# Setting the record. The trafficking of migrant women in the England and Wales off-street prostitution sector

Author(s)
Jackson, Keith; Jeffery, Jon and Adamson, George

## Aims

The report forms part of a police study aimed at improving understanding of the nature and scale of the trafficking of migrant women for sexual exploitation [Project Acumen] so it can be tackled more effectively. It seeks to measure the extent of trafficking in England and Wales, and highlight the circumstances of trafficked women and the varied techniques used by traffickers to exploit them.

## Methodology

A structured research programme was undertaken in 2 distinct stages, over a 12 month period in 7 Government Office regions [including Yorkshire and Humber]:

1. Stage 1 identified businesses and individuals selling sexual services, which involved open source research of newspapers, magazines and the internet, local expert opinion, information held on police systems and various proactive intelligence gathering techniques to obtain a snapshot of the number and size of these businesses. This information was then combined and duplicates removed to estimate the number of women involved in prostitution [see report appendices for details].
2. In stage 2, police officers interviewed a sample of 254 women from across England and Wales who were involved in off street prostitution.

The results were analysed to identify evidence of trafficking, exploitation and coercion and the prevalence of each. This was then combined with the previous information on the size of the sector in particular areas to estimate the likely number of individuals that exist within each category. Results were checked with local experts and other sources.

The report does warn that, due to the covert nature of human trafficking, the report can only represent a ‘best estimate’ rather than a definitive picture of the extent of human trafficking in the off-street prostitution sector in England and Wales.

## Key issues

The report provides statistical information on the off-street prostitution sector in England and Wales and provides a breakdown of the number of women involved by region, area of origin and exploitation category.

The report found that over half of the 30000 women involved in off-street prostitution in England and Wales, 17000 are migrant women. Of these 17000, 2600 are trafficked and 9200 are considered to be vulnerable to trafficking [5500 do not meet the 'trafficked' or 'vulnerable' thresholds].

The report also identifies significant regional differences. For example, less than a third of women in Yorkshire and Humber are migrants, while in London this figure rises to 96%. Of the migrant women working in this sector in Yorkshire and Humber, the majority are from Eastern Europe and Asia. Yorkshire and Humber has the second highest number of businesses involved in the off-street prostitution sector [after London].

In addition to statistics, the report also looks at the circumstances which lead migrants to become involved in prostitution and breaks down the sector into quantifiable segments – with a different combination of coercive, cultural and

financial factors seen within each sector.

## Recommendations

The report does not make any recommendations of how to tackle trafficking in the off-street prostitution sector, it merely aims to give greater understanding of the problem through which the UK can develop more effective approaches for combating trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Migrant Group
EU migrants
Non-EU migrants
Trafficked
Undocumented
Topic
Community and society
Exploitation
Forced labour
Migrant workers
Sexual health
Women
Place
UK - inc. Yorkshire & Humber element
Year
2010
Resource Type
Report

**Source URL:** *https://www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/research-entry/setting-record-trafficking-migrant-women-england-and-wales-street-prostitution*