**Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking**

Modern Slavery is the term used within the UK and is defined within the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The Act categorises offences of Slavery, Servitude and Forced or Compulsory Labour and Human Trafficking (the use of which comes from the Palermo Protocol).

These crimes include holding a person in a position of slavery , servitude forced or compulsory labour, or facilitating their travel with the intention of exploiting them soon after.
Although human trafficking often involves an international cross-border element, it is also possible to be a victim of modern slavery within your own country.

It is possible to be a victim even if consent has been given to be moved.

Children cannot give consent to being exploited therefore the element of coercion or deception does not need to be present to prove an offence.

[Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU)](http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/specialist-capabilities/uk-human-trafficking-centre) plays a central role in leading the NCA's fight against serious and organised crime.

**Types of Human trafficking**

There are several broad categories of exploitation linked to human trafficking, including:

* Sexual exploitation
* Forced labour
* Domestic servitude
* Organ harvesting
* Child related crimes such as child sexual exploitation, forced begging, illegal drug cultivation, organised theft, related benefit frauds etc
* Forced marriage and illegal adoption (if other constituent elements are present)

Find out more about the different [types of exploitation](http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/crime-threats/human-trafficking/types-of-human-trafficking).

There are several broad categories of exploitation linked to modern slavery:

**Sexual exploitation**

Sexual exploitation involves any non-consensual or abusive sexual acts performed without a victim’s permission. This includes prostitution, escort work and pornography. Women, men and children of both sexes can be victims. Many will have been deceived with promises of a better life and then controlled through violence and abuse. It is also possible to exploit a person who consensually engages in providing sexual services.

**Forced labour**

Forced/ compulsory labour involves victims being compelled to work very long hours, often in hard conditions without relevant training and equipment, ­and to hand over the majority if not all of their wages to their traffickers. The types of work and working environment can often be described as ‘dirty, demeaning or dangerous’. Forced labour crucially implies the use of coercion and lack of freedom of choice for the victim. In many cases victims are subjected to verbal threats or violence to achieve compliance.

Manufacturing, entertainment, travel, farming and construction industries have been found to use forced labour by victims of human trafficking in various extents. There has been a marked increase in reported numbers in recent years. Often large numbers of people are housed in single dwellings and there is evidence of ‘hot bunking’, where a returning shift takes up the sleeping accommodation of those starting the next shift.

The International Labour Organisation [ILO] has identified six elements which individually or collectively can indicate forced labour. These are:

* Threats or actual physical harm
* Restriction of movement and confinement to the workplace or to a limited area
* Debt-bondage
* Withholding of wages or excessive wage reductions that violate previously made agreements
* Retention of passports and identity documents (the workers can neither leave nor prove their identity status)
* Threat of denunciation to the authorities regardless of whether the worker holds legal status in the UK or not.

**Domestic servitude**

Domestic servitude involves the victim being forced to work in private households. Their movement will often be restricted and they will be forced to perform household tasks such as child care and house-keeping over long hours and for little if any pay. Victims will lead very isolated lives and have little or no unsupervised freedom. Their own privacy and comfort will be minimal, often sleeping on a mattress on the floor in an open part of the house.

In rare circumstances where victims receive a wage it will be heavily reduced, as they are charged for food and accommodation.

**Organ harvesting**

Organ harvesting involves trafficking people in order to use their internal organs for transplant. The illegal trade is dominated by demand for kidneys. These are the only major organs that can be wholly transplanted with relatively few risks to the life of the donor.

**Child exploitation**

Persons under the age of 18 are classified as children in the UK; therefore it is not surprising to see many young people who get caught up in aspects of criminal exploitation. They are particularly vulnerable to exploitation by individual opportunists, traffickers and organised crime groups. They can be deliberately targeted by criminals, or ruthlessly exploited by the people who should protect them. About a quarter of the victims referred to the [UK National Referral Mechanism](http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/specialist-capabilities/uk-human-trafficking-centre) are children, a high proportion of which are older teenagers.

Children can be subjected to any of the exploitative conditions as mentioned above and common countries of origin for victims include Vietnam, Nigeria, Romania, Slovakia and the UK.

**What can we do if we suspect a child has been trafficked?**

Children trafficked into the country may be registered at a school for a term or longer, before being moved to another part of the UK or abroad. This pattern of registration and de-registration may be an indicator that a child has been trafficked. It has been identified as a particular concern in schools which are situated near ports of entry, but professionals should be alert to this possibility in all schools. However, professionals should always bear in mind that not all children who go missing from education have been victims of trafficking. For example, there may be instances of children from communities that move around – Gypsy, Roma, traveller or migrant families – who collectively go missing from school.

If a member of the school staff suspects that a child may have been trafficked they should act immediately to inform the senior member of staff with designated responsibility for child protection and ensure that police or Children’s Social Care Services are contacted immediately. Children trafficked into the country may be registered at a school for a term or so, before being moved to another part of the UK or abroad again. Schools therefore need to be alert to this pattern of registration and de-registration. This pattern has been identified in schools near ports, however it could happen anywhere in the UK.

In England local authorities have a statutory duty to identify children missing from education. Manchester Safeguarding Children’s Board have produced a [**Toolkit for Safeguarding Migrant and Trafficked Children and Young People**](http://www.manchesterscb.org.uk/docs/Trafficked%20Children%20Toolkit%20Final%202011.pdf)**.** This toolkit includes a joint assessment tool and referral form to assist professionals in both assessing the needs of the child and the continuing risks that they may face, and referring their case to the competent authority The UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) will fulfil this role for asylum cases and the United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) for all other cases.

**How to Report suspected crimes of modern slavery**

In the first instance the point of contact for all modern slavery crimes should be the local police force. If you have information about modern slavery crimes – those who are committing such crimes or where victims are at risk that requires an immediate response dial 999.

If you hold information that could lead to the identification, discovery and recovery of victims in the UK, you can contact the Modern Slavery Helpline 08000 121 700.

For more information visit [www.unseenuk.org](http://www.unseenuk.org/)

Alternatively you can make calls anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.