and simplify existing modern slavery offences into one Act to provide clarity and focus when prosecuting slave drivers and traffickers
- increase the maximum sentence available for offenders to life imprisonment, with those who have a previous conviction for a serious sexual or violent offence facing an automatic life sentence
- ensure that perpetrators convicted of slavery or trafficking face the toughest asset confiscation regime
- give the courts new powers to order perpetrators of slavery and trafficking to pay financial redress to their victims

Prevention and Risk Orders - The Bill would introduce:

- Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders to restrict the activity of individuals who have been convicted of modern slavery offences, where they pose a risk of causing harm
- Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders, to restrict the activity of individuals who have not been convicted of a modern slavery offence, where they pose a risk of causing harm

The Bill would create a new Anti-Slavery Commissioner to ensure law enforcement is doing all it can to tackle this crime.

Protection of Victims - The Bill would:

- create a statutory defence for victims of modern slavery so that those who are forced to commit an offence are not treated as criminals by the criminal justice system; the defence will not apply to serious sexual and violent offences
- extend special measures so that all victims of modern slavery are supported through the criminal justice process
- provide statutory guidance on victim identification and victim services
- provide an enabling power for child advocates to support child victims of trafficking
- create a statutory duty for public bodies including the police, local authorities and immigration personnel to notify the National Crime Agency about potential victims of modern slavery

Law enforcement powers at sea - The Bill would close loopholes which prevent the police and Border Force being able to act where it is suspected that human trafficking or forced labour is taking place on board vessels at sea.

Extent of the Issue

The [Trafficking in Persons Report 2014](#) produced by the U.S State Department says there is evidence of forced labour and sex trafficking in Malaysia and Thailand. It highlights Malaysia's problem with migrants from other Asian nations who seek work on farms, factories and construction sites only to be trapped and have their passports taken and wages withheld.

The National Crime Agency (NCA) have reported a [rise in UK trafficking, slavery and exploitation](#) to more than 2,700. The rise includes people lured to the country after meeting people via online dating or job recruitment sites.

Romania remains the most likely country of origin for victims, followed by Poland and the UK.

The 2013 NCA says trafficking does not have to involve crossing international borders. Investigators say the rise is partly down to better reporting, including an increase in the number of children feared to be victims of sexual exploitation gangs.

Victims by country of origin	Number of Victims
Romania	307
Poland	239
UK	193
Albania	192
Nigeria	158
Slovakia	143
Vietnam	138
Hungary	136
Lithuania	104
Thailand	89

More than half of the Romanians in the figures were being exploited for sex, according to the NCA's annual intelligence assessment.

People from Poland were the most likely victims of labour exploitation - forced to work in agriculture, construction, factories and car washes.

Almost all of the 55 children who were being used to make false benefit claims originated from Slovakia, the report says.

The NCA says victims were being trafficked from Eastern Europe on the expectation of legitimate work which never materialised.

What is happening in the West Midlands?

379 potential victims are reported to have been subject to some exploitation within the West Midlands region. Of these, 40% potential victims experienced sexual exploitation, which was the most prominent exploitation type reported in the region, followed by labour exploitation.

The most prevalent county of origin of potential victims who encountered exploitation in the West Midlands region, where known, was Poland, which accounted for 149 victims, followed by Romania (68 victims).

Resources

A booklet produced by the home office on modern slavery can be found on the following webpage: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-uk-action-to-tackle-the-crime>

[Short film shows the full extent of slavery in the UK](#) - The Home Office has launched a new short film that lays bare the issue of modern slavery in the UK.

[Victims of human trafficking and the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme](#) guide has been published.

Other Information

Karen Bradley, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Modern Slavery and Organised Crime) has responsibilities for:

- modern slavery
- organised crime including:
 - National Crime Agency
 - serious organised crime
 - cyber crime and security
 - fraud and asset recovery
- security exports
- Olympic legacy
- European Union including Justice and Home Affairs opt-out
- Home Office parliamentary champion
- Home Office small and medium-sized enterprises champion

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