Trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation: a literature review

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Executive summary – Part A: Adults

- The report reveals that there is very little factual and robust evidence concerning trafficking of adults to the UK for the purposes of labour exploitation. Some areas of knowledge are more extensively addressed than others, but there are still significant knowledge gaps.

- It is known that victims constitute a wide range of nationalities, particularly Eastern European, Asian, African and South American. Victims may also be EU nationals and enter the UK through both legal and illegal means.

- Victims are found in a variety of employment sectors, including agriculture, construction, nursing, care, domestic work and hospitality. These industries typically require large numbers of low-paid, flexible, seasonal workers, sometimes in difficult or dangerous conditions. Demand for such cheap and malleable labour is a key driver of trafficking.

- Coercion and deception are used to control and exploit victims. Victims may experience debt-bondage, the withholding of identity documents, threats and abuse, reduced/no pay, excessive working hours, dangerous conditions, poor accommodation and discrimination.

- The UK is mainly a destination country, but internal trafficking also occurs. Victims are found in a wide variety of geographical areas in the UK.

- There is currently no standardised guidance to help identify or treat adult victims. Findings suggest that identification of victims might focus initially on exploitative working conditions, rather than assessment in terms of illegal/legal entry.

- Several knowledge gaps are identified. There is a lack of information on the exact scale of the problem and perpetrator/victim characteristics, including nationality, age, gender and education. There is a lack of information concerning long-term impacts and needs of victims, as well as the changing nature of trafficking routes and impacts of EU Accession.

- Findings should be treated with caution. Various methodological caveats mean that findings can only be indicative, as the review is based on a few qualitative studies, involving interviews and anecdotes from small, unrepresentative samples. They do not necessarily provide an accurate or complete picture of the UK situation.

- This review does, nevertheless, serve to highlight some important issues, for example the need for clear and consistent terminology in relation to trafficking, links between victim support and perpetrator prosecution, and perceptions of trafficking as an issue of border and law enforcement, as distinct from an issue of employment standards and exploitation.

- Despite methodological caveats, the broad consistency in the limited information and issues raised do indicate the growing importance of this area and provide a base from which to develop a better understanding. Filling the knowledge gaps identified would contribute towards a more robust evidence base for policy development.
Executive summary – Part B: Children

- The report reveals there is very little factual and robust evidence concerning trafficking of children to the UK for the purposes of labour exploitation. As in the adult report, some areas of knowledge are more extensively addressed than others. There are some differences from the adult report in terms of the information available.

- There is more information and guidance available concerning child, rather than adult, victim identification profiles; however, these are for child victims of all forms of trafficking, not just labour exploitation. Child victims appear to be primarily of African or Asian nationalities, as well as Eastern European and Jamaican, and are of a range of ages. More girls than boys are identified, but this may be a result of the nature of the exploitation they experience.

- Trafficked children enter the UK either accompanied by an adult or unaccompanied. Accompanying adults may claim to be the child’s parent/carer and are hard to identify. Those who are unaccompanied are referred to Social Services, but victims often only become apparent when they subsequently go missing from care.

- Children have been documented within domestic service, catering and manual labour. They are also used for credit card/benefit fraud and illicit activities. Children are particularly vulnerable to the deceptive and coercive practices of traffickers.

- Parents and family members can be perpetrators, but they may not always be aware of the resultant exploitation when sending their child to the UK for what is believed to be a better life. The acceptability of such practices, particularly in some African cultures, can hinder detection of children trafficked as domestic servants to families in the UK.

- A number of knowledge gaps are identified in relation to children. As with adults, there is a lack of information on the exact scale of the problem and perpetrator characteristics – beyond those identified as family members. Little is known about what happens to trafficked children who are not identified by Social Services. It is uncertain whether the exact trafficking routes, source and transit countries used in relation to children differ substantially from other trafficking routes, e.g. those for adults, sexual exploitation or smuggling.

- The review suggests children require special consideration in relation to trafficking because of their greater vulnerability and need in terms of support and protection.

- As with the adult report, similar methodological caveats mean that findings can only be indicative. The child report is also constrained by a narrow range of perspectives. Findings are primarily in relation to Social Services and do not incorporate child or perpetrator perspectives, or a wider range of individuals involved with victims.

- Despite these caveats, the broad consistency in the limited information indicates the growing importance of this area and, as with adult findings, provides a base from which to advance understanding. Filling the knowledge gaps identified would contribute towards a more robust evidence base and lead to more definitive policy recommendations.
1. Introduction

Background to the research

In December 2005, the House of Lords’ Joint Committee on Human Rights (JCHR) sought information from the Government about what is being done to tackle human trafficking. The Government acknowledged in its evidence to the JCHR that the majority of the knowledge regarding the situation in the UK centres on trafficking for prostitution and there is a need to improve knowledge and understanding of other forms of trafficking in order to assess whether these represent a significant problem for the UK.

In addition, the Prime Minister announced, on 22 January 2007, the UK’s intention to sign up to the Council of Europe’s Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings. ¹ This implied a need to confirm the implications of doing so, in terms of both the costs (and therefore the scale of the problem, i.e. numbers of victims) and the design of the supporting policy (such as improving methods of identifying victims and better understanding their needs). The policy aim is to understand more about the nature and extent of all forms of trafficking in order to develop an effective policy response to it.

The research that has been published in the UK to date has tended to focus on the trafficking of women/children for sexual exploitation. Although there are also evidence gaps in these areas, even less is known of trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation generally, therefore the focus of this review is labour exploitation, excluding sexual exploitation.

This literature review was conducted by Home Office researchers and independently peer reviewed by two external experts. This report is a summary of a longer and more detailed review.

Aims and objectives of the review

The aims of the review were threefold.
1. To identify what is known about trafficking to the UK for the purposes of labour exploitation (supplementing this information with international data where necessary and available).
2. To identify knowledge gaps in this area.
3. To make recommendations, where appropriate, as to how to address any knowledge gaps.

The above aims will contribute to improving the evidence base and policy in this area, both in relation to the prevention, detection and prosecution of offenders, and in the appropriate identification and treatment of victims. Findings are intended to be of use to policy makers and operational staff who are involved with tackling trafficking and assisting victims, as well as researchers and academics with an interest in this area. This review does not aim to outline or evaluate the legislation and policy changes that have been made or are currently being formulated within Government. It will simply present the findings from current published literature, which does not necessarily reflect current Home Office or Government thinking.

Findings from the reviewed literature are separated here into, first, adult victims and, second, child victims. There is similarity between some of the issues discussed for both types of victim, but differences in relation to some specific findings and recommendations drawn from the research.

¹ Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings and its Explanatory Report (2005) Council of Europe Treaty Series – No. 197, Warsaw 16V.2005: Council of Europe. The terms of the convention would enshrine special protection for victims of trafficking – a 30-day reflection period within which victims can decide whether or not to co-operate with the authorities in taking legal action against their traffickers. After this period, the UK Government would then have to decide whether to return victims or grant them some form of leave to remain.
Definitions of trafficking, smuggling and forced labour

The definition of trafficking is often regarded, in the reviewed literature, as unclear and inconsistent. Frequently, the distinctions between trafficking, smuggling and forced labour blur and overlap. The Palermo Protocol (2000) definition (outlined below) is the only recent international measure to attempt to define trafficking comprehensively, yet there is still some confusion over its actual meaning. The Protocol refers to a number of undefined concepts (e.g. ‘coercion’, ‘deception’ and ‘forced labour’) and, hence, can be left open to interpretation. As described below, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions attempt to define ‘forced labour’, where the Palermo Protocol does not; however, determining whether individuals have consented to their situation, or whether initial voluntary illegal movement has inadvertently resulted in trafficking, can be very problematic.

Definitions of trafficking and smuggling according to the Palermo Protocol and as adopted in the Council of Europe Convention are described below.

**Trafficking**

“(a) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

“(b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used.”

This definition emphasises the three core elements of trafficking: the movement or harbouring of a person; use of deception or coercion; and placement into situations of exploitation. These elements occur in combination and not isolation. This Protocol made trafficking in persons for all forms of exploitation an international criminal offence, whether for labour or sexual purposes.

The Palermo Protocol regards child victims of trafficking as special cases – they are regarded as victims of trafficking whether or not they are evidenced as coerced or deceived into their situation (UNICEF, 2003). It is suggested that it is impossible for children to give informed consent – they may simply be submitting to the authority of their parents, even if they understand what is taking place, as otherwise they feel they are being disloyal.

Throughout this report a child is defined as being under 18 years of age (in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and UK legislation including the Children’s Act, 1989 and 2004).

**Smuggling**

“Smuggling of migrants’ means the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident.”

This definition implies that a smuggled individual has provided his/her consent to be illegally transported from the country of origin to country of destination. It also implies an end to the relationship between the smuggler and migrant upon entry into the country of destination, without deliberate placement into an exploitative situation. Trafficking, however, implies a non-voluntary process, with an explicit purpose of exploitation and a continuing relationship between victim and trafficker.

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3 Ibid.
Forced labour

Forced labour is defined, according to the ILO Forced Labour Convention 1930 (No.29) and the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) as:

“All work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily” (Article 2 ILO C.29).

All forced labour includes unacceptable working conditions, but not all such working conditions constitute forced labour. Forced labour alone is just one, but often the most serious, element of the exploitation experienced by trafficking victims. It crucially implies the use of coercion and lack of freedom/choice afforded to the victim (as is implicit in the use of the term ‘trafficking’). The ILO (2007) has suggested six elements which, either individually or together, can indicate forced labour:

- threats or actual physical harm;
- restriction of movement and confinement to the workplace or to a limited area;
- debt-bondage;\(^4\)
- 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 and status);
- threat of denunciation to the authorities where the worker is of illegal status.

This report covers not only ‘forced labour’, but the multitude of different exploitative labour conditions experienced by victims of trafficking, in addition to some or all of the coercive elements described above.

The use of the terms trafficking, smuggling, forced labour and labour exploitation within this report is a reflection of the varying terminology used within the reviewed literature. However, it is not always possible to infer, from the published reports, whether it would have been more appropriate for authors to adopt alternative terminology to describe particular situations.

\(^4\) Where the worker is not paid and must work to pay off a debt or loan that he/she agreed to in order to facilitate entry to or work in the UK.
2. Methodology

The literature review has been conducted as systematically as possible, under tight time constraints. It does not however constitute a ‘systematic review’ as normally defined. Information sources were identified in a number of ways.

- Through policy and operational stakeholders across Government.
- Internet searches for relevant organisations/reports.
- ‘Hand searches’ of existing literature/emails.
- Searches of relevant electronic databases for priority sources, with assistance from the Home Office library.
- Speculative requests to UK academics and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

An extensive list of search terms was developed by the research team through prior knowledge of the topic and testing using internet search engines such as Google and online search tools such as the Ingenta database. These terms were used by the research team and library staff to search key databases and other resources.

Material has been included in the review if it is written in English, dates from 1996 or more recently, and is evidence that relates to the UK specifically. Material was excluded if it focused solely on trafficking for sexual exploitation or on policy/enforcement issues. Where it was not possible to distinguish if material related to trafficking to the UK for labour exploitation, as opposed to trafficking for sexual exploitation, it has been included, although it is stated that there is uncertainty in relation to the area of trafficking to which it relates. Similarly, information on trafficking in general, either not stating if it relates to the UK or if it comments on trafficking from a wider European or global perspective, has been included if UK-specific information is scarce.

The methodology and search terms used sought to include literature on both adults and children wherever possible, but separated out the findings because of the different arrangements for safeguarding child and adult victims.

Identified material was prioritised for relevance and reviewed by a member of the research team. A quality assessment of the research was made by the reviewer for pieces of primary research. Out of a list of 241 references identified overall, only 136 could be followed up and assessed for initial relevance. These were chosen based on title and abstract information (where available) in the first instance and secondly on availability. Those deemed as relevant to the review were prioritised in terms of level of relevance. It was not, however, possible to review all of the lower priority items in the time available. Therefore the findings presented in this report are not the full findings but present a large proportion of the picture that is available from published literature in relation to this area. The full list of sources and references provided, contributed to both the summary report and the full report.

The search produced only nine studies relating to trafficking of adults to the UK for the purposes of labour exploitation and these were reviewed fully using the research quality assessment criteria. A further 47 pieces of secondary literature, including Government reports, conference papers and other primary research (not necessarily focused on all the inclusion criteria) contribute to this report. Only four of these nine studies (Anderson and Rogaly, 2005; Black et al., 2005; Skrivânková, 2006, and Piek, forthcoming) specifically targeted all the inclusion criteria for this review, although information is still drawn from the other studies where relevant. These other studies focused on the employment of illegal workers or discussion of migrant working conditions but the migrants involved were not necessarily trafficked (TUC, 2004; Jones et al., 2006; Anderson, 2006). In some studies there were difficulties in disaggregating the UK information from the main findings (Wijers and Lap...
Chew, 1997; ILO, 2005). These studies were regarded with caution, particularly where those involved could not be confirmed as victims of trafficking. Three primary studies (AFRICA/NPCC, 2002; Somerset, 2004; Beddoe, 2007) relating to trafficking of children to the UK were reviewed fully using the research quality assessment criteria; a further 22 pieces of literature contribute to this report on children (many of these provide a broader picture of trafficking but not specifically in relation to trafficking for labour exploitation).

Caveats to interpretation

Overall, the information obtained from the studies needs to be treated with caution. Various methodological caveats constrain interpretation of the findings and present an incomplete picture. There was no quantitative evidence available in relation to the UK for either adult or child trafficking. The few studies identified overall involve qualitative in-depth interviews with small, unrepresentative samples of migrant workers, employers or experts. The studies also lack methodological transparency, indicating potential unreliability and, given the nature of the area under investigation, are liable to be biased by social desirability pressures on the interviewees. There were also examples of confusion within some of the literature in relation to the definitions of trafficking and confused use of terms ‘smuggling’ and ‘trafficking’. This therefore hinders comparability of the literature reviewed. It was also sometimes difficult to distinguish information on trafficking for labour exploitation from what appear to be more general findings in relation to trafficking.

These studies are also limited in terms of their scope. They tend to focus on specific employment areas in specific locations with specific communities and are constrained by a narrow range of perspectives (for example, there is limited research on perpetrators). Of the three primary studies included in relation to children the view represented is predominantly that of Social Services department employees, although some views from others working with children are also represented. The review found no research conducted with victims of child trafficking. One report concentrates solely on anecdotal evidence of African children in domestic servitude, which may not necessarily be applicable to children of other nationalities and employment sectors. A wider range of information is required to provide a fuller picture of trafficking for labour exploitation for both adults and children.

Although based on small samples, the studies do tend to draw out similar issues and findings, highlighting the growing importance placed on research in this area. The findings are therefore able to provide a flavour of pertinent issues and provide a base from which to develop understanding and knowledge. The findings also usefully highlight knowledge gaps and draw together recommendations from the reviewed literature.

The findings, however, are only indicative and the literature can by no means be used to present a conclusive and representative picture of trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation to the UK.
3. Findings, Part A: Adults

Overall, there is a lack of any robust research carried out in relation to all aspects of trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation in relation to adults. The majority of information available within this area is either at an international level, focused on sexual exploitation, or concerns illegal workers (who may or may not have been trafficked), which may not accurately reflect the trafficking and labour exploitation situation in the UK. The most comprehensive research conducted in this area involves trafficking to Eastern European and Asian countries, rather than Western Europe. An outline of what is currently known and not known in relation to trafficking of adults for the purposes of labour exploitation in the UK is presented below. These findings are a summary of a more detailed review.

What is the scale of the problem?

What do we know?

Small numbers of specific cases of those trafficked to the UK for the purposes of labour exploitation are documented by research or the police. For example, Skrivánková (2006) and Anderson and Rogaly (2005) documented 27 and 46 individual cases respectively. These are likely to severely underestimate the true extent of the problem.

Estimates of numbers of illegal migrants have been made but these are, by their nature, not precise or certain. In any case, such estimates are not an appropriate substitute for numbers trafficked in the UK (flows) or the numbers present in the UK at any given time (stocks).

The lack of reliable estimates is primarily because of the difficulties in identifying victims and apprehending and prosecuting perpetrators. Definitional issues also hinder the identification and production of reliable estimates.

What do we not know?

There are currently no available reliable estimates of the numbers trafficked to the UK for the purposes of labour exploitation. There is little or no systematic collection of the required data within the UK, in relation to either victims or perpetrators. Trends in human trafficking to the UK are also not known, for example, whether the problem is increasing or decreasing.

Who are the victims?

What do we know?

The limited information suggests that victims of trafficking are likely to represent a diverse and complex group.

- Victims constitute a wide range of nationalities, particularly Eastern Europeans, Asians, Africans and South Americans. Victims may also be EU nationals.
- Victims are equally likely to include both males and females, unlike victims of sexual exploitation who are predominantly female.
- Legal routes of entry are not immune to trafficking and worker exploitation. Victims may have entered and/or be working illegally or legally in the UK.

What do we not know?

There is little information concerning other characteristics and the background of victims prior to entering the UK, for example, age, education and qualifications, language skills, previous employment or family background. Furthermore, although it is known that victims may be legally in the UK, there is little specific research in this area.
What are the outward signs or indicators of a ‘victim’ of trafficking?

What do we know?

Identifying victims is clearly crucial to providing appropriate support in terms of physical, psychological and practical assistance, to those who have suffered from trafficking. Identification will also help to develop knowledge and understanding in this area.

Individuals may not even be able to identify themselves as victims of trafficking. The employment or working conditions undertaken are not necessarily perceived by victims as ‘forced’ or ‘involuntary’.

Research suggests that improved identification might focus initially on the exploitative working practices and conditions experienced by victims, rather than assessment in terms of illegal/legal routes of entry to the UK.

What do we not know?

The Palermo Protocol states the internationally agreed definition of human trafficking, but there is currently no definitive or standardised guidance available for practitioners, professionals or researchers to help identify or treat adult victims of trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation in the UK. Identification of victims can vary when alternative interpretations of the standard definition occur and terms are misused within literature.

What types of labour (other than the ‘sex industry’) are associated with trafficking?

What do we know?

Victims documented in the reviewed literature are found in a broad range of sectors, including agriculture, construction, cleaning, nursing and care work, domestic work, hospitality and also illicit activities. Different types of work may be associated with different nationalities and gender. Females are more likely to be found in cleaning and care work and males in the construction industry.

These industries tend to be characterised by ‘3D’ work – dangerous, difficult and dirty – and are often similar in their nature. They typically involve low pay and low skill levels, requiring large numbers of flexible, seasonal workers. Trafficking tends to occur in sectors with labour shortages that use large sub-contracting chains and are dominated by migrant workers. Migrant workers are particularly vulnerable in sectors such as domestic work, where work is undertaken in private households and is not subject to all the employment regulations of the more formal labour market.

Gangmasters have also been associated with trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation in the UK. The Gangmasters Licensing Act (2004) aims to help curb exploitation (and possibly as a result, any related trafficking), by prohibiting anyone from acting as a labour provider in the agriculture, shellfish gathering and associated processing and packaging sectors, without a licence. Future evaluations of the Act will determine its effectiveness.

What do we not know?

There is little in-depth research into particular employment sectors (apart from domestic service) that are associated with trafficking for labour exploitation, such as catering, construction, agriculture and illicit activities. Little is known about any differences between employment sectors in terms of migrant characteristics, perpetrators, methods of trafficking and recruitment, or idiosyncrasies of victim experiences that may vary between sectors.
What is the nature of the exploitation in the victims' experience? What distinguishes victims of trafficking for labour exploitation from those merely working in poor conditions?

What do we know?

Coercion and deception are the fundamental elements of trafficking and are used to control and exploit victims. It is these practices that distinguish victims of trafficking for labour exploitation from individuals merely working in poor conditions. It is the lack of free will or involuntary nature of the employment and conditions endured that indicate a trafficking situation, compared to the voluntary nature of those employed in other poor or illegal conditions.

- **Coercion** – can be achieved through debt-bondage, the withholding of identity documents, physical and psychological abuse, threat of reporting to the authorities and overall dependency on the perpetrator.
- **Deception** – can occur in relation to the nature or type of work promised to a migrant, achieved through misinformation or withholding of information.

Victims often experience a number of other, additional, exploitative conditions.

- Reduced/no pay.
- Long/excessive hours.
- Lack of holiday/sick pay/breaks.
- Poor health and safety provision and dangerous working conditions.
- Poor accommodation.
- Discrimination.
- Abuse – physical and psychological.
- Threats, intimidation and isolation.

What do we not know?

It is not known how the extent and type of exploitation might vary according to sector, migrant characteristics or across different points of the trafficking process (e.g. exploitation upon recruitment, transport and employment). Furthermore, it is not known how exploitation might differ between authorised and unauthorised workers and whether there are differences between those who are simply illegal and working voluntarily and those who are actually trafficked.

Who are the perpetrators?

What do we know?

There is minimal anecdotal knowledge only, suggesting that traffickers to the UK might:

- be members of the same nationality as the victim; and/or
- use former victims to recruit new victims.

What do we not know?

Overall very little is known about characteristics of perpetrators (apart from employers of illegal – not necessarily trafficked – migrants). UK-specific research has not been conducted in relation to perpetrators. In particular, there is a lack of information concerning: nationality, age, gender, education and qualifications, language skills, work/life prior to becoming involved in trafficking, and previous criminal behaviour/convictions.
Trafficking methods and processes

What do we know?

There is minimal anecdotal knowledge, suggesting that traffickers to the UK might:

- recruit through a formal (e.g. advertisements or agencies) or informal process (e.g. family, friends or acquaintances) or abduction/kidnapping;
- play a specialist role in the trafficking process;
- operate as part of a large network;
- charge anywhere up to £22,000 for their services;
- adopt a range of transportation methods, depending on costs and distance;
- choose the country/countries of destination or transit; and
- be involved in other forms of crime/trafficking.

What do we not know?

There is little information concerning traffickers’ operations in the specific context of the UK and labour exploitation. It is uncertain whether the methods and processes obtained from available international evidence specifically relate to those used in trafficking to the UK. More specifically, there is a lack of information concerning the extent to which traffickers are involved in just one element or the whole trafficking process, what roles they perform and how large their networks are.

Are there any geographical patterns of trafficking?

What do we know?

- Victims are found in a wide variety of UK geographical areas – particularly where there are high concentrations of industries that employ migrant workers.
- Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland may have different needs.
- The UK is mainly a destination country but internal trafficking occurs within the UK and networks lead onwards from the UK to destinations such as North America.
- Similar routes and nexus points might be used for both trafficking and smuggling.
- There are some broad patterns identified for trafficking routes into the EU and common entry points into the UK, for example, from France into Dover.

What do we not know?

Little is known about the exact trafficking routes, source and transit countries for purposes of labour exploitation and whether these actually differ in any way from other trafficking routes (e.g. for sexual exploitation or smuggling). Even though there is awareness that internal trafficking occurs in the UK and that it can be used as a transit country, there is little in-depth knowledge concerning these occurrences.

It is also not known how routes and methods for trafficking into the UK have changed as a result of A8 accession in May 2004 or A2 Accession in January 2007.

What are the impacts of trafficking on victims and what are their associated needs?

What do we know?

The UK does not currently have any centralised support/provision for victims of trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation. Limited assistance can be provided by organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau or International Organisation for Migration but only if victims
are able, or know how, to approach them or if they actually recognise that they have been trafficked or exploited. Research, in relation to needs and impacts on victims of trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, suggests it is likely that victims of labour exploitation might have some similar and some differing needs, especially given the abusive and dangerous conditions they can work in (although this is not qualified with any UK research in this area). Improved victim support might aid perpetrator convictions (as has occurred with perpetrators of sexual exploitation).

What do we not know?

There is little knowledge focusing on victim outcomes both in the short-and long-term, how victims finally leave the trafficking process, where they go, what difficulties they might face if returning home and whether they become re-trafficked. There is little analysis of the support they need (perhaps as a result of difficulties in identifying victims).

What factors feed the demand or drive trafficking for labour exploitation?

What do we know?

The key pull factors in relation to trafficking to the UK include:

- demand for cheap and malleable migrant labour to increase productivity;
- established family and community in the UK;
- belief that treatment of immigrants in the UK and benefits are better than elsewhere; and
- perception of a flexible UK labour market.

The inherent vulnerability of migrants themselves is also a contributory factor. They are highly dependent on other people, relying on ‘knowledgeable’ individuals (i.e. traffickers) for information, language, work and accommodation – as well as (actual or perceived) need for shelter from the authorities.

What do we not know?

There is limited information in terms of causal or ‘push and pull’ factors specifically related to the UK. In general terms, trafficking for labour exploitation is a result of: globalisation and limited opportunities in source countries for employment; restrictive migration policies forcing migrants into illegal routes; environmental and other disasters in source countries, and is influenced by the implementation of labour and employment standards in individual countries. However, due to the lack of information within the literature reviewed, it is not possible to comment on whether these factors apply specifically to the UK.

It is also not known what impact the new Points-Based System will have upon trafficking to the UK and if, as some authors suggest, its restrictions will encourage further trafficking.
4. Findings, Part B: Children

As with adult victims of trafficking, the majority of documented work in the area of child trafficking has concentrated on sexual exploitation. With a few exceptions, in comparison to adult literature there is generally less information in relation to children. Recently, however, it has been claimed that “the trafficking of children for labour exploitation emerged … in ways that have not been previously recorded” (Beddoe, 2007, p.27). It is not necessarily a new phenomenon but there is more likely to be an increased awareness and willingness to now recognise and address child labour exploitation. An outline of what is currently known and not known in relation to trafficking of children for the purposes of labour exploitation in the UK is presented below. These findings are a summary of a more detailed review.

What is the scale of the problem?

What do we know?

The largely anecdotal evidence in this review does support the existence of child trafficking to the UK for the purposes of labour exploitation. Somerset (2004) documented 35 confirmed individual cases (each ‘case’ being one child) across 33 London Boroughs. Beddoe (2007) identified 80 individual cases of child trafficking within the North-East, North-West and the Midlands. UNICEF (2003) documented 250 individual UK-wide cases in the past five years, but these findings represent trafficking for all purposes, not just labour exploitation.

These figures are expected to severely under-represent the actual number of cases. The lack of reliable statistics is largely attributable to the difficulties associated with identifying victims of trafficking and victims’ fear of reprisal/negative consequences if they do admit to having been trafficked/exploited. Children are even less likely to come forward as victims than adults, or know what their rights are and where to obtain help. Many social workers interviewed felt they encountered more victims yet they could not be verified or categorised as cases of trafficking. These figures cannot, therefore, be applied generally to the UK situation.

What do we not know?

There is a lack of accurate statistics to inform knowledge of the scale or trends of child trafficking to the UK for labour exploitation. This reflects the need for guidelines in relation to the identification of victims of child trafficking (including clarification of current trafficking definitions and how they are to be applied) and for authorities to record information on trafficking.

Who are the victims?

What do we know?

Child victims reported in the surveyed literature are primarily of African or Asian nationalities, with some victims documented from Eastern Europe and Jamaica.

Child victims of trafficking generally appear to be from a range of ages. Limited evidence points strongly to 16- to 17-year-olds being trafficked most commonly to the UK, but when children trafficked for sexual exploitation are removed from the picture, there appears to be no distinctive age trend for those trafficked for labour exploitation.

Anecdotal reports in the literature suggest that more girls than boys are trafficked to the UK, but this may just be because more girls than boys are identified due to the nature of exploitation. Gender may affect the type of exploitation they are subject to, for example, girls may be more prevalent within domestic labour, sexual exploitation and forced marriage, whilst boys may be subject to more hazardous labour, contraband and restaurant work. On the
other hand, some research suggests that boys and girls are equally likely to be exploited for restaurant, catering work and sexual exploitation.

Many victims were also in the care of Social Services and subsequently went missing. Missing children are likely to have been trafficked and then either seek out traffickers on arrival or are found and taken by them.

What do we not know?

Despite anecdotal evidence primarily pointing to African and Asian nationalities being most at risk of child trafficking for labour exploitation, further research is required to provide a more reliable picture as much information includes children trafficked for all purposes, not just labour exploitation. The current lack of trends, e.g. in relation to age, may be due to the small numbers involved. More research is required to determine any trends.

There is little information concerning children's education, family life and background, previous employment in the source country and if children of different ages and gender are trafficked for different reasons. There is generally less information concerning males as fewer are identified. It is uncertain how boys who disappear from the care of Social Services, are exploited or where they are employed.

Further information is also required in relation to children who are not in the care of Social Services. Many children will enter the UK without being brought to the attention of the authorities and may comprise an entirely different group of victims.

What are the outward signs or indicators of a child 'victim' of trafficking?

What do we know?

Indicators of child trafficking are available and are clearly crucial to providing appropriate support to victims and developing knowledge in this area. These indicators have, however, been developed in a generic manner and could, therefore, be based primarily on information from incidences of trafficking for sexual exploitation, an area where more is known about victims (especially girls). To date, it would appear that the information available is based on evidence from Social Services alone.

Victims of trafficking can be very difficult to identify for a number of reasons, predominantly in relation to fear of what will happen if they disclose information. Variations in the use and interpretations of trafficking definitions also contribute to difficulties in their identification. One factor that may have affected the development of indicators is the lack of clarity surrounding whose responsibility it is to identify victims, e.g. the Immigration Service, Police, Social Services, Health Services, foster carers or all of these.

What do we not know?

The available evidence indicates no existence of indicators of children trafficked specifically for the purposes of labour exploitation. Particular attention should be paid to identifying victims of trafficking for labour exploitation as a group separate to those trafficked for sexual exploitation, as indicators may well be different. Identifying trafficked children once they have started employment is at present an area where little, or nothing, is known. There is also a lack of information concerning combined indicators in relation to areas other than Social Services, e.g. indicators for those who work in Health Services, Police or Immigration. There is little information concerning indicators of children who would not ordinarily be brought to the attention of Social Services and the authorities.
What types of labour (other than the ‘sex industry’) are associated with child trafficking?

What do we know?
The following types of employment were all identified by the reviewed literature as having links to children trafficked to the UK for labour exploitation.

- Domestic service.
- Credit card and benefit fraud.
- Restaurants/catering work.
- Manual labour, including work in small workshops, factory sweatshops and cannabis factories.
- Drug trafficking.
- Other illicit activities such as selling cigarettes and alcohol, begging and pick-pocketing.

What do we not know?
There is not enough evidence to comment on which sectors or types of work are the most common ones for trafficked children to work in. There is little in-depth research into particular employment sectors and little information concerning any differences between sectors in terms of child characteristics, perpetrators, methods of trafficking and recruitment and idiosyncrasies of victim experiences.

What is the nature of the exploitation in the child victims' experience? What distinguishes child victims of trafficking for labour exploitation from those merely working in poor conditions?

What do we know?
As with adults, the elements of the child’s experience that distinguish those trafficked from those who are just working in poor conditions are the elements of coercion and deception that are used to engage the child in work. However, it should be noted that the Palermo Protocol definition of human trafficking states that because of their vulnerable status, children do not have to be evidenced as coerced or deceived in order to be regarded as ‘trafficked’. Examples of coercive practices employed against children involve:

- confiscation of identity documents;
- threats of being reported to the authorities;
- use of violence or threats of violence towards them and/or their family, including the use of Voodoo curses (particularly with African girls);
- debt-bondage;
- social isolation or physical restraint; and
- being subdued with drugs.

These can be experienced along with other elements of labour exploitation and poor conditions as experienced by adults, for example working long hours without breaks, particularly in domestic service where children may be looking after other children in the family. They may be working in potentially hazardous situations, including abusive and neglectful conditions.

What do we not know?
There is not enough evidence to comment on how elements of exploitation may differ in their nature and extent between different employment sectors and at different points across the trafficking process (e.g. transport and employment).
Who are the perpetrators?

What do we know?

There is little evidence concerning perpetrator characteristics. Traffickers may be of the same nationality or ethnic origin as the victim; however, anecdotal evidence suggests this is not always the case.

Parents and family members have been implicated as perpetrators. Some parents may give their children to traffickers or employers because of financial need, but may not necessarily be aware of the resultant exploitation and may genuinely believe that their children will have a better life in the UK. Family members in the UK may deliberately deceive parents and/or children. Alternatively, parents may be aware of the true purpose, whilst children remain unaware. The acceptability of such practices, particularly in some African cultures can hinder detection of African children trafficked as domestic servants to families in the UK.

What do we not know?

Aside from the family members involved in trafficking, little else is known about the perpetrators and how children are recruited. Further evidence is needed in this area so that more can be learnt about perpetrator characteristics, e.g. nationality, age, gender, education and qualifications, and involvement in other areas of criminal behaviour. There is little information available to help identify perpetrators of child trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation.

Trafficking methods and processes

What do we know?

Evidence suggests that trafficked children enter the UK either unaccompanied or accompanied by an adult and all entry points into the UK are potential routes used by traffickers. Many trafficked children arrive in the UK accompanied by adults unrelated to them who may pretend to be their parents or say that they have permission from the parent(s) to bring the child to the UK. As there are legitimate reasons to do this it can be difficult for immigration officials to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate circumstances.

Many children will have false passports and will be made to look older or younger than they are. By making children look older, traffickers will hope to avoid detection. By making children look younger or not providing them travel documents when entering the UK unaccompanied, will ensure that they are referred to Social Services. Traffickers can then track the child down later and take him/her to an exploitative situation, or the child will have contact details for the trafficker, and will escape and contact them. A number of children have been documented as having gone ‘missing’ from Social Services and are believed to have been trafficked.

What do we not know?

There is little information concerning child traffickers’ operations in the specific context of the UK and labour exploitation. As described in the section on adults, there is more global information pertaining to methods and processes, but it is not certain how this relates to the UK context or those of children. Little is known about the roles that traffickers may undertake, e.g. whether they are involved in just one element or the whole trafficking process and how large their networks are, specifically in relation to child trafficking. It could be that, as with traffickers of adults for labour exploitation, a number of different traffickers with different roles are used throughout the trafficking process; however, there seems to be no evidence to confirm this.

There is also little known about what happens to trafficked children once they enter the UK, particularly those who are not identified by Social Services or subsequently go missing from Social Services care and are not found. In comparison to what little is known about adults or
trafficking in general, less is known about specific trafficking networks and the organisation/planning involved in relation to children.

Are there any geographical patterns of child trafficking?

What do we know?

There is anecdotal evidence that children are trafficked to and exploited in counties and cities all over the UK and that some children have been trafficked internally. Trafficked and exploited children have appeared in regions where members of their community are particularly prevalent, but trafficked children may also live and be exploited in areas other than those in which they are actually living.

What do we not know?

It is uncertain whether there are regional patterns in types of child labour exploitation as evidence is largely anecdotal. Little is known about the exact trafficking routes, source and transit countries used in relation to children and whether these actually differ in any way from other trafficking routes, e.g. those for adults, for sexual exploitation or smuggling. Even though there is awareness that internal trafficking occurs and that the UK is used as a transit point, there is little in-depth knowledge concerning these occurrences. It is also not known how trafficking routes and methods into the UK have changed as a result of A8 accession in May 2004 or A2 Accession in January 2007.

What are the impacts of trafficking on child victims and what are their associated needs?

What do we know?

The inherent vulnerability of children can mean that the impacts of trafficking are even greater than on adults — not only are they highly dependent on their traffickers, regardless of the purpose, but the evidence also suggests serious implications on a child’s survival, health and development, including:

- physical abuse and neglect during and after the journey (e.g. lack of medical attention, physical beatings, rape, sensory and food deprivation and drug/alcohol addiction);
- physical health problems (e.g. stomach pains, tiredness, irritation) that may manifest as temper outbursts, aggression, and anti-social, disruptive, uncommunicative behaviour; and
- psychological harm (disorientation, identity problems, isolation, loss of trust, flashbacks, nightmares, dependency, low self-esteem, depression, suicidal thoughts, and panic attacks).

The reviewed literature suggests that child victims of trafficking in general (not necessarily for labour exploitation) have been identified as having a number of very specific needs:

- specialist counselling:
- health care:
- appropriate accommodation (with people who are trained in the area); and
- appropriate security to prevent children going missing from care and contacting traffickers.

Currently, care received can differ depending on whether or not children are identified by an ‘Unaccompanied Minors Team’ that can provide more specialist services than mainstream care.
What do we not know?

The particular needs of children who have been trafficked specifically for the purposes of labour exploitation is an area that requires further attention, especially in relation to the provision of specialist services in the UK. The information currently available in relation to sexual exploitation may not necessarily relate to all aspects of labour exploitation. There is also little information concerning long-term impacts, or how children eventually escape trafficking situations – where they go and what happens to them.

What factors feed the demand or drive child trafficking for labour exploitation?

What do we know?

The literature reviewed suggests a number of factors that drive trafficking of children for labour exploitation – although these do not necessarily apply across the globe – including:

- cultural beliefs, e.g. in relation to the acceptability of child labour;
- demographic reasons, e.g. large families, where parents cannot afford their children;
- poverty and unemployment in the source country;
- desire of parents to give their children a better life;
- globalisation and perception of children as goods/commodities;
- dysfunctional families, where children leave home to escape abuse, turning to traffickers;
- lack of education – children attending school are less likely to be trafficked and schools can teach about the risks of trafficking;
- discrimination – many trafficking victims are from minorities/disadvantaged groups, making them vulnerable to discrimination/social exclusion;
- political conflict/economic transition; and
- inadequate, ineffective laws/regulations or general ignorance of trafficking laws where they exist in countries of origin and destination.

What do we not know?

Further evidence is required to assess the extent that factors driving trafficking relate specifically to the UK. It cannot be assumed that these situations necessarily apply to the UK in the same way as to other countries. There is also little information concerning specific differences between push and pull factors in relation to adults and children. General drivers of trafficking, as discussed in the report on adults, concern restrictive immigration policies, environmental disasters and political disturbances or war, and lack of opportunities in source countries (amongst others). There is little information concerning the relative impact of these factors and whether some factors are more important than others.
5. Conclusion

Recommendations made in the literature

The limited available literature makes some practical recommendations drawn directly from the research. They do not necessarily reflect Home Office policy but are summarised here in the interests of establishing a full debate. The methodological caveats and scope of these studies previously described should be taken into consideration in relation to these suggestions. Further research to fill the knowledge gaps identified from this literature would help to provide a more robust evidence base and thus more definitive recommendations. Some recommendations from the literature are broadly similar for both adult and child victims of trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation. There are a number of other practical recommendations drawn from the literature though, which apply specifically in relation to children who require special consideration as a result of their greater need and vulnerability. These are described in the separate section below, following discussion of the broader recommendations.

Refining the definition of ‘trafficking’

Although there is an internationally agreed definition of human trafficking, the reviewed literature suggests that a clearer definition of trafficking might help to improve understanding of the area, aid victim identification, assess the scale of the problem and assist in policy development. There is need to clarify concepts such as coercion and deception, allowing for a more consistent use of the definition both within the UK and internationally. According to the reviewed literature, current definitions can leave individuals uncertain concerning what should be measured, how best to do so and who should be responsible for doing so. Any revised definition should, however, be agreed upon at an international level; a unilateral attempt to do so might cause further confusion by departing from consensus.

Enforcement or employment and human rights?

The literature suggests that the current understanding of trafficking is based around borders and law enforcement. Whilst it cannot be denied that this is an important focus, the reviewed literature suggests a shift in emphasis towards employment and human rights issues. This is promoted on the basis that it might help to identify victims and perpetrators, for example by using exploitation as a primary indicator of trafficking, rather than illegal movement, and in turn, better assess the extent and nature of the problem.

Employment standards and reducing labour demand

Some authors of the reviewed literature also suggest additional legislation to protect migrant worker rights, putting them on equal footing with UK workers. Similarly, codes of conduct and practice standards, as well as positive incentives, are suggested to help reduce employer demand for cheap migrant labour and encourage high employer standards and discourage abuse. While Government action can raise awareness of trafficking and the required employer standards, it can also raise awareness of rights amongst migrants themselves and practitioners or professionals who might be involved in identification of trafficked persons.

Victim support and protection

There was strong support in the literature for improved victim support and protection, regardless of legal status, similar to that received by victims of sexual exploitation. Victim protection is suggested to go hand in hand with law enforcement and prosecution, since evidence supplied by protected victims may increase perpetrator prosecutions. Without appropriate support, victims are unlikely to come forward, especially if they are illegal, leaving them hidden and unidentified and therefore vulnerable to further exploitation.
The following recommendations have been identified in the literature as applying specifically to children.

**Specialised housing, protection and support**

Given the particular circumstances and vulnerability of children, which differ from those of adults, there is a clear case within the reviewed literature for always providing specialist care and accommodation (especially within the first week). Depending on the particular case, this could consider physical and emotional needs, legal advice, language, 24-hour supervision, supervised telephone access, education and reintegration needs. Appropriately trained service providers would be required, and one approach would be to operate through ‘safe houses’ in locations across the UK, with specially trained foster carers or guardians.

**Multi-agency approach**

The reviewed literature suggests that the Police, Social Services, and Immigration Officers can all assist in identifying cases and ensuring that children receive appropriate care. One proposal for achieving this is a national framework and guidance with specialised training for all individuals involved in the area. Better communication is required between all those in contact with victims to help raise awareness and support a more co-ordinated approach.

**Registering and monitoring of children**

Improved registering and monitoring of children in both the short- and long-term would help to address the scale of the problem, track perpetrators and identify ‘hot-spot’ areas of trafficking.

**Legislation and protocol**

Greater enforcement of employment legislation in relation to children’s age and the number of hours they are allowed to work would, among other benefits, assist in dealing with trafficking. Suggestions are also made within the reviewed literature that more could be done to take child victims specifically out of the immigration system whilst a decision is being made in relation to their future and that immigration rules should not overrule children’s rights. One implication of this is that children would be more likely to be recognised as victims of abuse and exploitation, not simply criminals in need of removal from the UK.

**Knowledge gaps**

As described in the findings, there are many knowledge gaps in relation to trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation in the UK that have been identified by both the reviewed literature and by the authors of this review when bringing together the available information.

To summarise, in relation to adults, in some areas more is known than in others, for example, victim nationality, employment sectors and the nature of exploitation. However, there is a lack of definitive information on the scale of the problem, victim and perpetrator profiling, long-term impacts and needs of victims, how the trafficking process ends, specific routes to the UK and impacts of EU Accession. There are also broader considerations required in terms of the different forms of trafficking and variations in knowledge and practice between countries.

In relation to children, some areas of knowledge are more developed than for adults; for example, identification factors have been developed for children but not for adults (although these do concern all child victims of trafficking, rather than victims of labour exploitation specifically). Overall, more information exists concerning children in terms of victim nationality, employment sectors, how cultural practices may contribute to the problem and methods of entry to the UK, e.g. as unaccompanied or accompanied children and their use of Social Services. However, as with adults, there is a lack of information in relation to the scale of the problem, as well as specific characteristics of victims — especially for children who do not come into contact with Social Services; such victims may represent a very different group, with different needs and policy requirements. There is also a lack of information concerning perpetrators (apart from the role of family members) and the long-term needs and outcomes of victims.
Broader considerations are also required in relation to how child and adult trafficking situations may differ in terms of victim and perpetrator characteristics, methods and processes, as well as how different forms of trafficking, such as sexual exploitation, may differ.

Future evidence generation should focus on filling these knowledge gaps and studies might benefit from: larger sample sizes; a wider range of research with professionals, employment sectors and geographic locations; information being extended beyond that acquired by Social Services; an attempt to acquire first-hand information from children and perhaps, even perpetrators and develop more robust methodological procedures. The individuals involved in this type of research are notoriously ‘hard-to-reach’, even more so with the sensitivities surrounding children, but the use of alternative methodologies and examples from international research may help to fill these knowledge gaps.

Overview

This literature review highlights that there is very little factual and robust evidence concerning the trafficking of both adults and children to the UK for the purposes of labour exploitation. Some areas of knowledge are more extensively addressed than others, but there are considerable gaps in knowledge, which hinder development of policy and understanding of the area. A much larger proportion of information is available at an international level and/or focuses on sexual exploitation. Further work is required to determine if these findings would be relevant to trafficking for labour exploitation in the UK. Furthermore, findings are based on a few qualitative studies, involving interviews and anecdotes from small samples.

However, despite the methodological caveats, the findings are broadly consistent. This indicates that this is an area of growing importance and there is a base from which to develop knowledge further, but at the present the evidence base is only indicative.

This literature review does highlight some important issues, which impact upon our understanding of human trafficking. A clear consensus in relation to the definition of trafficking is required in order to further policy development and fill knowledge gaps. How trafficking is fundamentally defined is likely to affect both how the extent and nature of the problem is measured and also the policy adopted to address it. Victim needs and protection are also crucial themes throughout the review, highlighting the links between victim support and perpetrator prosecution. Findings from the review also suggest that children will need special consideration when it comes to support and protection. This is primarily due to their inherent dependence on adults in order to survive, and particular vulnerability to the coercive measures adopted by traffickers, as well as their lack of knowledge concerning human rights. Finally, this review has highlighted the potential benefit of tackling human trafficking, both as an issue of borders and law enforcement, but also employment, exploitation and human rights. Alternative perspectives concerning the nature of the problem may allow practitioners, professionals and researchers to better identify victims, thereby increasing our knowledge of the problem and contributing towards its prevention.
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