

Human Trafficking

DEFINITION: As in the United Nations Palermo Protocol, human trafficking involves three main elements:

- **THE ACT:** Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of persons.
- **THE MEANS:** Threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or vulnerability, or giving payments or benefits to a person in control of the victim-survivor.
- **THE PURPOSE:** For the purpose of exploitation, which includes exploiting the prostitution of others, sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery or similar practices and the removal of organs.

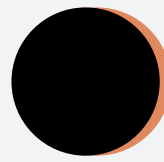
Where the victim-survivor is under the age of 18, only 'the act' and 'the purpose' are needed to establish a crime of human trafficking.

Someone doesn't have to be transported across borders for human trafficking to take place. Trafficking is defined by the movement of a person, and this can happen within a single country or even within a single community.

- 50% of trafficking victim-survivors were trafficked into sexual exploitation and 38% for forced labour.¹
- 67% of people investigated or arrested for trafficking in persons are men, and 33% women.²
- 46% of trafficking victim-survivors are women, 34% are children, and 20% are men.³

CASE STUDY: International students from India attending Greenwich, Chester and Teesside universities were brought to the UK on student visas but vanished from their courses and were found working in exploitative conditions hundreds of miles away. The students stopped attending lectures shortly after arriving in the UK. They were later found in the care sector in Wales, where they were living in squalid conditions with up to 12 people in a three-bedroom flat, and were working up to 80 hours a week for far less than minimum wage. The students had just 16 hours of online training before starting working in the care homes, and in most cases had not undergone sufficient background checks as false information was provided to the care homes by the suspected exploiters, who ran a staff agency.

Source: *The Guardian*



Forced Labour

DEFINITION: As in the ILO Forced Labour Convention, forced labour is all work or service which is exacted from any person under the threat of a penalty and for which the person has not offered themselves voluntarily. Almost every form of modern slavery includes some element of forced labour.



Forced labour exploitation is most often found in industries with informal workers and/or little regulation. These include:

- Agriculture and fishing
- Services such as hospitality and transport
- Domestic work
- Construction, mining, quarrying and brick kilns
- Manufacturing, processing and packaging
- Sex work, including sexual exploitation
- Market trading
- Illicit trades and illegal activities

Many people who are subjected to forced labour are deceived into thinking they will be getting legitimate employment.

- **Forced labour** affects at least 27.6 million people worldwides.⁴
- **Globally, 17.3 million people** experience forced labour exploitation in the private sector, including in domestic work, manufacturing, construction and agricultures.⁵
- **Nearly 4 million people** live in forced labour imposed by state authorities.⁶
- **More than half** of all forced labour occurs in high-income and upper-middle income countries.⁷

CASE STUDY: Liam and Jakob were experiencing homelessness in northern Europe when a person they thought was a prospective employer offered them a job in construction, along with room and board, in a neighbouring country. They left their country with fake passports and worked hard laying asphalt and stone in residential neighbourhoods. Their “employer” forced the men to work long hours, continually reduced their wages, and physically abused them. They were routinely moved around and often unsure of where they were even located. When their “employer” abruptly left, the men were able to seek assistance at their national embassy. Eventually, their “employer” was arrested and convicted of human trafficking.

Sexual Exploitation

DEFINITION: A form of forced labour, sexual exploitation is any actual or attempted abuse of position of vulnerability, power over someone or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

Some victim-survivors of sexual exploitation are also exploited in other ways, such as being forced into domestic servitude or into drugs supply.

- **6.3 million people worldwide endure forced commercial sexual exploitation.**⁸
- **67% of people trafficked for sexual exploitation are women.**⁹

CASE STUDY: Sophie was trafficked from the UK to Italy for sexual exploitation. The person who trafficked her wasn't a stranger; he was her best friend. Sophie had known her abuser for five years. She'd met him in the north of England, and they'd spent five years building what Sophie thought to be a trusting relationship. Later, as it transpired, her abuser used this time period to groom her, discover personal details that would later be used to trap and manipulate her.

This man seized Sophie's passport and made threats to her and her family. He forced her onto the streets in Italy to sell her body for sex. For six months, she suffered through abuse, sexual exploitation, manipulation, sleep deprivation and starvation.

After six months of mental and physical abuse Sophie stumbled into a hospital, sick and exhausted. Here, she found the courage to call her mother. And that moment was the beginning of the end of her ordeal. The end of an indescribable time in Sophie's life and the start of recovery.

Source: Sophie Hayes Foundation



Criminal Exploitation

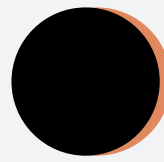
DEFINITION: Criminal exploitation takes place when someone is forced, threatened and/or blackmailed into criminal activity for someone else. This could include cannabis cultivation, drug dealing, carrying weapons, stealing or shoplifting, using a person's bank account to transfer money gained from drug dealing, or committing benefits fraud.



People experiencing homelessness, especially young men, can be particularly at risk of criminal exploitation. Traffickers are known to exploit vulnerable individuals by approaching them in homeless shelters, food banks and soup kitchens with a view to recruiting them to carry out short term work under the guise of cash-in-hand payment. However this can quickly become criminal work where the recruiter may use drugs and/or alcohol as a means of control over the victim-survivor.

- **46,000 children** in England are thought to be involved in gangs.¹⁰
- **49% of potential victims** identified to the UK's National Referral Mechanism in 2021 for criminal exploitation were children.¹¹

In the UK, the term county lines is a common form of criminal exploitation. It involves gangs and organised criminal networks exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of "deal line". They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.



CASE STUDY: As a child growing up in Newcastle, as a result of violence at home, Harriet started spending as much time as possible away from home and missed a lot of school. She developed friendships with older teens and was exposed to alcohol and drugs, which eventually led to the start of an addiction.

Harriet was approached by a member of a local gang, who offered her money and free drugs and alcohol in return for picking up drugs and dropping them off. It wasn't long before Harriet's addiction grew. She was forced into sexual exploitation alongside County Lines drug trafficking, none of which she was paid for.

This abuse continued for a number of years until she was eventually arrested, recognised as a victim-survivor, and referred to the Unseen Women's Safehouse. At the Safehouse, caseworkers quickly took care of her immediate health needs and ensured she had access to medical care, sexual health clinic, counselling, and drug and alcohol services.

Source: Unseen



Forced Begging

DEFINITION: Forced begging takes place when someone is forced, whether through violence, threats or psychological pressure, into begging.

Those who are forced to beg are made to hand over the money they've earned to their exploiters and commonly suffer abuse if they fail to reach the earning targets they have been set. Children forced to beg experience serious violations of their rights, and are often exposed to severe physical, psychological and emotional abuse.

In some cases, the victim-survivors are deliberately maimed, or have their clothes or shoes taken away, to attract more sympathy. Traffickers will often deliberately target mothers with children or persons with visible disabilities in order to exploit them¹⁴.

Although both criminal exploitation and forced begging are accepted forms of trafficking, research has found that most victim-survivors are not identified, and many are instead prosecuted and treated as criminals by authorities. ¹⁵

CASE STUDY: Carolina, a 13-year-old Romanian girl, was trafficked to the UK by an organised crime group to undertake forced begging. Her own father paid the gang €200 for this. She was driven to Spain and then flown to the UK in December, accompanied by one male offender. She was placed with a male and female offender in Slough, and instructed to call them 'Aunt' and 'Uncle'. Carolina was driven by one offender 40 miles to another town, 5 days a week, where she was made to sell old copies of the Big Issue (a charity magazine) outside the entrance to a Post Office for over 7 hours a day. She was beaten and searched at the end of each day, and was not allowed to keep any of the money she had made. She was also exploited for domestic servitude by the offenders, looking after their children. She was poorly fed and clothed, and this was noticed by members of the public.

Carolina was identified by the police during a raid in January 2008, following a large-scale investigation by the police into the trafficking of Romanian nationals to the UK and other European countries by an organised crime group. She was placed into social services, and then returned to her mother in Romania. Carolina gave evidence against her father and three other offenders, who were convicted for trafficking a child into the UK for forced criminal exploitation.

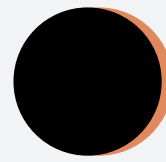
Source: GOV.UK

Domestic Servitude

DEFINITION: Domestic servitude is defined as domestic work where the circumstance and conditions amount to slavery. This may include: employers stopping workers from leaving their home; pay being low, delayed or withheld; pay being given 'in kind', in the form of food and/or accommodation; workers being subjected to violence or threats; workers' identity documents being withheld; or employers limiting workers' contact with family.

Domestic work and domestic servitude are not always slavery, and when properly regulated can be an important source of income for many people. However, when someone is working in another person's home, they may be particularly vulnerable to abuses, exploitation, and slavery, as they might be hidden from sight and lack legal protection.



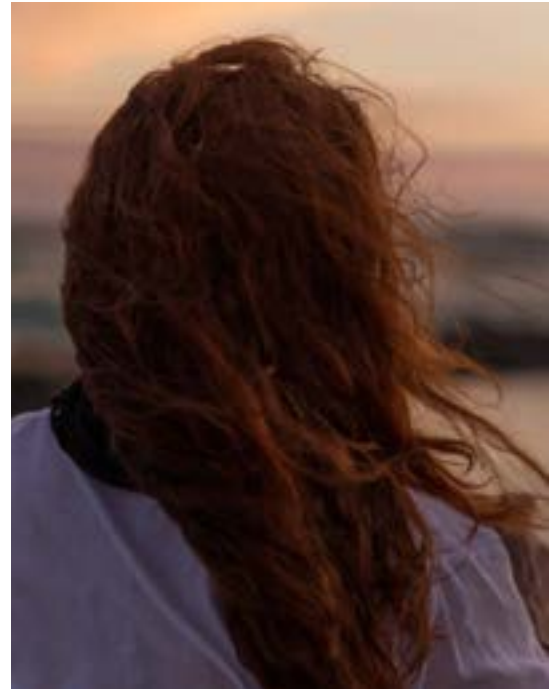


- **1.4 million, of the 17.3 million people in forced labour in the private sector, are exploited in domestic work.**¹⁶
- **More girls under the age of 16 work in domestic service than in any other category of child labour.**¹⁷

CASE STUDY: Tizita's father spent long periods of time away from home working for the military, leaving her mother to provide for the family. She had just given birth to a new baby when a neighbour offered Tizita, who was 12 years old at the time, the chance to move to the city where she could go to school and have a better life.

But once Tizita arrived, she was not allowed to go to school. Instead, she was forced to cook, clean and look after a baby. She also endured verbal and physical abuse.

Distraught, Tizita ran away. A passer-by found her on the street and took her to the police station, before she was taken in by a Hope for Justice Lighthouse, who found her the support she needed to recover from her ordeal and reunite with her family.



Source: Hope for Justice

Debt Bondage

DEFINITION: Debt bondage, also known as bonded labour, is a form of forced labour that happens when a person is forced to work to pay off a debt.

Debt bondage is the world's most widespread form of slavery. People who experience debt bondage have often been tricked into working for little or no pay. In many cases, they are forced to pay off inflated fees associated with their recruitment, accommodation or food, with no control over their debt. Most or all of the money they earn goes to pay off their 'loan'.

Many people live in fear or violence from the people that exploit them, or of passing on their debt to their children and/or families. Migrant workers are particularly vulnerable to this form of exploitation, for example, as they are often dependent on recruiting agencies.

- **20% of all people in forced labour exploitation in the private economy are in situations of debt bondage.**¹⁸

CASE STUDY: At 15 years old, Linh came to the UK from Vietnam, after her and her mother met a man who told them he could find them work. During her journey to the UK, which Linh estimates took around one year and took her through many countries including Thailand, Turkey, Greece and France, she became separated from her mother.

When Linh arrived in the UK, she was held captive in premises and made to cook and clean for others. She was also made to work for long hours with no pay or protective equipment at a nail bar in a local town. Linh was often beaten and not allowed to move freely within the premises without permission from the adult males there. She was told that the work she was doing was paying off her debt to be brought to the UK. She was never given any money or told how much she owed. Her traffickers told her that if she did not pay back her debt, her family in Vietnam would be harmed, and that if she tried to escape she would be found and killed.

Linh was found in the nail bar by police after a member of the public alerted them to children working on the premises. When she was found, police referred Linh to Independent Child Trafficking Guardianship (ICTG) service, where she received emotional and practical support to help her on the road to healing from her trauma.

Source: Barnados

Forced Marriage

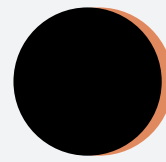
DEFINITION: A forced marriage is where one or both people do not or cannot consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used to force them into the marriage. It is also when anything is done to make someone marry before they turn 18, even if there is no pressure or abuse.

Forced marriage is illegal in the UK. It is a form of domestic abuse and a serious abuse of human rights, as well as a form of modern slavery.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will may be: physical: for example, threats, physical violence or sexual violence; or emotional and psychological: for example, making someone feel like they are bringing 'shame' on their family. Financial abuse, for example taking someone's wages, can also be a factor.



- **An estimated 22 million people were living in forced marriage on any given day in 2021.**¹⁹
- **Worldwide, one in every five girls is married, or in union, before reaching age 18.**²⁰



CASE STUDY: At 15 years old, Sophia was taken by her family from her home in the UK to Bangladesh and was forced to marry a man twice her age. After arriving in Bangladesh, Sophia fell pregnant within months, and became depressed, lonely, and desperate to escape her situation. However, Sophia was terrified of what might happen to her if she tried to flee.

Sophia said: "I had to take my personality out of my body and become a shell. It was the only way I could function because I was so petrified of being locked up and being abused." Eventually, Sophia made it back to the UK, escaped her forced marriage, and gave birth to her baby daughter.

Despite her trauma, Sophia now wants to play a part in combating the abuse she experienced. "I'm speaking for all survivors who have gone through these taboo experiences," she said.

Source: Yahoo! Sport

Forced Organ Harvesting

DEFINITION: Forced organ harvesting is the illegal practice of surgically removing a victim's organs against their will.

Despite the general interest in the issue, forced organ harvesting remains a particularly hidden, underground type of exploitation and seems to be greatly underreported. Trafficking in persons for organ removal has some specific features that may make it even more difficult to identify and tackle the problem. Among those are, for example, the very technical nature of some of the processes and the possible involvement of professionals from the medical sector.

- **Due to an absence of reliable information, the global scale of forced organ harvesting remains unknown.**²¹
- **In 2011, it was estimated that the illicit 'organ trade' produced illegal profits between USD 600 million and USD 1.2 billion per year.**²²
- **The WHO predicts that more than one illegal organ transaction is made every hour worldwide.**²³



CASE STUDY: Dawitt was 16 years old when an acquaintance suggested he sell a kidney in Cairo. He was offered \$5,000 for the surgery and would use the money to fund onward travel to Europe.

After surgery, Dawitt was taken to an apartment for recovery and received an envelope with \$2,000. The broker promised to pay the remaining \$3,000 once he had recovered from the surgery. Instead, the broker paid a smuggler, who would facilitate Dawitt's journey to Italy. The broker connected Dawitt to the smuggler with no assurances as to when, or if, the boat would depart.

When Dawitt recovered and felt strong enough to make the journey, the broker and the smuggler disappeared. Dawitt was left with nothing.

Source: Stop the Traffik



Illegal Adoption

DEFINITION: Illegal adoption is defined as referring to situations involving adoptions resulting from crimes, such as abduction and sale of and trafficking in children, fraud in the declaration of adoptability, falsification of official documents or coercion, and any illicit activity or practise such as lack of proper consent by biological parents, improper financial gain by intermediaries and related corruption.

Illegal adoptions violate multiple child rights norms and principles, including the best interests of the child, the principle of subsidiarity and the prohibition of improper financial gain.

The abduction of babies (e.g. through kidnappings or by falsely informing parents that their baby was stillborn or died shortly after birth), the improper inducement of consent (e.g. through misrepresentation, bribery or coercion) and improper financial gain (e.g. through payment for the child or the payment of bribes to intermediaries involved in the adoption process) are among the most common methods used in the sale of children and illegal adoptions.



- **There is no reliable data on the number of children who have been or are being adopted as a result of being sold, trafficked or subjected to other illegal acts and illicit practices.** ²⁴
- **Vulnerable parents, in particular mothers, are often targeted (e.g. single mothers in situations of economic hardship, from rural areas, belonging to indigenous communities and/or without access to education).** ²⁵

CASE STUDY: Although she had known she was adopted for quite some time, Natia only decided to find her biological parents in 2022, following the death of her adoptive mother. “My cousin knew my real name, my place of birth, and the names of my parents,” Natia says.

Natia was able to find her family, but they believed that she had died 45 years ago in a maternity hospital. Natia’s biological father had died many years earlier, and her mother had Alzheimer’s disease. According to Natia’s aunt, the doctors had told her mother that her baby had died and they had buried her in the hospital’s cemetery. “No one doubted the doctor’s words, and no-one saw the baby’s body,” Natia said.



This was the story that Natia’s biological parents believed. But in the version told to her adoptive family, Natia was abandoned as a baby. “My adoptive family paid 600 maneti. If my parents had known that I was stolen, they would have returned me to my biological family,” Natia said.

Source: The Telegraph

Children Recruited by Armed Forces or Armed Groups

DEFINITION: This form of exploitation involves the compulsory, forced or voluntary conscription or enlistment of children into any kind of armed forces or organised armed group(s).

In many conflict-affected areas, children continue to face the threat of recruitment by armed forces or armed groups, who exploit them as fighters as well as for sexual violence and other forms of abuse. No matter their involvement, the recruitment and use of children by armed forces is a grave violation of child rights and international humanitarian law.

- **Globally, just over 1 billion children under the age of 18 live in countries or territories affected by armed conflict.** ²⁶

- **Between 2005 and 2020, more than 93,000 children were verified as recruited and used by parties to conflict, although the actual number of cases is believed to be much higher.**²⁷

CASE STUDY: Florence* was nine years old when her life changed suddenly. Rebels with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) descended on her home whilst she and her family were asleep. The rebels barged into their hut and kicked down their door. One man held Florence down, ripped off her blouse and tied her up. She watched in horror as another man severely beat her mother. Florence's grandfather and others were tied up, and the rest of the village were forced to walk and walk without rest to an unknown destination. The rebels told Florence not to be afraid because they would take her back home, but she didn't believe them.

"The rebels didn't kill me, but they forced me to kill others. I was trained to fight and shoot a gun. At first I refused, but they beat me and threatened me with death. The rebels made examples out of some of the children to warn the rest of us what would happen if we disobeyed their orders."

When Florence was ten, she was married against her will to a Brigade Commander. From then on, he would demand sex from Florence every day and beat her if she tried to resist. Her abuser had a total of twenty "wives" including Florence, some of which were very young.

A year into her captivity, Florence was finally able to escape, using a big fight that erupted between LRA members and the Ugandan government as her opportunity to run away. Florence returned home to her village, where her mother accepted her but she was shunned by her neighbours and community.