

how to prevent modern slavery

A REPORT BY UNSEEN BASED ON DATA FROM THE MODERN SLAVERY & EXPLOITATION HELPLINE AND LIVED EXPERIENCE ACCOUNTS

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introduction

The latest worldwide estimates of the scale of modern slavery suggest there are more than 40 million people globally in situations of modern slavery and exploitation.

In 2021, the number of people referred to the UK Government's system of identification and support, the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), stood at 12,727. Of those, only 2,866 were given a Positive Conclusive Grounds decision, confirming their status as a victim of modern slavery.

In addition, there have only been a handful of convictions in the UK, just 259 charged by the Crown Prosecution Service during 2020¹, which means that many of the perpetrators of these despicable crimes are never brought to justice. Despite UK Government estimates in 2014, putting the scale of modern slavery

in the UK at around 10,000-13,000 potential victims, many think the true number is much higher, at around 100,000.

Much about the methodologies and tactics used to recruit and hold people in modern slavery is still unclear, and this report seeks to better understand these, by analysing data collated through Unseen's Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline and survivor accounts. Understanding more about the push and pull factors that result in exploitation can help us develop robust prevention strategies to stop exploitation from occurring in the first place.

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¹ 2021 UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery (publishing.service.gov.uk)

overview

Unseen has one mission: to end slavery. We seek to do this through providing direct support to survivors of modern slavery and human trafficking; equipping stakeholders with information and advice; and tackling the systemic issues through working with the governments in the UK and overseas.

Modern slavery is a serious and high harm crime in which people are treated as commodities, bought, sold, and exploited for criminal gain. The term modern slavery encompasses two criminal offences: human trafficking; and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour.

Human trafficking consists of three components: action, means and purpose of exploitation. It is different from human smuggling, although smuggling can be a pre-cursor to exploitation.

There are common myths and misconceptions about modern slavery such as assumptions that UK nationals cannot be victims, or that a person cannot be a victim if they reject offers of help. Exploitation can take several different forms, including sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude, with victims coming from all levels of society and backgrounds.

Although the introduction of the UK's Modern Slavery Act in 2015 sought to provide a better understanding of the crime, through the provision of additional law enforcement tools and better support for survivors, much about the true extent of modern slavery in the

UK is still unknown. Data remains disparate, siloed and incomplete, making it difficult to fully understand the phenomena and prevent it. Preventing modern slavery is vitally important to reduce the long-term impacts of the crime and safeguard vulnerable individuals from harm.

Through this Home Office funded project, Unseen seeks to maximise the data it has already gathered from survivors and contacts into the Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline to provide an evidence-base which could support the development of more robust prevention strategies.

It is vital that Unseen's invaluable data can help the Government, law enforcement agencies, statutory agencies and NGOs to work collaboratively, and support more people out of modern slavery and prevent them from entering it in the first place. Providing an evidence base on which to pilot on-the-ground prevention strategies will be far more effective than previous strategies which have focused on anecdote and noise, rather than the push and pull factors that contributed to people getting into exploitative situations.

executive summary/ key findings

Modern slavery prevention strategies should be targeted towards young people and young people within the workforce to prevent exploitation from occurring. Recruitment tactics and methods of control used by exploiters would be much less effective if more information and support were readily accessible to young people and the young workforce. Further research should explore the datasets of other statutory services frequently informed of modern slavery reports such as police, immigration, the NRM and support services.

what we did

This project was a mixed method study aimed at identifying patterns and trends within victim and exploiter demographics, recruitment and exploitation techniques, and identifying where prevention strategies would be beneficial.

Specific objectives were to:

- Gather and share evidence of correlations between differing accounts of modern slavery.
- Understand the usefulness of these trends, patterns and correlations and the impact this could have on modern slavery prevention strategies.
- Provide an evidence-base on which to inform these strategies.
- Compare Helpline statistical data with information obtained from those with lived experiences of modern slavery.
- The project was conceived by Unseen and funded by the Home Office. All raw information obtained by Unseen remained confidential and was not shared with the Home Office for this report.

Data was pulled from the last full dataset available for 2021 and analysed for key patterns and trends. Survivors within Unseen's community and safehouse projects were asked for their views on what they think contributed to modern slavery and their ideas on what strategies are needed to contain it.

what we found

The main theme of the findings was that young working adults were at most risk of exploitation and that those most likely to exploit them were of similar age or slightly older. They were also of similar nationality and often used job offers and false information as a means in which to recruit vulnerable people in search of work or more financial and home stability.

The findings indicate that prevention strategies should be targeted towards:

- Information and education on how to access legitimate work opportunities for young people.
- Providing information and education regarding manipulation techniques to young people.
- Increased safety provisions within public areas and online, using vehicles such as the Online Harms Bill.
- Training and awareness of modern slavery towards the public and those working in the community door to door.
- Improve trauma-informed support available to victims and survivors within statutory services.
- Scaling up modern slavery data analysis across sectors regularly respond to changing trends and issues.

aims and objectives

This project seeks to interrogate Unseen’s most recent complete annual dataset from 2021, from the Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline, supplemented by focus group work with survivors from our outreach and safehouse support.

A key aim of the project is to better understand the thought processes of those targeted for exploitation, understand the vulnerabilities at play and inform prevention activities. Involving survivors’ first-hand accounts of their journey into, through and out of exploitation is vital to help establish what led them into exploitation in the first place and what might have prevented them from doing so.

Through our direct work with survivors, we know that the experiences of those caught up in modern slavery can be extremely distressing. Our approach to managing in-person focus groups would, therefore, need to be mindful of this and sensitive to the needs of the participants to avoid the risk of re-traumatising.

Our approach was to hear a range of diverse survivor stories to establish the similarities and differences in experiences and whether any trends could be identified. The focus groups did not seek to gather levels of evidence needed to secure a conviction, but the push and pull factors involved in each person’s experience:

how they were recruited, controlled, and exploited, including how we could learn from those experiences to prevent it happening to others.

Since opening in 2016, the Helpline has gathered over five years’ worth of invaluable data from diverse situations across all modern slavery typologies. Our data relates to situations of exploitation and modern slavery that have occurred both here in the UK and overseas. This is entirely separate from the Government’s National Referral Mechanism data, which captures information about those who consent to UK Government help and support.

One key aspect of the project was to improve the Helpline’s capabilities to assess and analyse its data more effectively, utilising AI and machine learning techniques to help identify hidden trends within the data. Our project was not focused on one typology but on the four key typologies most prevalent in the UK: labour exploitation, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and domestic servitude.

The objectives for the project were to:

- identify trends, patterns and correlations to understand how individuals from diverse nationalities were recruited;**
- unearth any correlations between the recruitment tactics and the methods of control used by exploiters;**
- identify the barriers faced when trying to leave exploitative situations.**

As a result of this project, we want to support stakeholders to better understand those who are more likely to fall victim to modern slavery. This will be important for key stakeholders such as government bodies, embassies, law enforcement, businesses, statutory services, and NGOs that have the power and influence to make strategic decisions on preventative strategies that will make a real difference.

background

about unseen

Unseen has 15 years of experience working directly with vulnerable men, women and children who have escaped exploitation and who present with complex needs, providing practical and emotional support as they rebuild their lives.

To date, Unseen's safe accommodation and outreach services have supported more than 350 survivors. In late 2016, Unseen established the Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline, a free, 24/7, confidential service that provides help, guidance and support to anyone who needs it.

Each year the Helpline takes around 8,000 incoming calls and contacts related to a wide range of situations. The Helpline routinely and systematically collects and shares data from these contacts on the nature and scale of modern slavery in the UK.

All Helpline and frontline support staff are trained specialists in all aspects of modern slavery, providing information, advice and guidance to potential victims and survivors, police officers, local authority personnel, NHS professionals and businesses.

authors

This report has been compiled by Justine Currell, Director; Lauren Saunders, Head of Policy and Research; and Rachel Harper, Head of Helpline Services, who collectively have a wealth of experience in dealing with modern-slavery-related issues.

The team's experience includes:

- The development of the Modern Slavery Act 2015;
- Collaborative work across law enforcement, business and government;
- Frontline support for survivors/potential victims of modern slavery;
- Compiling thematic reporting on the issue of modern slavery.

The project was also additionally supported by

Unseen's frontline support staff, data team and survivor group, with additional technical support from Salesforce personnel.

project timeline

To meet the project's challenging timelines, Unseen implemented a robust project plan between December 2021 and March 2022.

The project commenced initially in December with data preparation and data cleaning activities. This was an important aspect of the project to ensure the available data was accurately recorded and as complete as possible.

Work also started on plans for holding a series of survivor forums, with encouragement to Unseen survivors to attend. As part of this work, software and user interface upgrades were made to our Salesforce platform to optimise data analysis and ensure all structured and unstructured data could be captured.

Once initial preparations had been undertaken, the Helpline data was extracted, throughout January and February 2022, ready for analysis to inform potential findings on the location of exploitation, nationality, typology, and methods of recruitment and control.

The data was shared with survivors via the forum to seek their views and gain an understanding of their experiences. A survey was developed to capture additional commentary, which survivors could complete in their own time.

Key findings from the data and forums were identified, collated and analysed and are now presented in this document.

ethics, risk, safeguarding and gdpr

Comprehensive risk assessments and due diligence checks were completed as part of this project. This was to ensure all necessary steps were taken to protect those involved in retelling their stories and those facilitating such conversations as well as the project's outputs. This was continually monitored and reviewed throughout the project.

Our project involved analysing data from existing services, so it was expected that Covid-19 measures would not affect the project, other than debriefs potentially needing to be delivered virtually and survivor involvement being more difficult to obtain in a virtual environment, should that be required.

Given the extreme sensitivity of the data Unseen uses, all data protection matters are taken seriously. Full anonymisation of all data took place prior to the analysis stage to ensure the safety and security of the potential victims and survivors involved in this work, whether in-person or because their data is being used. Strong GDPR protocols were already in place, and we used Unseen's existing GDPR protocols for handling sensitive information.

All staff involved in managing and delivering this project have been GDPR trained and are familiar with Unseen's data protection policies. To avoid compromising any data or individual, access to data was restricted to those staff members involved in the delivery of this project. Data is stored on a secure internal system, and protected with restricted access, passwords, and two-factor authentication.

All data used in this project has been collated and anonymised, so information cannot be traced back to any vulnerable individual. To provide further oversight and ensure the project would not compromise any individual's safety or position, the data from the Helpline and survivor forums was rigorously checked and approved to ensure no information pertaining to an individual's identity was shared externally.

As our experience tells us, there is always a risk with such projects that the trauma experienced by survivors may restrict their ability to recall details of their experience and remove any willingness to take part in the project.

In addition, survivors may face other barriers to their involvement such as language, location, childcare, and the length of time available to complete the project and to build the trust required to support them to disclose their stories.

To mitigate such risks, Unseen's Designated Safeguarding Officer & Lead participated in the project to ensure all safeguarding policies were adhered to. Full information about the project's aims and objectives was provided to the participants of the survivor forum, together with optional consent to take part and withdraw at any time with no impact on wider support. Commencing the survivor involvement process early in the life of the project allowed time to build trust and ensure the process could be managed effectively on all fronts.

methodology

Understanding our theory of change played an integral part in developing this project. We want to show the importance of our data and how, along with survivor accounts, it can lead to key insights and a better understanding of the issue. This, in turn, supports the development of specific prevention activities and solutions, which can lead to relevant training and education and, ultimately, informs others and is the catalyst for creating behaviour change.

the data

Data collated by the Helpline is provided by a diverse range of individuals and organisations. As a result, the nature of what data is shared and collated can vary significantly, including the level of detail. What a member of the public knows about a situation versus an individual directly involved is vastly different.

When recording data, the Helpline Team makes no assumptions as to the information they are receiving and will only record data where the caller or contact is confident about specific details. For example, nationality will be marked as unknown if someone says, “I think they could have been Romanian, because there are lots of Romanians in car washes”. This avoids any unconscious bias the caller may have.

Helpline data is also only collated through information captured during the calls, which means follow up information might not be possible to obtain. This project has allowed Unseen to review all data recording processes to help improve the level of detail received, and thus reduce the number of data points where information is recorded as not known.

Calls to the Helpline also rely on awareness of its existence and remit among the public, potential victims and support agencies. While Unseen does everything it can to promote the existence and accessibility of the Helpline, awareness of it varies within certain groups, locations, and individuals.

It is also widely acknowledged that awareness of the terms “modern slavery” and “exploitation” varies, and those who are in exploitative circumstances may not be aware that they are experiencing exploitation and so may not consider contacting the Helpline.

It is acknowledged that some individuals in need may engage with Unseen’s Helpline services but be directed to other organisations for support. The location and standard of this support are unknown.

survivor participation

To gain an in-depth understanding of prevention techniques it is important to include the voices of those with lived experience. In total, 158 survivors were invited to participate and 15 agreed, via either the focus groups or survey process established as part of this project.

The survey with questions relating to vulnerability factors, recruitment tactics and methods of control was developed and presented to participants to capture their views on what activities or understandings may have prevented them from being exploited.

Translations and interpreters were used to ensure those who did not speak English were able to contribute. Support was also provided for those who could not travel to participate.

Throughout the sessions, the survivor participants were offered a chance to share their own stories and general perspectives without going into specific details. Participants were also given the option not to participate if they felt uncomfortable at any time and support was offered to those with complex needs to ensure there would be no risk to participation.

Of the survivors in Unseen’s service, 10% engaged with the project from eight different nationalities. Many survivors in service are currently still in the initial stages of recovery and therefore the reduced timelines for the project did not allow sufficient time for some of the survivors to feel in a position to talk about their experiences.

As recovery is different for everyone, only those who felt able to do so took part. It can take survivors many months or even years to share information about their experiences and the levels of participation were in line with our expectations prior to the start of the project.

Had the project been over a longer timeframe, more participants might have felt able to contribute. Survivors often report a lack of confidence in participating in group discussions and so opportunities to increase trust over time so that survivors feel able to share is crucial to the success of projects such as this.

Some survivors indicated that ongoing vulnerabilities such as their own mental and physical health needs, ongoing housing challenges, legal difficulties and substance abuse issues were significant barriers to participating.

Due to the limited time available to run the project it was not possible to involve a wider number of survivors who are no longer in Unseen's direct support services. This is a shame, as those individuals might have felt more able to contribute, having exited support once their own needs had been reduced.

As a result of this project, we have reviewed our exit procedures for direct services to ensure people are still able to participate in future projects should they wish to. Childcare costs were covered for those participants that needed support; however, some participants did bring younger children with them to the meeting. Where not appropriate for children to be in the room and childcare could not be sought, survivors were politely asked to complete the survey instead.

By seeking views through both the forum and via a confidential survey, the project could capture contributions from the natural free-flowing conversation of the forum, and more individual and confidential points through the survey.

Survivors were provided with notice of the project in advance, including as much time for the survivors to consider and respond within the project timelines, as well as a follow-up meeting to debrief participants on how their contribution would be used.



Of the survivors in Unseen's service, 10% engaged with the project from eight different nationalities. Many survivors in service are currently still in the initial stages of recovery...

results and findings

outcomes

This project analysed data from the Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline on cases opened between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2021. Information relating to the situations of exploitation reported and the potential victims indicated in those situations include:

The age, gender and nationality of any potential exploiter and potential victim indicated in the situation (where such data was known or reported. A value of “unknown” was recorded where this information was not provided.)

- The typology indicated
- The relevant industries
- The indicated recruitment tactics, methods, and recruitment locations
- The reported methods of control used or experienced
- The indicated vulnerability factors of any potential victims.

This data was then cross-referenced with the data collated from the survivor survey and forum discussions to further inform findings.

potential victim demographics

NATIONALITY

A total of 3,019 potential victims from 76 nationalities were indicated to the Helpline through calls and contacts made in 2021, relating to reports assessed to be modern slavery.

Of these victims, 2,006 had unknown nationalities. Of the nationalities that were known, Romania was the most prevalent, with 241 victims indicated.

Vietnam and China were the second and third most prevalent nationalities, with 150 and 82 potential victims respectively.

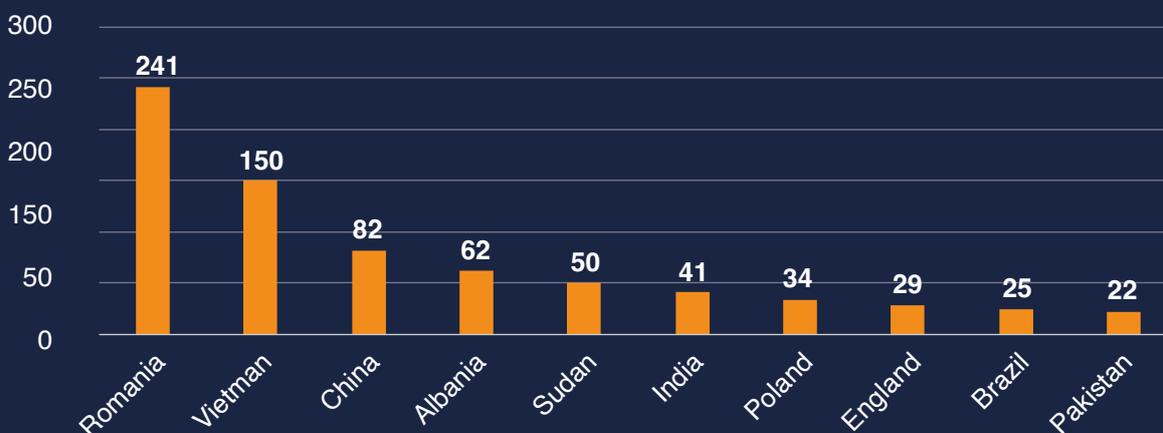
This differs from the Government’s National Referral Mechanism data² for the same period which shows the most prevalent nationality as the UK, with 31% of all referrals, followed by Albania and Vietnam with 20% and 8% respectively.

There are many reasons why the data could be different, including but not limited to:

- The range of different individuals reporting (those with both direct and indirect contact with the potential victim).
- The fact that the Helpline is confidential and independent from the Government (it is available to individuals who do not wish to report to authorities).
- Having translation services on hand 24/7 (often reported as not the case for other services), which possibly make it a more viable support option for some nationalities.

For the fifth year running, Romania was the most prevalent victim nationality indicated to the Helpline, with just under 24% of potential victims where the nationality was known. Vietnam and China were also prevalent and have been in the top 10 indicated nationalities in Helpline data for the past five years, with 15% and 8% respectively of potential victims where the nationality was known in 2021.

Chart 1 Prevalence of most common nationalities indicated to the Helpline in 2021



² Modern Slavery: National Referral Mechanism and Duty to Notify statistics UK, end of year summary, 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

PROXIMITY OF THE CALLER TO EXPLOITATION

The proximity of a caller to the situation of exploitation indicated is important in determining key aspects.

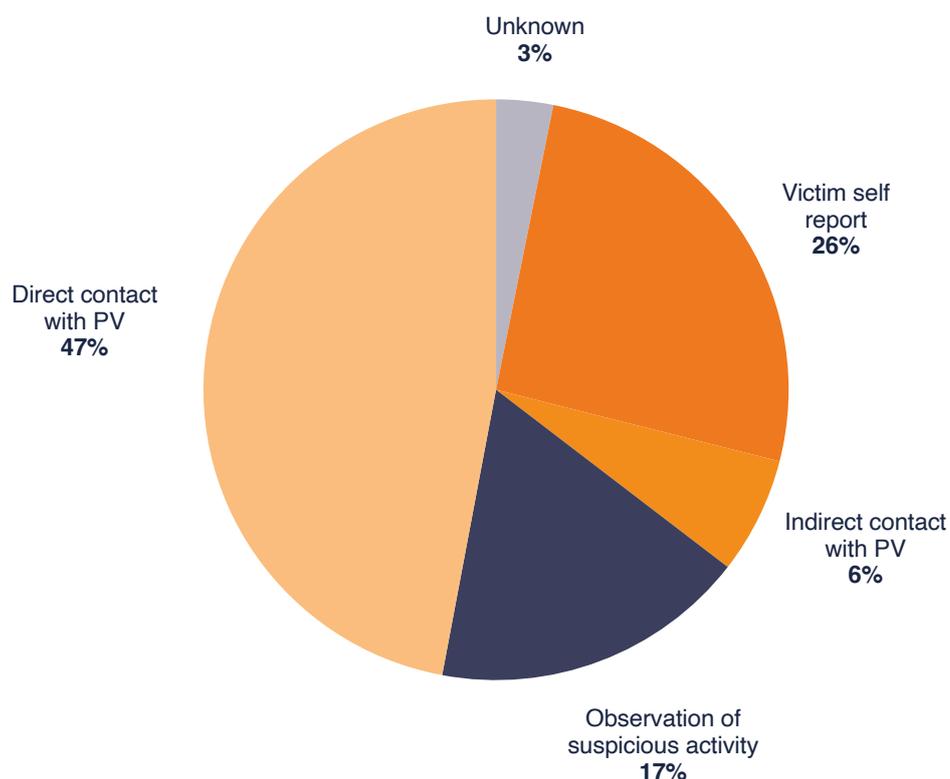
In 2021, 1,526 cases of modern slavery were raised by the Helpline from calls and contacts received. A potential victim self-reported in 394 cases (26%), and in 718 cases (47%) the individual reporting was in direct contact with the potential victim.

The remaining cases comprised individuals in indirect contact with a potential victim (6%), where callers were observing suspicious activity (17%), and in 48 cases (3%) the proximity was recorded as unknown.

When the caller was more removed, the level of detail and data known and reported may have been less. For example, a member of the public observing suspicious activity might know far less about a situation than someone in direct contact with a potential victim, or indeed the potential victim themselves.

However, in 2021, almost three quarters of modern slavery cases relied on information from either a victim self-reporting or someone in direct contact with the potential victim.

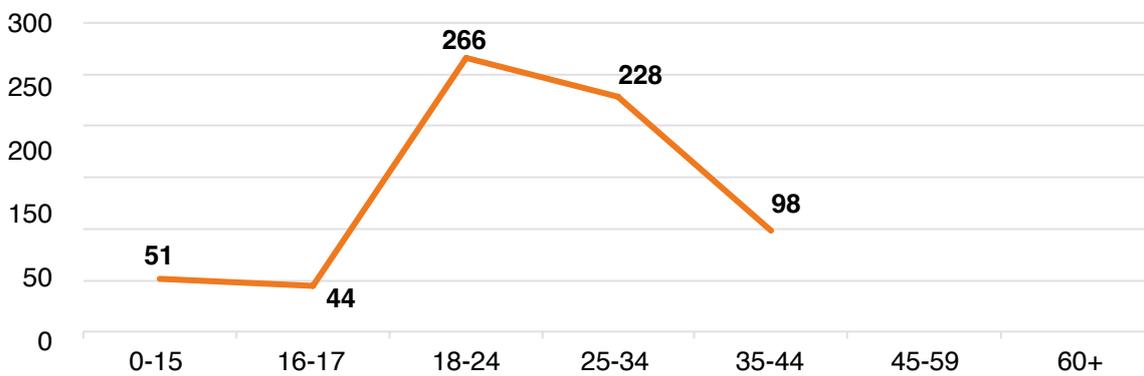
Chart 2 Proximity of the individual to the situation being reported, by typology



AGE

Where possible, the Helpline seeks to establish the age of any potential victims indicated in modern slavery situations. The most prevalent known age ranges indicated for potential victims in 2021 was 18-24, followed by 25-34 years of age. Although the Helpline receives information about a wide range of potential victims, from minors to those in their eighties, in 2021, 75% of those indicated (where the age was known) were reported to be below the age of 35.

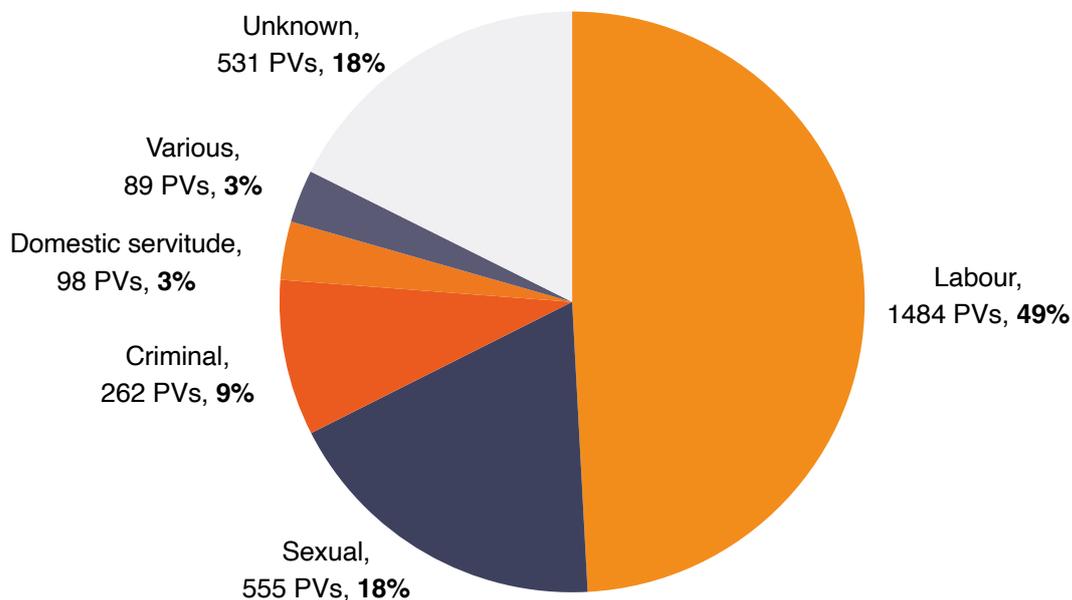
Chart 3 Breakdown, by age, of potential victims indicated



TYPE OF EXPLOITATION

Where the type of exploitation was indicated by a contact to the Helpline, labour exploitation was the most prevalent, followed by sexual exploitation. Sometimes the typology was not recorded by the Helpline, often where the contact is a professional seeking technical advice and fewer details were divulged about the situation. The chart below provides a breakdown of the typologies by the percentage of potential victims indicated for each.

Chart 4 Breakdown of number and percentage of potential victims by typology



recruitment

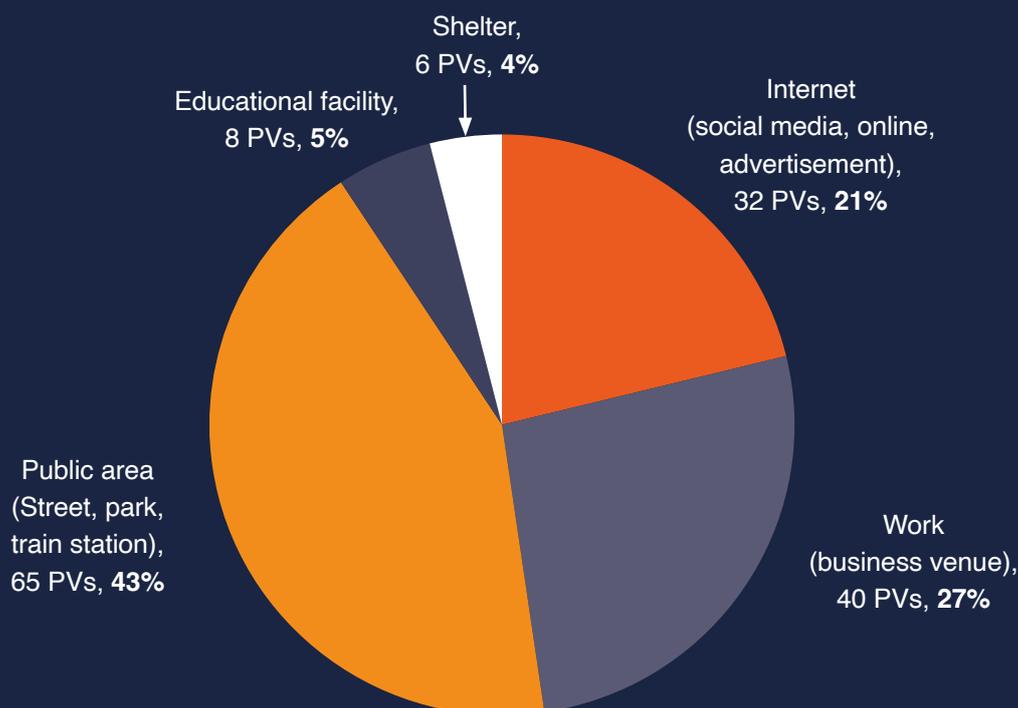
From the aggregate data recorded for cases opened in 2021, further data analysis has helped to develop an understanding of the factors that make people vulnerable to exploitation and the recruitment methods exploiters use to recruit and exploit those most vulnerable.

Recruitment tactics may have been unknown by the contact reporting to the Helpline. Often this is because the contact may have been a member of the public with little knowledge of the situation but with sufficient concerns for the welfare of individuals they might have observed or briefly encountered. Or it could be because a potential victim was not able to offer fuller details of their situation when they were facing more urgent service needs.

RECRUITMENT CHANNELS

The recruitment channel indicated through calls and contacts to the Helpline helps to better understand where risks might arise for those most vulnerable to exploitation. Where the recruitment channel was known at the time of call, public spaces were the most reported, relating to 43% of potential victims. Work and business venues were the second highest recruitment channel with 27% of potential victims (PVs) reported, again excluding unknowns.

Chart 5 Recruitment channels used by number and percentage of potential victims



Use of public areas, including streets, parks and train stations, for recruitment could be indicative of gangs and exploiters using public places to approach people who they think might be vulnerable or susceptible to exploitation.

The use of the internet to recruit individuals was also prevalent and highlighted the risks to individuals who may not have been online or social media savvy and more susceptible to exploitation through this means (for example minors and vulnerable adults).

Survivors who participated in the forum and survey told us that educational facilities were also a common location for their recruitment.

The internet, public areas, group homes and homeless shelters were among the locations also mentioned by survivors. However, due to the small number of participants, data from these platforms have not been factored into statistical analysis.

Across the top three recruitment channels (internet, business venues and public areas) nine different recruitment tactics were recorded. As highlighted in the table below, job offers/adverts were the most prevalent recruitment tactic across all three channels for cases reported to the Helpline in 2021.

This prevalence of job offers/adverts was consistent with what survivors reported as part of the survivor forum and survey. Many agreed that a lack of information and support available to them regarding employment – and how to tell a legitimate offer of employment, support or housing – was an important reason for what caused them to be vulnerable.

The second most common tactic reported in 2021 to the Helpline for exploitation overall was false promises or statements, which also spanned all three most common recruitment channels (internet, business venues and public areas).

However, false promises or statements were twice as common for potential victims via online recruitment versus the other two channels.

Contrastingly, although abduction was the third most common recruitment tactic overall in 2021, the table below shows abduction to be a common tactic for public areas (32%), but no occurrences (0%) were recorded for other avenues, such as online or business settings.

One explanation is that abduction involves taking someone against their will, and an exploiter using this method would need a location in from where to do this, and public places offer a location that is open and less secure than other locations.



...abduction involves taking someone against their will... public places offer a location that is open and less secure...

Table 1 Recruitment tactics indicated across three most prevalent recruitment channels

| | Internet (social media, online advertisement) | Work (business venue) | Public Area (street, park, train station) |
|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|
| Abduction (3rd) | 0% | 0% | 32% |
| Coercion (Threats, Blackmail, etc.) | 16% | 5% | 8% |
| False promises or statements (2nd) | 44% | 23% | 26% |
| Familial | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| International Marriage Broker (IMB) | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Intimate partner/marriage proposition | 9% | 0% | 0% |
| Job offer/advertisement (1st) | 53% | 85% | 42% |
| Offer of Accommodation | 25% | 8% | 20% |
| Other | 0% | 3% | 8% |
| Posing as Benefactor | 0% | 0% | 3% |
| Smuggling, ransom | 0% | 0% | 11% |
| Unknown | 19% | 5% | 9% |

This table shows percentages of potential victims within each recruitment channel that experienced each recruitment tactic. One potential victim might have experienced multiple recruitment tactics. A value of unknown may be selected when no recruitment tactics are known for that respective potential victim.

The three most prevalent recruitment channels revealed some similarities in the corresponding most common recruitment tactics. However, the prevalence of each tactic varies across channels. For example, an offer of accommodation was more common for online (53%) and public area channels (42%) than for work channels (8%). A job offer was twice as common in a work setting versus a public place. And coercion was more common for those recruited online versus in a business setting or public area.

In addition to abduction, other recruitment tactics that only surfaced with respect to one channel include an intimate partner/marriage proposal, which affected 9% of potential victims with respect to internet recruitment but 0% across the other two most common channels. Similarly, both posing as a benefactor, and smuggling

and/or ransom recruitment tactics, only affected potential victims where a public area was a recruitment channel.

One survivor shared her experience of being homeless in a park when she was approached by a man who she did not know but had been watching her for a few days. He then offered her work and a place to stay which is consistent with the reports the Helpline is receiving about how individuals might be approached in open spaces.

Exploiters can remain detached and unidentifiable online, making it easier for false promises to be made, with the exploiters often hiding behind a façade. In addition, public areas allow exploiters to observe and approach strangers, particularly those who may appear more vulnerable, such as minors or lone women.

It is, therefore, important to raise awareness of online safety and public safety in open spaces, as well as manipulation techniques used to recruit young and vulnerable people, to reduce the potential risks of recruitment using these locations.

Further exploration into the location type used by exploiters where the internet was used as a recruitment channel showed that for those potential victims who were recruited via the internet, the internet in general, followed by Facebook, was the most common channel used by exploiters.

This aligns with our understanding of the ease of use with these platforms for recruitment and is also indicative of the access to large numbers of vulnerable people who could be reached and targeted via this method.

Table 2 Number of potential victims broken down by online platform types used for internet recruitment

| Internet - Dating Site | Number of potential victims |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Internet - Dating Site | 3 |
| Internet - Facebook | 10 |
| Internet/Online | 18 |



Exploiters can remain detached and unidentifiable online, making it easier for false promises to be made, with the exploiters often hiding behind a façade...

RECRUITMENT TACTICS COMPARED TO VICTIM NATIONALITY

Analysis of recruitment tactics with potential victim nationalities showed some slight variations across the top five nationalities.

The table below shows the number of potential victims recorded to have been recruited with the given recruitment tactic per nationality. The percentage indicates the number of potential victims of that nationality that experienced the corresponding recruitment tactic.

Job offers/advertisements and false promises were the most prevalent recruitment tactics indicated in cases

involving the top three nationalities of potential victims (Romania, Vietnam and China).

Intimate partner/marriage proposition was the most reported tactic in cases indicating Albanian nationals, whilst abduction and smuggling/ransom were the top tactics indicated in Sudanese potential victims.

This analysis highlights that recruitment tactics vary across different nationalities of Potential victims indicated through the Helpline and this should be considered when developing prevention strategies.

Table 3 Recruitment tactics indicated by most common potential victim nationality

| | Romania | | Vietnam | | China | | Albanian | | Sudan | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| | Number of PVs | % of PV nationality | Number of PVs | % of PV nationality | Number of PVs | % of PV nationality | Number of PVs | % of PV nationality | Number of PVs | % of PV nationality |
| Abduction | 0 | 0% | 2 | 1% | 1 | 1% | 3 | 5% | 24 | 48 % |
| Coercion (Threats, blackmail, etc.) | 1 | 0% | 5 | 3% | 3 | 4% | 4 | 6% | 4 | 8% |
| False promises or statements | 38 | 16% | 61 | 41% | 16 | 20% | 7 | 11% | 10 | 20% |
| International Marriage Broker (IMB) | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| Intimate partner/marriage proposition | 4 | 2% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 2% | 9 | 15% | 0 | 0% |
| Job offer/advertisement | 18 | 7% | 25 | 17% | 16 | 20% | 7 | 11% | 4 | 8% |
| Other | 0 | 0% | 2 | 1% | 3 | 4% | 6 | 10% | 0 | 0% |
| Posing as Benefactor | 0 | 0% | 1 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 3% | 2 | 4% |
| Familial | 1 | 0% | 1 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 2% | 0 | 0% |
| Smuggling, ransom | 0 | 0% | 13 | 9% | 5 | 6% | 5 | 8% | 24 | 48% |
| Offer of Accommodation | 2 | 1% | 3 | 2% | 1 | 1% | 1 | 2% | 0 | 0% |
| Unknown | 191 | 79% | 59 | 39% | 52 | 63% | 31 | 50% | 8 | 16% |

RECRUITMENT AND AGE

When analysing recruitment tactics in relation to age brackets of potential victims indicated via the Helpline, 18 to 34-year-olds feature prominently where false promises or statements (16%) and job offers/advertisements (20%) have been indicated.

This could be for a variety of reasons but might, for example, indicate that younger people (under 35 years old) may be more susceptible to false promises because of their age and relative lack of experience.

Exploiters might assume this and target younger workers as a result. Additionally, it could be because there are more people looking for work within this age bracket and therefore might be more prevalent in Helpline data. Abduction was the third most prevalent recruitment tactic (14%) for this age group.

RECRUITMENT TACTICS BY EXPLOITATION TYPOLOGY

Across modern slavery cases reported to the Helpline in 2021, the recruitment tactics reported having been experienced by potential victims also vary in relation to the type of exploitation.

The most common recruitment tactic recorded for Potential victims of sexual exploitation was false promises or statements.

Whilst prevalent for sexual exploitation also, job offers/advertisements were the most common form of recruitment noted for Potential victims of labour exploitation and domestic servitude. In contrast, coercion was the most common form of recruitment for criminal exploitation.

Table 4 Recruitment tactics per PV by exploitation typologies

| | Sexual Exploitation | Criminal Exploitation | Labour Exploitation | Domestic Servitude | Various | Unknown |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------|---------|
| Abduction | 14 | 8 | 59 | 0 | 4 | 2 |
| Coercion (Threats, blackmail, etc.) | 15 | 33 | 16 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| False promises or statements | 73 | 19 | 122 | 21 | 21 | 6 |
| International Marriage Broker (IMB) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Intimate partner/ marriage proposition | 21 | 4 | 10 | 10 | 7 | 2 |
| Job offer/advertisement | 36 | 19 | 189 | 28 | 24 | 2 |
| Other | 10 | 17 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 7 |
| Posing as Benefactor | 2 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Familial | 8 | 4 | 24 | 19 | 5 | 3 |
| Smuggling, ransom | 4 | 4 | 66 | 1 | 21 | 0 |
| Offer of Accommodation | 1 | 4 | 35 | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| Unknown | 406 | 178 | 1121 | 35 | 39 | 510 |

sexual exploitation

The most prevalent recruitment tactic indicated in sexual exploitation situations (where tactics were known) was false promises or statements recorded for 73 potential victims (49% of PVs of sexual exploitation, excluding PVs with no known recruitment tactic).

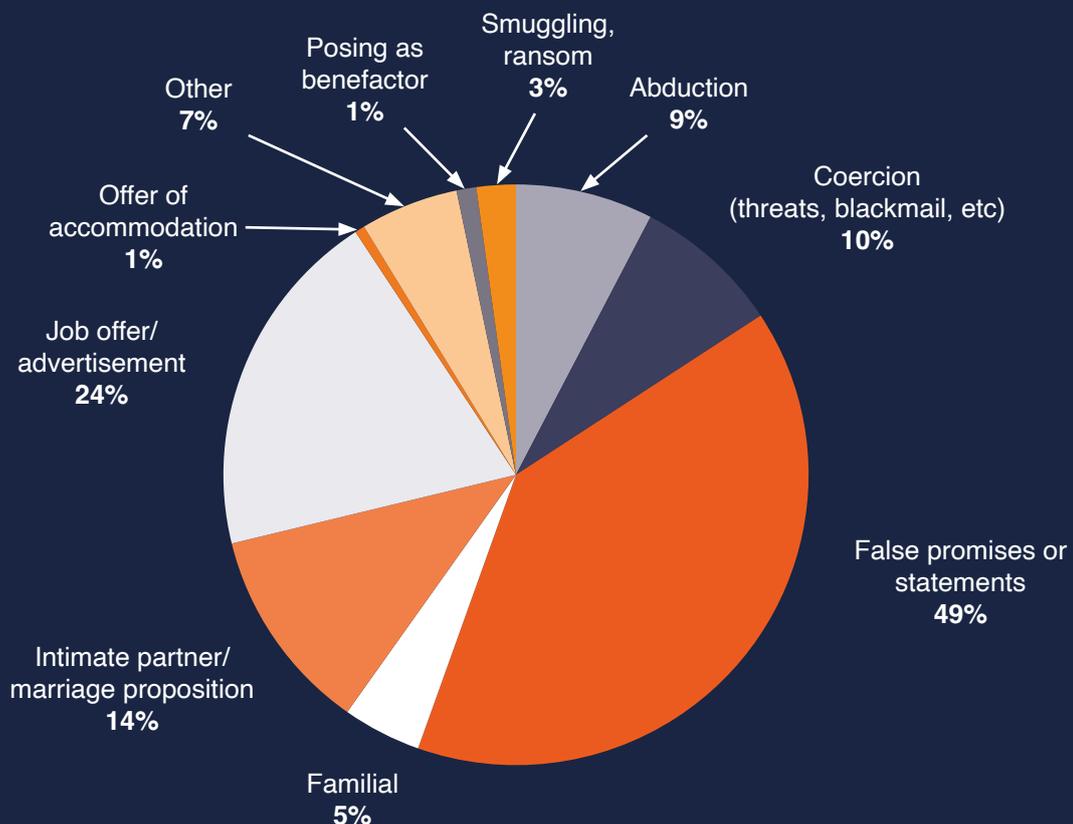
This is consistent with anecdotal evidence from strategic partners such as Border Force who encounter potential victims coming into or going out of the UK and who appear to know little about where they are going and their plans.

Often reports indicate that women have been promised a job or other opportunity only to find it is false and the woman is expected to become involved in commercial sex.

A job offer/advertisement was the second most common recruitment tactic within sexual exploitation with 36 potential victims reported.

Within sexual exploitation situations, an intimate partner or marriage proposition was the third most prevalent tactic, relating to 14% of Potential victims (excluding unknown recruitment tactics), higher than any other exploitation type for this tactic. This fits with the understanding that intimate partners and marriage propositions can be used to manipulate women into exploitation, often sexual exploitation, as they believe their exploiter loves them.

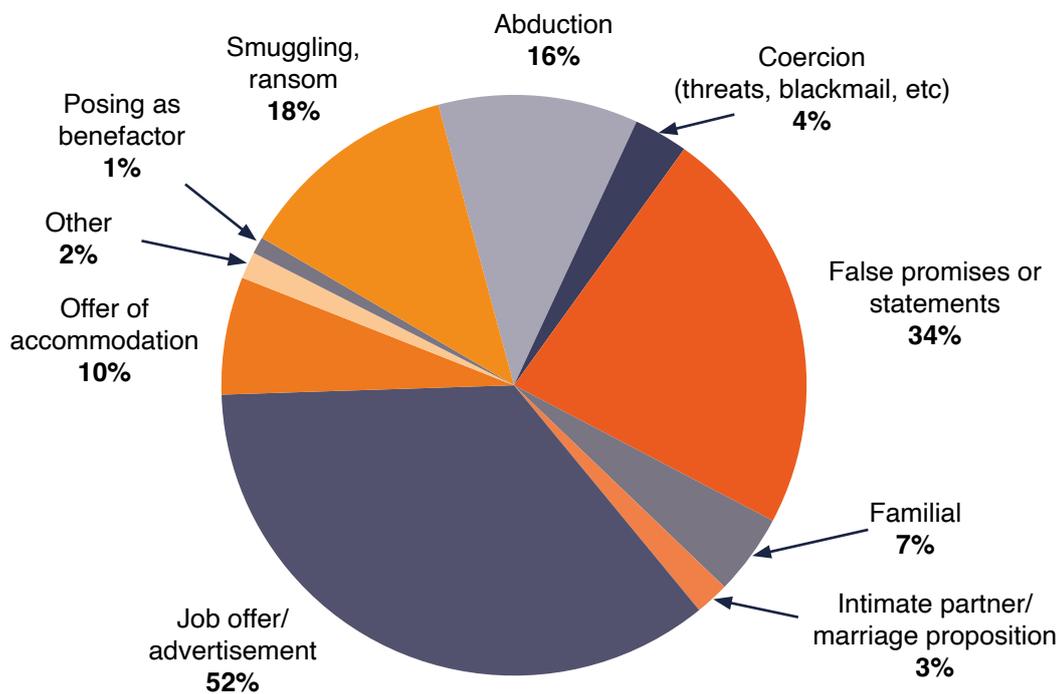
Chart 6 Breakdown of recruitment tactics indicated by potential victims of sexual exploitation



labour exploitation

Unsurprisingly, the most prevalent recruitment tactic for potential victims of labour exploitation was a job offer/ advertisement, followed by false promises or statements. Both abduction and an offer of accommodation are more common for potential victims of labour exploitation than for any other typology.

Chart 7 Breakdown of recruitment tactics indicated by potential victims of labour exploitation



...338 Potential victims were reported to be exploited within the most prevalent industry of construction

recruitment tactic per industry within labour exploitation

Within labour exploitation, 338 Potential victims were reported to be exploited within the most prevalent industry of construction. The second most prevalent industry within labour exploitation was car washes with 154 Potential victims reported, followed by agriculture and farming with 151 Potential victims reported as the third most prevalent.

Job offers were the most prevalent recruitment tactic used across two of the top three industries within labour exploitation.

Construction data encompasses a range of different circumstances, including construction sites and small private building companies conducting roofing and home repairs.

Table 5 Recruitment tactics used per top three labour industries in which potential victims were exploited

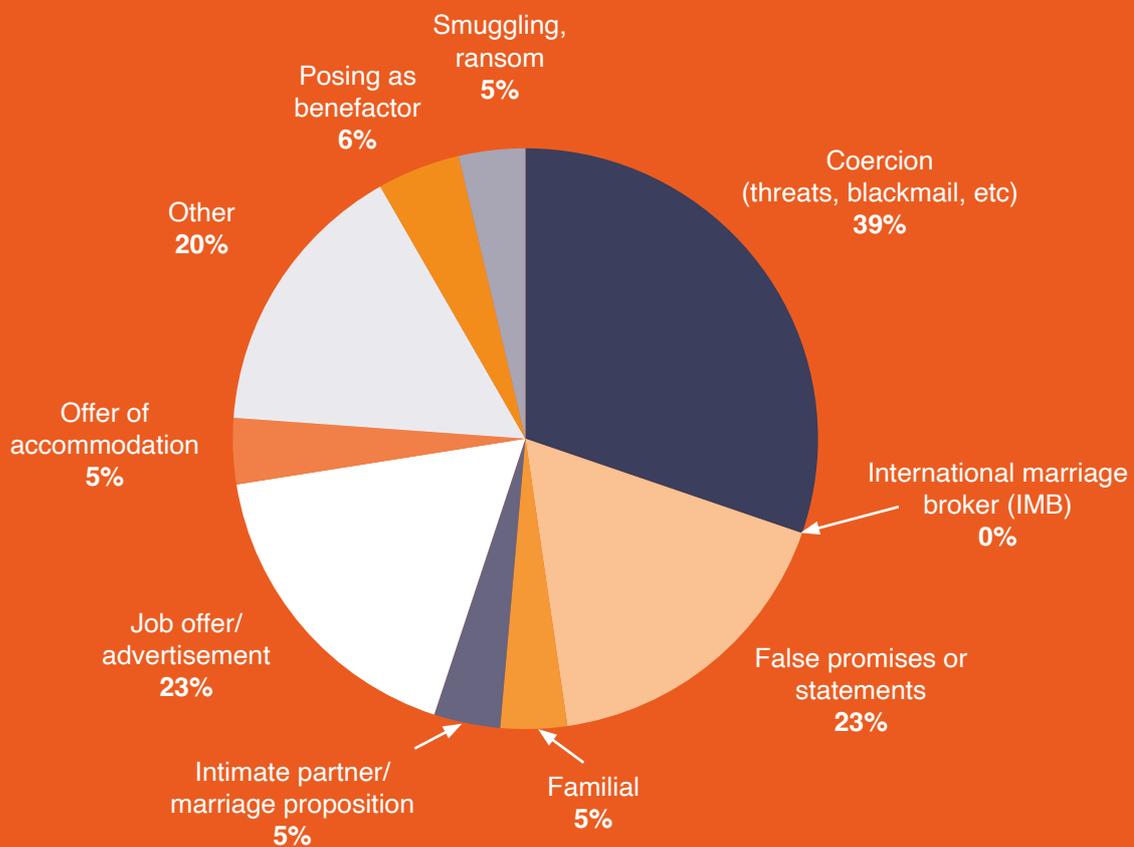
| Industry | Number of PVs | Most prevalent reported recruitment tactics |
|---------------------|---------------|--|
| Labour Exploitation | 1484 | |
| Agriculture/Farm | 151 | 1 ST False promises or statements (41 PVs) 2 ND Job offer/advert (28 PVs) |
| Car Wash | 154 | Job offer/advert (6 PVs) |
| Construction | 338 | Job offer/advert (22 PVs) |

criminal exploitation

A total of 262 potential victims indicated for criminal exploitation in modern slavery cases were reported to the Helpline in 2021.

Of those exploited for criminal exploitation, 165 potential victims were involved in activities involving drugs. Coercion was the most prevalent reported recruitment tactic within criminal exploitation, affecting 33 potential victims. Coercion was also the most prevalent recruitment tactic for potential victims of criminal exploitation where drugs were involved, affecting 28 potential victims.

Chart 8 Breakdown of recruitment tactics indicated by potential victims of criminal exploitation



Of those exploited for criminal exploitation, 165 potential victims were involved in activities involving drugs.

domestic servitude

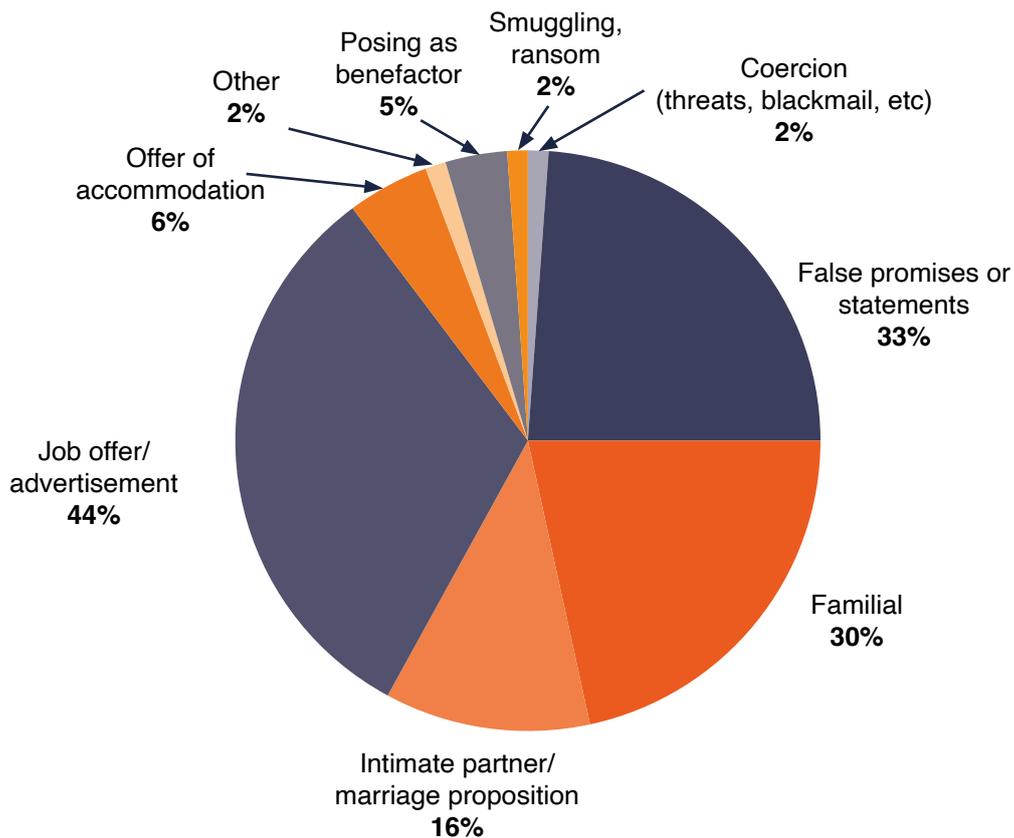
For modern slavery cases of domestic servitude opened in 2021, 98 potential victims were indicated. The most common recruitment tactic recorded was job offer/advertisement, followed by false promises/statements and familial recruitment.

Familial recruitment tactics made up 30% of the recruitment tactics used on victims exploited for domestic servitude, which was a significantly higher percentage than its use within the other typologies of

exploitation. (Familial recruitment tactics were reported for only 5% of victims exploited for criminal gain, 7% for forced labour, and 5% for sexual exploitation.) This indicates this recruitment tactic was used the most for exploitation that was in a domestic setting.

Like sexual exploitation, intimate partner/marriage proposition was more common as a recruitment tactic for domestic servitude.

Chart 9 Breakdown of recruitment tactics indicated by potential victims of domestic servitude



VULNERABILITY FACTORS

As the analysis of recruitment information highlighted, exploiters use locations and platforms that are accessible to large numbers of people. However, there will undoubtedly be some people that exploiters attempt to recruit who do not respond to these tactics and therefore do not enter exploitation.

Analysis of possible contributing factors, such as vulnerabilities present for those who enter exploitation, could help further inform prevention strategies.

The most common vulnerability factors present, prior to exploitation, reported to the Helpline across all exploitation typologies are age, language barriers and immigration status.

Age, as one of the top three vulnerabilities recorded, is consistent with what we have seen in relation to young people being at greater risk of exploitation.

Unsurprisingly, more vulnerabilities were indicated

at the time of the call, which could be during or after exploitation. There could be several reasons why this was the case.

Many of these vulnerabilities are understood to occur as impacts of the trauma of exploitation. Thus, vulnerabilities listed for potential victims who are currently in exploitation or have left exploitative situations could indicate that people are more vulnerable when they have exited exploitation or that the potential victim themselves or the caller are more aware of the vulnerability factors. This is consistent with what service provision reveals when working with survivors who have left exploitation. Often when a situation has passed, people are able to reflect on it, understand it and learn from it.

The second most prevalent vulnerability indicated in contacts to the Helpline at the time of the call was past abuse, some of which could be occurring or have occurred during exploitation.

Table 6: Vulnerability factors of potential victims (PVs) recorded based on prior to and post exploitation

| | Number of PVs with vulnerabilities prior to exploitation | Number of pvs with vulnerabilities at time of call |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Age | 309 | 196 |
| Gang involved | 0 | 48 |
| Pregnancy | 0 | 24 |
| Immigration Status | 394 | 317 |
| Language | 490 | 402 |
| Past abuse | 127 | 500 |
| Physical impairment | 21 | 20 |
| Learning Difficulties | 26 | 22 |
| Mental Illness | 37 | 54 |
| LGBTQIA | 0 | 6 |
| Financial Instability - poverty/debts | 110 | 110 |
| Substance Abuse (alcohol and/or drug) | 62 | 62 |
| Social Unrest | 121 | 16 |
| Looked after/unstable family | 15 | 6 |
| Homelessness | 106 | 120 |

As 298 potential victims of exploitation in total experienced the top recruitment tactic of a job advert as an entry into exploitation, vulnerabilities before exploitation with respect to this population are shown below.

As well as being in the top three overall vulnerabilities prior to exploitation reported, immigration status and language are common vulnerabilities reported when the recruitment tactic was recorded as a job offer, followed by financial instability and homelessness.

Table 7 Vulnerability factors prior to recruitment with a job offer/advert

| | Number of PVs with vulnerabilities prior to job advert as RT |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Age | 7 |
| Gang involved | 0 |
| Pregnancy | 0 |
| Immigration Status | 100 |
| Language | 73 |
| Past abuse | 16 |
| Physical impairment | 7 |
| Learning Difficulties | 4 |
| Mental Illness | 5 |
| LGBTQIA | 0 |
| Financial Instability - poverty/debts | 45 |
| Substance Abuse (alcohol and/or drug) | 4 |
| Social Unrest | 8 |
| Looked after/unstable family | 1 |
| Homelessness | 42 |
| Unknown | 91 |

SURVIVOR VIEWS ON VULNERABILITY

Some of the survivors involved in the forum and survey told us that financial instability and poverty, homelessness, mental illness, immigration status, language barriers and looked after/unstable family were reasons behind why they felt false promises and fake offers of work were successful.

The data set from survivors in support was much smaller than that of the Helpline due to the abbreviated period of data collection for this project. However, it still shows a correlation between the vulnerabilities indicated through the Helpline and those highlighted by survivors through the forum.

Survivors also said they felt forced marriage, religion and cultural differences were used by exploiters to target them into abuse and exploitation.

“Hardly women complain”

“Force marriage by gave [giving] money. Sold”

“[An] unstable home life [is] more likely to increase chances of unsafe work, such as dealing drugs”

“If I complain against husband, then it affects my family respect and the killing for honour”

Survivors felt that more information for young people about their rights and how to avoid dangerous situations could help stop people from becoming exploited.

Survivors felt that having this in a language the person understands is important because of the bonds made when being able to talk freely and understand something in their first language.

“When people don’t speak your language it’s hard... it’s so nice when someone does... you are just so relieved, and you agree to what they say”

One survivor felt that their gender was a vulnerability factor used by their exploiters and that more could be done to help people feel safe.

“Wife or any woman afraid from homelessness. Illegal migrants afraid from deportation. Children are not aware about this, because they open their eyes in hard times”

exploitation period

THE EXPLOITER

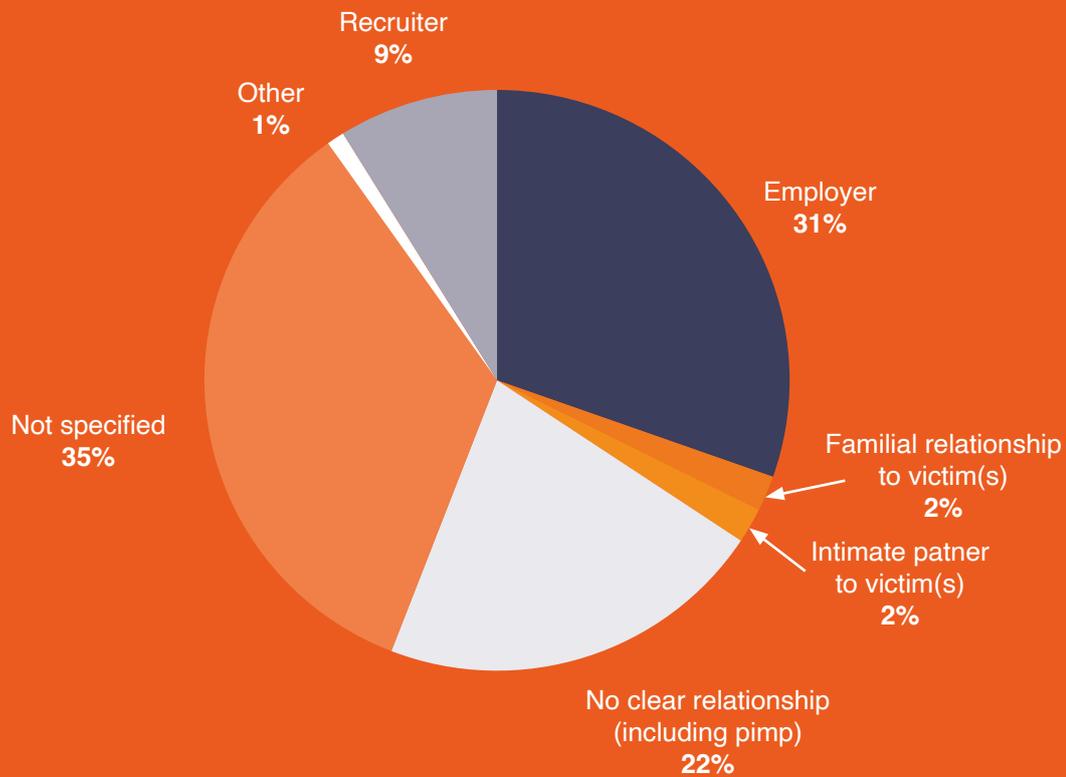
To understand exploitation and how it occurs we must also look at the exploiter and the relationship between themselves and the potential victim.

Relationships between an exploiter and victim recorded as unknown by the Helpline was because the information was not provided at the time of the contact. This could be because of the proximity of the

caller to the situation and their lack of knowledge of the individuals involved, or because the caller chose not to disclose that information.

The most prevalent relationship indicated in contacts to the Helpline was an employer/employee relationship. This aligns with the prevalence of labour exploitation as the most common typology and job adverts as the most common recruitment tactic.

Chart 10 Breakdown of trafficker relationships to victims



The gender breakdown of exploiters indicated in cases of modern slavery raised by the Helpline shows that overwhelmingly, males were by far the most prevalent gender reported in cases opened in 2021.

The age range indicated in many male exploiters reported to the Helpline were aged between 25-44. This age range was slightly higher than the most common age range of victims (18-24). This may indicate that younger working aged individuals are more likely to trust slightly older peers who may be perceived to have more experience in the workplace.

This provides further evidence that targeted prevention techniques would be helpful for younger people to avoid exploitation and find legitimate work by gaining confidence in the work environment.

Table 8 Gender of Potential exploiters

| | Total |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Male | 1021 |
| Female | 218 |
| Transgender female | 1 |
| Unknown | 768 |
| Total | 2008 |

Table 9 Potential exploiter age range

| Age category | Male | Female |
|--------------|------|--------|
| 15 and under | 0 | 0 |
| 16-17 | 0 | 0 |
| 18-24 | 17 | 2 |
| 25-34 | 42 | 8 |
| 35-44 | 59 | 7 |
| 45-59 | 29 | 7 |
| 60 and up | 14 | 2 |

Table 10 Top 10 nationalities for potential victims and potential exploiters

| Nationality | In the top 10 for victims? | In the top 10 for exploiters? |
|-------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Romania | Yes | Yes |
| Vietnam | Yes | Yes |
| China | Yes | Yes |
| Albania | Yes | Yes |
| Sudan | Yes | No |
| India | Yes | No |
| Poland | Yes | Yes |
| England | Yes | Yes |
| Brazil | Yes | No |
| Pakistan | Yes | Yes |
| Ireland | No | Yes |
| Russia | No | Yes |
| Libya | No | Yes |

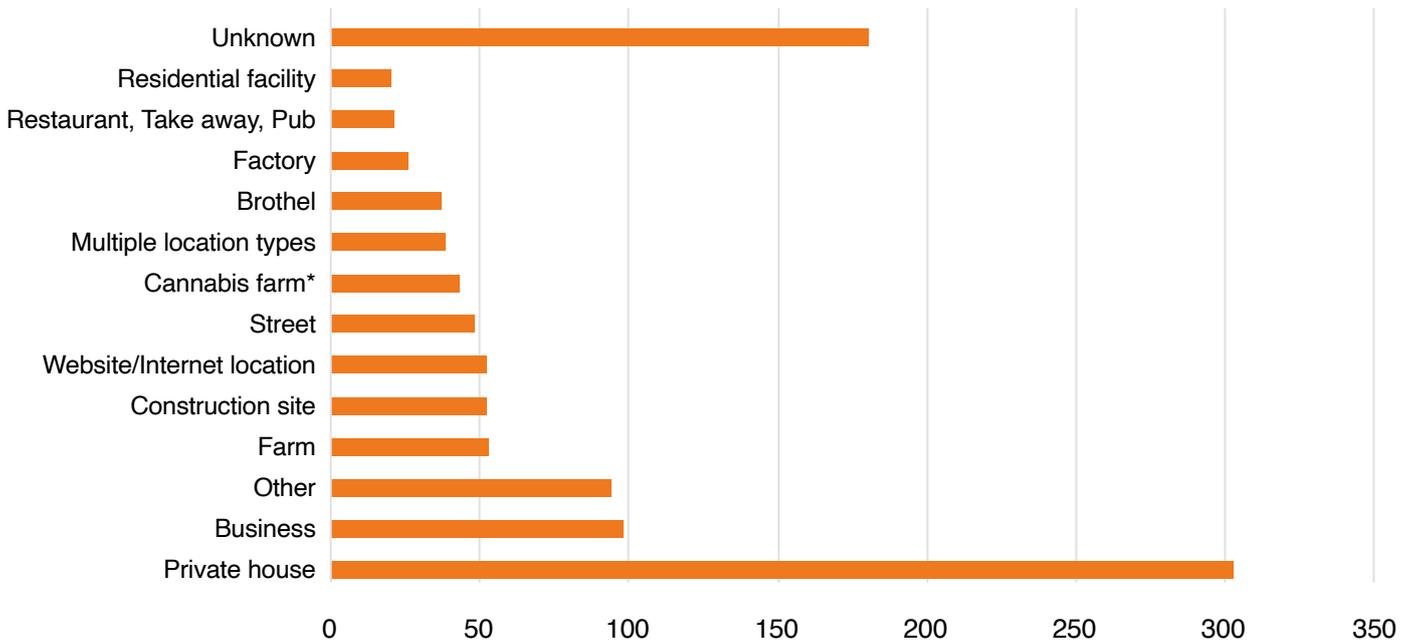
Regarding commonalities between nationalities of potential exploiters and potential victims reported, seven out of 10 nationalities were present in the top 10 nationalities for both cohorts.

This was consistent with the view from survivors about having a bond with someone who speaks the same language, has similar common interests, or because individuals often look to peers for guidance and support.

EXPLOITATION LOCATION/VENUE

In addition to information relating to potential exploiters, information pertaining to the location or venue of exploitation can also help in identifying prevention strategies.

Chart 11 Breakdown of most common exploitation locations across all typologies



Of the cases where the exploitation location was reported, the most commonly reported locations were in private homes. This is consistent with what we know about exploiters preferring to keep exploitation out of the eyes of the public and authorities through reports of cannabis cultivation and pop-up brothels in short-term let properties, domestic servitude within homes, as well as home repairs in connection with the construction industry and more.

Strategies for prevention should look at housing regulations, renting laws and others to help reduce this issue.

Training and awareness of people likely to attend private homes regularly should also be rolled out for reports to be made quickly – for example with delivery drivers and door-to-door salespeople or housing officers responding to complaints regarding houses of multiple occupation (HMOs).

These individuals are likely to visit private homes and witness certain behaviours but may not know what they are seeing and how to appropriately report it.

METHODS OF CONTROL

Understanding modern slavery and identifying prevention strategies that work can be achieved through reviewing not only how someone is recruited but how they remain in exploitation.

Maintaining control over potential victims is crucial for exploiters because they want to protect their assets – the victims.

Helpline data indicates methods of control experienced by potential victims of modern slavery, where this information is available. A wide range of methods of control are recorded by the Helpline, and one victim could experience multiple methods of control.

In total, in 2021, the Helpline indicated 7,039 methods of control in total with 462 different control combinations.

Financial control (28%), monitoring (30%), tied accommodation (31%), restricted movement (29%) and physical abuse (20%) are five of the most common methods of control recorded for potential victims of modern slavery.

Survivors also mentioned that, threats of violence against them was another common occurrence.

methods of control per nationality

While some methods of control are common across the top five nationalities, some interesting variations surfaced.

For potential victims indicated on modern slavery cases opened in 2021, the table below shows the most common methods of control experienced by potential victims for the five most common nationalities. The percentages shown are the percentage of potential

victims of each respective nationality where the corresponding method of control was recorded.

When looking at the top five most common potential victim nationalities, no one method of control was consistently indicated. As an example of the variation of methods of control shown above, tied accommodation was the most common form of control indicated for Romanian potential victims (55%).

Table 11 Methods of control indicated by most common potential victim nationality

| | Romania | Vietnam | China | Albanian | Sudan |
|------------|--|---|--|---|---|
| 1st | Tied accommodation (55%) | Confinement, restricted movement (41%) | Confinement, restricted movement (49%) | Confinement, restricted movement (44%) | Physical Abuse (86%) |
| 2nd | Financial control (31%) | Physical abuse (34%) | Physical abuse (37%) | Physical abuse (39%) | Monitoring (64%) |
| 3rd | Monitoring (25%) | Threat to harm subject, family or other (34%) | Tied accommodation (34%) | Sexual abuse (39%) | Confinement, restricted movement (62%) |
| 4th | Other (20%) | Monitoring (31%) | Monitoring (29%) | Threat to harm subject, family or other (37%) | Financial control (54%) |
| 5th | Emotional abuse – verbal/ manipulation (19%) | Financial control (27%) | Financial control (28%) | Other (34%) | Threat to harm subject, family or other (54%) |

However, tied accommodation did not feature in the top five forms of control for Vietnamese potential victims, only affecting 24% of potential victims from Vietnam.

For another disparity, the most common method of control for Vietnamese potential victims was confinement/restricted movement affecting 41% of Vietnamese potential victims. Yet, this method of control

did not fall within the five most common for Romanian potential victims.

Confinement and restricted movement only affected 18% of Romanian Potential victims. Another variation was physical abuse which was significantly more common with Sudanese potential victims (86%) than all other common nationalities depicted.

Methods of control per recruitment tactic

Data on methods of control when overlaid with the top five recruitment tactics per potential victim showed interesting correlations.

These findings show that restricted movement and physical abuse are often control methods associated with situations involving abduction.

71% of the potential victims recruited via abduction were controlled through restricted movement and 48% suffered physical abuse.

This aligns with the premise that those who are abducted are taken against their will and unable to leave the situation, often being physically abused or restrained to ensure they comply.

Fairly similarly, for those potential victims that were recruited via smuggling/ransom, 78% experienced restricted movement, 66% suffered physical abuse, with 57% were financially controlled.

For those seeking work and responding to a job offer or advert, five control methods are prevalent in the Helpline data: tied accommodation (64%), financial control (69%), monitoring (28%), restricted movement (41%) and physical abuse (38%). This suggests that a range of interrelated control methods are used in a considerable proportion of these cases.

Offers of accommodation and a job to a person who has nowhere to stay, and no income is a big pull factor. Once in the “tied” accommodation, potential victims can be easily monitored and staying there is dependent on the victim paying often extortionate amounts of rent, often for sub-par accommodations and often from confiscated wages.

If they fail to pay the rent they are not only without work and an income, but they also lose their accommodation. Indeed, the Helpline often hears from potential victims that part of why they feel trapped in a situation of exploitation is that they are unaware or do not have other options for work or accommodation.

This was consistent with what survivors said in relation to not having enough information on how to access legitimate employment and financial support. It is also highlighted in survivor accounts from support staff that once individuals have exited exploitation, they are often tempted to return to unsafe work to financially support themselves.

Both tied accommodation and financial control being identified as common control methods is evidence that not all exploitation needs to include an element of physical harm and/or restriction. For some, the emotional attachment and worries regarding alternatives and fears for others are enough to keep individuals in exploitation.

...71% of the potential victims recruited via abduction were controlled through restricted movement and 48% suffered physical abuse.

Table 12 Methods of control compared with most prevalent recruitment tactics by potential victim

| | 1 st | 2 nd | 3 rd | 4 th | 5 th |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|---|
| | Job offer/ advert | False promises/ statements | Abduction | Smuggling, ransom | Coercion (Threats, blackmail, etc.) |
| Confinement, restricted movement | 121 | 108 | 70 | 75 | 17 |
| Cultural/familial/religious pressure or coercion | 13 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Emotional abuse – verbal/ manipulation | 77 | 49 | 10 | 17 | 12 |
| Financial control | 206 | 138 | 25 | 55 | 47 |
| Induced substance abuse | 11 | 12 | 4 | 1 | 10 |
| Isolation | 38 | 38 | 21 | 23 | 12 |
| Monitoring | 88 | 81 | 38 | 35 | 27 |
| Physical abuse | 112 | 88 | 47 | 64 | 42 |
| Sexual abuse | 50 | 87 | 16 | 18 | 13 |
| Threat – other | 23 | 13 | 8 | 6 | 9 |
| Threat to abandon subject/make homeless | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Threat to expose or shame subject | 4 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Threat to harm subject, family or other | 78 | 60 | 35 | 34 | 41 |
| Threat to report to police or immigration | 26 | 22 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Tied accommodation | 192 | 155 | 14 | 35 | 12 |
| Withheld/destroyed Important documents | 80 | 57 | 2 | 23 | 9 |

Methods of control per exploitation type

In addition to overlaying data on control methods and recruitment tactics the data was also analysed to establish if there were any patterns in the methods of control used by exploiters based on the different typologies of modern slavery. Monitoring, financial control, and restricted movement/confinement were significant control methods indicated for all typologies.

Unsurprisingly, sexual abuse and restricted movement were common methods of control highlighted within sexual exploitation.

Tied accommodation was recorded as more common for labour exploitation and domestic servitude than for criminal and sexual exploitation.

Withholding documents was most common for domestic servitude, as would be expected with tied visas and travel often managed by the exploiter.

Table 13 Methods of control experienced by potential victims by exploitation type

| | Sexual exploitation | | Criminal exploitation | | Domestic servitude | | Labour exploitation | |
|--|---------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|
| | Number of PVs | % of SE PVs | Number of PVs | % of CE PVs | Number of PVs | % of DS PVs | Number of PVs | % of LE PVs |
| Confinement, restricted movement | 181 | 33% | 52 | 20% | 47 | 48% | 554 | 37% |
| Cultural/familial/religious pressure or coercion | 2 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 5 | 5% | 14 | 1% |
| Emotional abuse - verbal/manipulation | 29 | 5% | 21 | 8% | 32 | 33% | 288 | 19% |
| Financial control | 112 | 20% | 79 | 30% | 43 | 44% | 536 | 36% |
| Induced substance abuse | 48 | 9% | 13 | 5% | 0 | 0% | 21 | 1% |
| Isolation | 70 | 13% | 10 | 4% | 16 | 16% | 125 | 8% |
| Monitoring | 176 | 32% | 61 | 23% | 29 | 30% | 609 | 41% |
| Physical abuse | 110 | 20% | 64 | 24% | 26 | 27% | 348 | 23% |
| Sexual abuse | 255 | 46% | 10 | 4% | 8 | 8% | 20 | 1% |
| Threat – other | 9 | 2% | 21 | 8% | 9 | 9% | 66 | 4% |
| Threat to abandon subject/make homeless | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 1% | 8 | 1% |
| Threat to expose or shame subject | 15 | 3% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 4 | 0% |
| Threat to harm subject, family or other | 60 | 11% | 96 | 37% | 18 | 18% | 201 | 14% |
| Threat to report to police or immigration | 4 | 1% | 3 | 1% | 13 | 13% | 42 | 3% |
| Tied accommodation | 97 | 17% | 26 | 10% | 49 | 50% | 652 | 44% |
| Withheld/destroyed important documents | 35 | 6% | 10 | 4% | 35 | 36% | 125 | 8% |

SURVIVOR VIEWS ON EXPLOITATION

We asked survivors why they felt they were unable to leave exploitation to see if this was consistent with what was reported to the Helpline.

Survivors told us that they often did not know support was available and that they did not feel they had alternative options. If they had known, they might never have been exploited.

“Didn’t know services could help. [I got] no answers”

Some survivors had known that there might be some help available to them, however had either been informed that there were long waiting times for this or had tried to access it without getting any results. One survivor said:

“I spoke to someone, [I] was told it would take time... I thought is it [NRM support] worth it?”

Others reported attending statutory services including the police and health services and not being identified or given the opportunities to disclose and be heard to receive support.

“I went...a police station... wasn’t given any information...left”

“I was sent to so many places [different health care professionals], it made my health worse”

Several survivors talked about the public also having a part to play in stopping exploitation but said they felt many people either do not know what to look out for or are unaware of what they are seeing and how to respond to it.

“It is important for more people to be educated about the indicators [of modern slavery] so they can help”

“People just don't look”

“If I saw that [Helpline] number – I wouldn't call, I didn't know what it [modern slavery/exploitation] was”

One survivor talked about her fears for family members both in the UK and overseas being a significant factor for her:

“I didn't know they were safe... still don't...”

We asked what she felt would help reduce this fear. She said:

“More information on how to check on them... bring them to safety”

Survivors consistently said that lack of awareness of support, legal advice and information on their rights was a big reason they felt they were unable to leave.

Confidence was another issue for survivors:

“I didn't feel confident”

conclusion

Overall, the evidence shows that those most vulnerable to exploitation are those who are of young working age, who are in search of work, money and accommodation and are unaware of where and who to turn to for legitimate employment opportunities and help.

Prevention activities and resources should be focused on informing and supporting those at risk to prevent modern slavery and reduce the levels of re-trafficking.

Support and information should be readily available and offered in a timely manner to those who leave exploitation and those who might still be in exploitative circumstances.

As we have been able to deeply analyse Helpline data, we have identified a few gaps which could have further informed key preventative strategies. Collating

data from other sources such as police statistics, health reporting, Border Force and NRM (National Referral Mechanism) data, and combining this with the Helpline, would help fill these gaps and result in a strong cross-sector analysis to further understand why someone enters exploitation.

Opening the project to even more survivors, those within and outside of the NRM, would also lead to further interesting insights which could continually feed into strategies to prevent modern slavery occurring.

SURVIVOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Survivors gave a range of ideas on where they think prevention resources should be targeted. They said:

-  Having proper equipment in work environments is something frequently missing in exploitative settings. If more robust checks and monitoring of organisations' equipment took place this would help identify locations of exploitation.
-  Support regarding career development should be a legal requirement in all industries and certificates of business authenticity should be readily available to all potential role candidates on request. If this were a known expectation, then people would feel more confident in knowing the work they were entering into was legitimate and would help break the bonds of exploitation through debt bondage sooner.
-  Suitable and stable accommodation should be easier to access and advertised better to those in need.
-  Access to financial support and budgeting help should be made easier for those who are vulnerable. This will enable people to know if what they are being offered is too good to be true.

HOW TO PREVENT MODERN SLAVERY

- ◇ More support should be available for family members abroad via overseas working to check on people's safety. This should be advertised more publicly so that those in exploitation can use this.
- ◇ Overseas working with other governments to stop corruption.
- ◇ Access to legal support should be improved for vulnerable groups with better information on how to get it.
- ◇ Increased resources into interpreter services and translated documents.
- ◇ Better information and advertisements of available community peer groups to reduce feelings of isolation, and the likelihood of turning to a potential exploiter for support.
- ◇ More resources to be put into public awareness of modern slavery through training and education programmes.
- ◇ More information on the internet and in public areas in easy to find places.
- ◇ Police/law enforcement patrols in industries and on farms to ensure no exploitation is occurring. Both in cities and rural areas.
- ◇ More arrests should be made.
- ◇ Better communication from those with power to make changes to be made directly to survivors in an accessible way.
- ◇ More access to first responders who sit outside of police/immigration, and who know how to support and identify potential victims.
- ◇ Community groups to raise awareness of modern slavery.
- ◇ Police to utilise a non "strict" line of enquiry that avoids "cross" questions.
- ◇ Education in schools on crimes such as exploitation and sexual abuse.
- ◇ More support available and advertised in relation to exploitation occurring through domestic relationships, forced marriages etc.

UNSEEN RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Data capturing resources should be rolled out to multiple sectors to ensure a comprehensive approach to monitoring modern slavery and exploitation. This will make response and prevention easier through reducing the number of caveats in data recorded in any particular location.
2. Scaling up this project to cover longer periods of time would allow a better understanding of how trends differ and would enable quicker responses to be taken when socio-economic changes appear. Consideration of the time it takes to clean and analyse this data would need to be incorporated into roll-out plans.
3. Increase resources into data pulling and analysis programmes to speed up the process and reduce costs.
4. Continuous data could be added to this project and regularly analysed to keep up with emerging trends. For example, over recent years as modern slavery changes, there has been a significant increase in reports of children involved in criminal exploitation. If continuous data and regular analysis were put in place, findings would be distributed to those on the frontline so we could better target prevention activities on these groups.
5. Incorporate the findings of this report into widespread training on modern slavery to ensure the public, private organisations and statutory services can respond accordingly to potential threats.
6. Support survivors to share their stories in a confidential, safe space away from concerns relating to timeframe/police/immigration etc, and develop data resources to capture this over time. This would help build a more accurate picture of exploitation, assuming that not all information will be obtained in a few interactions. A multi-agency data sharing and capturing mechanism would help this.
7. Increase resources to educate and train young people on accessing work, awareness of their rights and entitlements, and how to spot manipulating behaviours.
8. Online safety needs to be targeted towards the removal of fake job adverts. The Online Harms Bill should be utilised to achieve this.
9. Safety and awareness resources, including the Helpline number, should be available in public places like parks and train stations so people know to look out for those who might be targeting them.
10. Strategies for prevention should look at housing regulations, renting laws and others to help reduce private homes being used as locations for exploitation.
11. Statutory services due diligence and monitoring to ensure victim care is a prioritised to improve identification and foster a culture of belief over blame.
12. Training and awareness of people likely to attend private homes regularly should also be rolled out for reports to be made quickly – for example, training for housing officers, delivery drivers and door-to-door salespeople.

References

Modern Slavery: National Referral Mechanism and Duty to Notify statistics UK, end of year summary, 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

2021 UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery (publishing.service.gov.uk)

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Unseen is working towards a world without slavery. We provide safehouses and support in the community for survivors of trafficking and modern slavery. We also run the Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline and work with individuals, communities, businesses, governments, other charities, and statutory agencies to stamp out slavery for good.



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