The Scottish Government

Human Trafficking in Scotland
2007/08

Crime and Justice

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HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN SCOTLAND 2007/08

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2009

The views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and do not necessarily represent those of the Scottish Government or Scottish Ministers.

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Executive Summary

This report results from an initial research project carried out by Scottish Government Analytical Services during 2007/2008 to improve the evidence base around human trafficking in Scotland. It aims to construct a more detailed national picture of the nature and extent of the phenomenon whilst also examining the issues and challenges for policing and victim care in a Scottish context. It draws on data from a range of sources namely interview, documentary and open source material from law enforcement agencies, victim services and other relevant non-governmental organisations.[1]

In total, this research showed that 79 individuals believed to be victims of human trafficking came into contact with agencies in Scotland between April 2007 and March 2008. The majority of cases involved adult female victims who had been trafficked into sexual exploitation, and a smaller proportion represented groups of both males and females who appeared to have been trafficked for exploitation in other industries. In cases of trafficking for sexual exploitation, victims and suspected victims were normally recovered in private flats or houses being used to operate brothels. In the small number of cases of labour exploitation encountered, victims were found to be working in restaurants or takeaways.

The nature of individual victims' experiences varied widely. Many of the victims recovered by police presented as illegal migrants whose travel and work had been facilitated by a third party. In the main, these individuals claimed to be working in prostitution of their own free will, but many reported having been debt bonded, and some cited this debt as their main reason for remaining in the sex industry. However, the experience of agencies which provide services to victims was somewhat different. Few of the (mainly) women and girls encountered by these agencies had been paid for work, the sole purpose of which was usually solely to repay a discretionary debt imposed by traffickers. Few of these individuals had freedom of movement once they were trafficked and most felt under threat in their countries of origin.

Interview and documentary police data evidenced multiple links between human trafficking and other forms of organised crime, such as Class A drug distribution, cannabis cultivation, money laundering and other serious fraud.

Overall, this research echoes the message of that carried out in other jurisdictions: human trafficking is a complex area of policing and victim care with many challenges. These include difficulties in engaging with 'closed' communities, gathering robust intelligence, identifying and retaining victims, language barriers and securing prosecutions. There are also broader challenges for multi-agency working in terms of reaching a common understanding of the meaning of victimisation and of the respective roles of the agencies involved.

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[1] This should not be regarded as a process review as management information was not included in the data reviewed.

Introduction

The phenomenon of human trafficking has received increased attention in recent years from policy makers, academics and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). However, little empirical research on this subject has been carried out in the UK (Marie and Skidmore 2007; CEOP 2007; Home Office 2007; Skrivánková 2006; IOM 2005; Dickson 2004; Zimmerman 2003; Kelly & Regan 2000) and none to date has focused specifically on trafficking of adults in Scotland.

The research

This report results from a small scale research project carried out by Scottish Government Analytical Services during 2007/2008 to improve the evidence base around human trafficking in Scotland. Although a good deal of research has been conducted at global, European and UK levels, none had previously focused specifically on the nature and extent of the phenomenon in Scotland. This paper seeks to construct a more detailed national picture whilst also examining the issues and challenges for policing and victim care in a Scottish context.

Definition

The internationally accepted definition of human trafficking is the broad one set out in the *Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children*, which supplements the *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*. It defines human trafficking as follows.

'Trafficking in human beings' shall mean 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.

UK and Scottish policy context

Policy focus in the UK has culminated in the creation of a joint action plan on human trafficking in 2008 by the UK and Scottish Governments and ratification of the provisions contained in the *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* on 1 April 2009. In March 2007, the then Home Secretary signed the *United Nations Convention* on behalf of the UK and the joint action plan which was published at the same time outlined the initial measures needed to implement ratification. Scotland has a significant role to play in the development of this work, which includes identification of victims of trafficking, provision of support, arrest and prosecution of those responsible.

There are a number of other noteworthy developments. In November 2006 the UK Human Trafficking Centre was established. This is a multi-agency law enforcement centre, designed as a hub of expertise to support agencies across the UK in dealing with cases of human trafficking. Launched in early 2006, Operation Pentameter was the first UK wide police operation to focus specifically on tackling human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation. The operation was carried out over three months and involved all police forces in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands, along with the UK Borders Agency (UKBA)[2], the Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement

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[2] During the research fieldwork period the UKBA was known as the Borders and Immigration Agency (BIA).

Agency (SCDEA) and other agencies. The original operation was followed by Pentameter 2 in 2007, a much longer operation in which the focus was widened in order to include other forms of trafficking in adults and children. During this time a Regional Intelligence Cell for Scotland was established within Strathclyde police. While the research upon which this paper is based does not represent an evaluation of Pentameter 2, the timescales of the two do overlap. It is clear that police activity in this field increased significantly during the period of the operation, which generated additional data for analysis.

In 2005 the Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance (TARA) Project was set up. It is the only non law enforcement agency focusing specifically on victims of trafficking, which provides services to female adult victims who have been trafficked into sexual exploitation. It liaises with the police, housing departments, health professionals, agencies which work with women in the sex trade and other relevant non-governmental organisations (NGOs). For most of the research period the TARA team had one full time and one part-time post and only had capacity to provide services to victims recovered within the Glasgow City Council area. However, it subsequently received additional funding to resource more workers on a 6 month pilot basis and widened its remit to provide information and 'plug-in' services to victims recovered across Scotland. Other agencies, including the Scottish Refugee Council, the International Organisation for Migration, and the Women and Children's Department of the Legal Services Agency also provide specialist support to victims at one or more stages of the process. Barnardo's provide services to children and young people who have been trafficked or exploited, as do Local Authority Social Work Services.

Social context
Human trafficking occurs in Scotland in the context of a society which has a small but growing migrant population. Official in-migration figures have doubled in the last five years – in 2001/02 18,357 people identified themselves as migrating to Scotland from overseas and this figure stood at 37,800 in 2006/07 (General Register Office for Scotland 2009). These figures, along with those who are not captured by statistics include many individuals from Eastern European countries which have recently joined the EU[3], but also foreign nationals from other countries who come to the UK, usually seeking to improve their standard of living.

The sex trade, which is most prevalent in the major cities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Stirling, Aberdeen and Dundee, has increasingly moved 'indoor' in recent years (i.e. from street locations to saunas, massage parlours and private residences) (Sanders 2006 and discussions with Strathclyde police). This is likely to be due to increased policing and lower levels of tolerance for street prostitution and new legislation introduced in late 2006, which criminalises those who buy sex. This movement may also be related to the changing demographic of workers. The industry has traditionally been occupied by individuals from Scotland and other parts of the UK but in recent years this has changed and it is now estimated that approximately 50% of indoor sex workers in Glasgow –the largest urban centre for sex work – are from outside the UK[4]. Migrants may consider it less risky to work indoors, especially if they are living in the UK illegally. In the year or so prior to the research there was also a notable movement within the indoor sex industry – from saunas and massage parlours to private houses and flats.

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[3] Please see explanation of the development of the EU at:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_union.
[4] The nationality of women attending the off-street prostitution Base 75 drop in service in Glasgow between December 206 and December 2007 were recorded. Forty-one women said they were from the UK and 46 reported being from another country.

Methodology

This research draws on data from a range of primary and secondary sources, namely:

- international literature, both academic and government reports;
- other documentary and open source material, such as training materials and progress reports relating to individual organisations in Scotland and
- interview data collected by the author.

The interview data and some of the documentary data analysed is 'secondary' in the sense that those who were interviewed and those who prepared training and progress reports were professionals working in the field of human trafficking. Given the timescales and resources of the research, and the sensitivities associated with victimisation in this area, it was not possible to sample victims of human trafficking. All of the findings presented relate to various forms of trafficking among adults.

A review of the relevant international literature and other documentary materials was used to construct a framework of themes to be explored during interviews. A semi-structured interview[5] schedule was designed using this framework. In total, 20 interviews were carried out with the main agencies involved in work relating to human trafficking in Scotland. The most appropriate representatives from each of these agencies were interviewed; in other words, those with a specific responsibility for dealing with human trafficking. These included: Senior Investigating Officers from each of the eight Scottish police forces, along with SCDEA; senior officials from other relevant statutory agencies, such as the UKBA, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (Scotland), Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA); workers from victim care and support services operating in Glasgow (TARA) and Edinburgh (Scot-Pep); and a variety of professionals working in relevant NGOs, such as the Women and Children's Department of the Legal Services Agency, the Scottish Refugee Council, Barnardo's, Save the Children Scotland, the International Organisation for Migration and Amnesty International Scotland.

All interviews were carried out between October 2007 and February 2008. In most cases interviews were carried out face-to-face in a private room within the interviewee's workplace. In a small number of cases where distance or timescales prevented face-to-face meetings, interviews were conducted by telephone. Extensive notes were taken by the author and transcripts of interviews were provided to the interviewee who added to and/or amended them where necessary. Data relating to individual organisations were anonymised, systematically coded and manually analysed. For reasons of sensitivity it was not considered appropriate to transfer direct quotes from interviews into the findings.

The research also made use of documentary analysis of reports prepared by individual organisations. Some of these were open source materials, as listed in the references section. Others were progress reports and training materials prepared for specific audiences.

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[5] A semi-structured interview is a method of research in which the interviewer explores a framework of themes in a fluid manner. While a structured interview has a formalised, limited set of questions, a semi-structured interview is flexible, allowing new questions to be generated during the interview as a result of the interviewee's responses.

Limitations of the research

Some of the findings of this study should be treated with caution. Firstly, the findings are based on analysis of the *available* data relating to incidents and cases which had come to the attention of statutory and non-statutory agencies. The research did not attempt to estimate the extent of unreported incidents or experiences, of which there may be many. Given that this is a relatively new area of policing and victim care[6] and a very new area of empirical research, making such estimates would not be methodologically advisable. Any previous estimates made in the UK (for example, Kelly and Regan 2000) have been wide ranging and largely unsupported by empirical evidence. Secondly, although every effort was made to conduct systematic analysis of the data, the various data sources were incomplete in some areas. Each organisation tended to collect data at different levels of detail and many collected data as it became available, rather than in accordance with specific criteria. Thirdly, as documented in the key findings section, victims of trafficking are often difficult to identify. For the purposes of this research individuals were counted as 'victims' of human trafficking if they identified themselves as such, *and* if the relevant organisation interviewed had reasonable grounds to consider that one or more elements of the Palermo Protocol definition applied to them. Individuals were counted as 'suspected victims' if they identified themselves as such, *or* if the organisation interviewed considered that one or more elements of the Protocol definition was relevant. For ease of reference, all 'victims' and 'suspected victims' are referred to as 'victims' in this report. Fourthly, the requirement of anonymity, especially relating to the characteristics of individual victims produces limitations, including gaps and possible duplication. In some cases two or more agencies may have encountered the same individual. Although efforts were made to avoid 'double counting' some of these may not have been successful due to the difficulty in identifying individual victims.

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[6] Obviously the common law crimes and victimisation often associated with human trafficking, such as crimes of violence, rape, extortion and others are not new. These have been dealt with from both policing and victim care perspectives for many years.

Key findings

The picture of human trafficking in Scotland is a complex one with numerous gaps. A large part of what we currently know about this crime comes from police intelligence and operational activity. However, victim care services and related NGOs can also provide us with important information about victims and their experiences.

Table 1: Number and gender of victims by agency type 2007/08
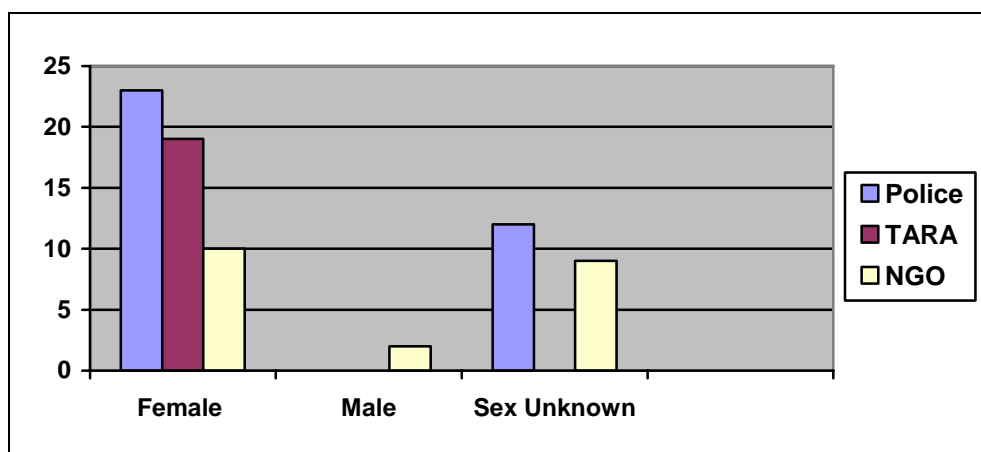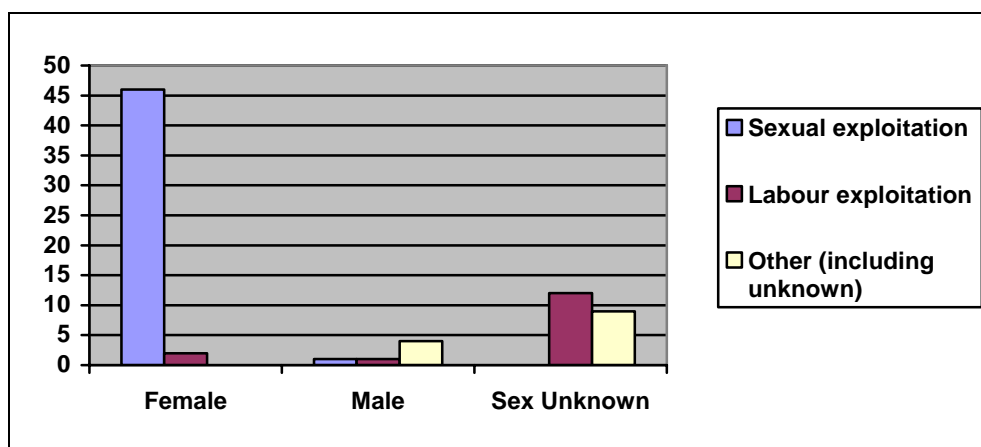

Total n=79
Sources: Interviews with and internal reports by police forces, TARA and NGOs

Scale

In total, 79 victims of human trafficking came into contact with agencies[7] in Scotland between April 2007 and March 2008. Table 1 illustrates the proportion of victims who came to the attention of various agency types. As Table 2 shows, the majority of cases involved females who were believed to have been trafficked into sexual exploitation and a smaller proportion represent groups of both males and females who appeared to have been trafficked for exploitation in other industries. There were a high proportion of victims who came to the attention of the police and NGOs for whom the sex was unknown. This is because in several cases individuals left before any details could be recorded. The apparent difference in scale between sexual and labour exploitation can probably be accounted for, in part, by real factors, such as the influx in recent years of relatively cheap labour from the newer EU countries. However, the picture of trafficking for labour exploitation may be distorted by the nature of some of these situations of exploitation; for instance, domestic servitude, which may be even more easily concealed than brothels operating in private residences, may be occurring but not visible to agencies. Increased policy focus on this type of exploitation and greater awareness among practitioners of its characteristics may uncover greater numbers of victims than are currently known to agencies. In many cases the age of victims is unknown. Where age was known, it spanned a wide range from individuals in their late teens to those in their early forties.

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[7] These agencies include police, UKBA, TARA, Scot-pep, Social Work Services, the Scottish Refugee Council, and the Women and Children's Department of the Legal Services Agency.

Table 2: Number and gender of victims by exploitation type 2007/08

Total n=79
Sources: Interviews with and internal reports by police forces, TARA and NGOs

Nature
The nature of individuals' experiences varied widely. Many of those recovered by police in operations during Pentameter 2 presented as illegal migrants whose travel to, and work in, the UK had been facilitated by an unidentified third party. In most of these cases victims claimed that they knew what work they would be doing and were content to be doing it. However, some reported having been deceived and/or coerced into the work they were doing. Some victims claimed that an 'agent' had taken their identity documents from them upon arrival in the UK. Many had been debt bonded or charged large fees for the arrangement of work permits and travel, and females recovered in brothels often cited the repayment of this debt as their main reason for remaining in the sex industry. Some appeared to be frightened about what would happen to them if they did not repay this debt. Most refused victim support services or accommodation and fled before being interviewed, or shortly after an initial interview.

A somewhat different picture was presented by victims encountered by victim care services and other victim focussed agencies in Scotland, such as TARA, the Scottish Refugee Council and the Women and Children's Department of the Legal Services Agency. Some of the victims they encountered had actively sought to travel abroad to work and earn money but had been trafficked into situations of exploitation. Others had fled some form of persecution (usually gender-based) in their country of origin, and had been introduced to individuals who offered to help them with travel, accommodation or employment but then trafficked them into exploitation. Few of the (mainly) women and girls encountered by these agencies had been paid for prostitution. The purpose of this prostitution was usually solely to repay a discretionary debt imposed by the traffickers for travel or accommodation. Few of these individuals had freedom of movement once they were trafficked and most felt under threat in their countries of origin, either because their traffickers had knowledge of where their families lived or because of the likelihood that they would face discrimination from the local community, especially if they had had children as a result of sexual exploitation.

The differences in the pictures of trafficking victims encountered by police and victim services respectively may represent real differences in the experiences of exploitation. The client groups appeared to comprise different individuals: very few of those encountered by the police and UKBA were referred to victim services and vice

versa[8]. However, it is likely that some of these differences may be accounted for by the perceptions of victims of the agencies they initially encounter and the amount of time taken to build trust before victims disclose their experiences. Interview data suggested that many victims of trafficking mistrust and/or fear any official authorities, particularly the police. These findings are supported by evidence which shows that many victims who have had very traumatic experiences may not be capable of reflecting on or disclosing these experiences for a certain period of time due to post-traumatic stress disorder (Zimmerman, 2003).

Location
In cases of trafficking for sexual exploitation, victims were normally recovered in private flats or houses which are being used to operate brothels. Although there had been indications of trafficked women being employed in saunas or massage parlours, mainly in Edinburgh and Glasgow in the past, none were found in such establishments during 2007/2008. This may have been due to the fact that these establishments were, by then, more actively policed, and in a smaller part, due to the increased attention which trafficking and sexual exploitation was receiving in the media during that period. It was also reflective of a wider movement of the sex industry from public facing premises to more anonymous locations. It was acknowledged by interviewees, however, that such establishments remain places of risk, and where they exist, they are being monitored and visited by the relevant police forces. In Glasgow and Edinburgh, agencies providing services to those employed in the sex industry, namely TARA, Base 75 and Scot-Pep, also took account of this risk and sometimes received intelligence through third party reporting from those who worked with women they consider to be exploited. In Edinburgh specifically, Scot-Pep conducts outreach work within such establishments and may witness individuals and interactions which arouse suspicion.

In the small number of cases of labour exploitation encountered, victims were normally found to be working in restaurants or takeaways and/or living in private multi-occupancy dwellings.

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[8] Although the details of some cases dealt with victim services were passed to the police through third party reporting for the purposes of further investigation, the police did not encounter the victims involved in these cases.

Nationality

FIGURE 1: VICTIMS' COUNTRY/REGION OF ORIGIN 2007/08

Asia

Nigeria

Other African country

Pakistan

Eastern Europe
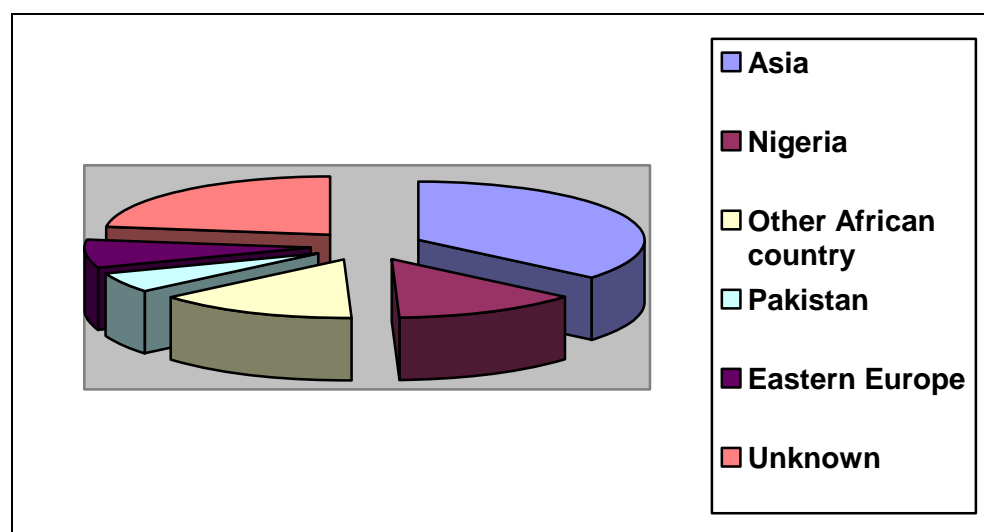
Unknown

Total n=79
Sources: Interviews with and internal reports by police forces, TARA and NGOs

As Figure 1 shows, just under a quarter (n=17) of the victims' country or continent of origin was unknown. Where the victim's country or continent of origin was known, most originated from Asian (n=27) and African (n=21) countries. Some of the interviewees considered that the expansion of the EU[9] in recent years appears to have marked a general movement of the trafficking business from Eastern European countries to other continents. It is widely agreed that this trend is also likely to have been influenced over the longer term by the growth in communications and cheap travel. Although Eastern European migrants remain at risk of exploitation in various ways, it is no longer as profitable for traffickers to facilitate their travel, employment and accommodation as most can now reside and work freely in the UK. The majority of victims and suspected victims encountered by the police during Pentameter 2 were Asian and within this group, most identified themselves as Chinese[10]. Others were identified as Malaysian, Thai, Pakistani and Vietnamese. The remaining group of victims comprised smaller numbers of Romanians, Slovakians, Nigerians, and Brazilians. However, the picture perceived by other agencies that have come into contact with victims is somewhat different. Of those being supported by the TARA Project during the fieldwork period, three were Nigerian, one was Somali, one was Pakistani, one was Ugandan, one was Lithuanian, one was Gambian and one was Russian. Of the 10 victims of trafficking who had been clients of the Women and Children's Department of the Legal Services Agency since April 2007, 6 were Nigerian, 3 were from Eastern Africa and only one was Asian. Similarly, clients of the Scottish Refugee Council who had disclosed being victims of trafficking were mainly

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[9] For further details on the expansion of the European Union please see
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enlargement_of_the_European_Union.
[10] Some or many of these individuals may actually originate from other Asian countries. China does not accept the return of individuals from other countries unless it can be proven that they are Chinese. It is thought that this is why Chinese illegal immigrants usually destroy documentation, counterfeit or otherwise, and it is also considered the reasoning behind many Asian individuals claiming to be Chinese when they are actually from other countries in Asia.

from West African countries, in particular Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Ghana[11]. Some were also from Pakistan but none were Chinese. In fact, only one Chinese individual had disclosed their victim status to the Scottish Refugee Council in the previous 5 years. In cases where traffickers, agents, pimps, madams, and other facilitators were identified, most were from the same countries or regions of origin as their respective victims. Again, the largest proportion presented, or was reported, as being Chinese. In a small number of cases individuals from Scotland or other parts of the UK had been linked to some element of trafficking activity.

Routes
From the available data, the main trafficking route into Scotland appeared to be from London, where individuals travelled directly from source countries or via other European countries. They were usually accompanied, and/or were met at an airport, by a male or female linked to the trafficking organisation. From interviews with professionals who encountered victims it seemed that most entered the UK using counterfeit documentation. Most were no longer in possession of such documentation by the time they came to the attention of the police or other agencies. In some cases victims reported that they had been forced to hand over their papers to an agent. It was suspected in cases involving Chinese individuals or those claiming to be Chinese, that they destroyed any documentation they had upon entering the UK, either of their own volition or because they were told to by traffickers or agents. Another significant route appeared to be from Belfast (Northern Ireland) to Stranraer (Western Scotland) via the Republic of Ireland (usually Dublin) and other European countries.

Links with other types of serious organised crime
It is widely documented that serious organised criminals do not tend to specialise in one crime type. International evidence suggests that they are increasingly flexible in terms of the activities they pursue and the other individuals or groups they work with (Wright, 2006). From the data gathered in this research it was clear that several of the women interviewed by police whose travel to the UK was facilitated had initially approached individuals or groups whom they knew to be involved in other forms of serious organised crime. Most notably this included members of Chinese snakehead groups. In some of these cases, multiple links with such individuals who are active in the UK and abroad had been evidenced by police, independently of witnesses, from material found at the scene, such as mobile phones and financial documents, and from existing entries on the Scottish Intelligence Database.

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[11] The Scottish Refugee Council supported 6 victims of trafficking during April 2007-March 2008.

Figure 2: Links between human trafficking and other forms of serious organised crime

Sources: Interviews with and internal reports by police forces, TARA and NGOs

As illustrated in Figure 2, the following examples from interviews with various police force highlight the close relationship between human trafficking and other forms of organised crime in Scotland.

o   One human trafficking operation evidenced links with various individuals who were known by English police forces to be involved in the distribution of Class A drugs.

o   A male individual who employed illegal migrants in his restaurants was known to be involved in various other forms of criminality including serious fraud, money laundering and the importation of contraband cigarettes.

o   Various males connected to a brothel which was the focus of a human trafficking operation in Edinburgh were found to be involved in criminality in other parts of Scotland and the UK, including the cultivation of cannabis and other drugs offences, distribution of counterfeit DVDs and credit card fraud.

o   A male involved in human trafficking and the pimping of a female from various premises was known to have been involved in the supply of cocaine.

Challenges for policy and practice in
policing and victim care

In this section we examine the main implications for policy and practice, which are drawn from analysis of interview data.

Focus of Pentameter 2

While the European Convention definition encompasses child trafficking and human trafficking for labour exploitation as well as human trafficking for sexual exploitation, and it was initially understood that Pentameter 2 would tackle all of these forms of exploitation, the overwhelming focus of intelligence gathering and operational work in the UK appeared to remain focussed on sexual exploitation in the main. Data from this research indicated that this was true of Scotland. For example, the investigative strategy for Strathclyde comprised the following wording in relation to human trafficking: *"Through partnership working, use all investigative means necessary to identify those victims trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation, particularly children, and to bring to justice those persons complicit in these crimes"*.

Understanding of human trafficking

It was felt among some police personnel and other agencies that there was still a lack of a formal and shared understanding of the definition of human trafficking victimisation used among practitioners. In part, this related to the difficulties inherent in identifying human trafficking 'on scene'. While there were many cases where organised prostitution had clearly been taking place, it was often difficult to evidence human trafficking. More explicit guidance on the characteristics of trafficking may be helpful.

Priority of human trafficking

Human trafficking is a high priority for the Scottish police service and there is a centrally driven will to include human trafficking as core police business, which has very high level support. In practice, however, data showed that action on human trafficking was still considered to be an addition to everyday police work. Forces set their own intelligence and operational priorities within individual control strategies, and these strategies relate to their respective local public concerns.

Actionable intelligence

It is clear that human trafficking is a difficult area in which to gather and present intelligence. Actionable intelligence requires reliability and it is measured by a formal grading system on the Scottish Intelligence Database. Sheriffs are briefed on the system so that they can make informed decisions when considering whether or not to grant warrants. From interview responses it appears there was often a lack of actionable intelligence to support suspicions of human trafficking. Although police can make routine visits to saunas, massage parlours and private residences which may be functioning as brothels, they cannot force entry without a warrant and there needs to be justification for this. Usually the level of intelligence required for a warrant is at the level gleaned by surveillance, first hand observation or reliable third party sources. These require intense and costly resourcing.

Identification and retention of victims

Normally, the greatest source of evidence lies with the witnesses and victims recovered during an operation. In many cases where human trafficking was strongly suspected 'victims' did not identify as such. Some police officers interviewed reported that they could not impose a duty of care on victims as to do so would violate their human rights. Where victims did self-identify, they often left wherever

they were staying during, or immediately after, initial debriefing. Mistrust of the police was thought to be one reason for this. Another may have been fear of deportation, regardless of their immigration status. If they were debt bonded they may have feared what would happen to them or their families if they did not pay off the rest of their debt and/or if they agreed to act as witnesses of a crime. There is some evidence from the Poppy Project and other specialised victim care services operating in the England & Wales, that providing a holistic services to victims of trafficking, as opposed to simply accommodation, may serve to address some of these issues. However, another emerging factor appeared to be that some individuals simply did not want to go back to the life they left behind before they came to the UK and they may remain in situations of exploitation unless viable economic alternatives were presented to them.

Unknown communities
In Scotland the migrant population has traditionally been very small but it has grown substantially in recent years. For example, there are now in excess of 77 nationalities residing in Glasgow, and even in much smaller cities and towns, substantial proportions of the population are made up of new and often transient ethnic minority communities. With language barriers and mistrust of the authorities, especially police, some communities (especially Chinese) are effectively 'closed' to regular policing and other mainstream service provision. Where there is willingness to report serious crime to the police there are often problems with interpretation, both in terms of a lack of appropriate interpreters and the reliability of those available.

Multi-agency working
While UK and Scottish policies set out a victim centred approach to human trafficking, the competing priorities of various statutory and non-statutory agencies can be problematic. For example, where a non-EU citizen self identifies as a victim, the police priority is to gain reliable evidence, the victim service priority is to ensure that the victim's needs are met and that they are not further victimised, and the UKBA priority is to establish the immigration status of the person. Although there is a good working relationship between these 3 agencies, in practice, it is the police who carry out operations and the extent and nature of involvement of other agencies is usually determined by their initial judgement. An organisation like TARA may be best placed to properly identify victims of human trafficking and gain their trust, but some law enforcement officials feared that involving non-statutory agencies could jeopardise the security of operations.

Prosecutions
In England and Wales there have been a number of successful prosecutions for human trafficking resulting in some of the largest sentences in Europe. Whilst there have been prosecutions for brothel keeping and other offences in suspected human trafficking cases in Scotland, there have been none for human trafficking to date. One case did reach the courts in late 2007 but collapsed due to lack of evidence. Data gathered during the course of this research showed that this is likely to result from a combination of factors including: an unclear intelligence picture; low levels of awareness among the public; absence of witnesses; difficulties with translation during debrief of witnesses; further training needs among police and prosecution professionals; and some difficulties in obtaining warrants, including a perceived tendency for Sheriffs to favour the familiar language of brothel keeping instead of newer legislation relating to human trafficking. All of these factors contribute to a lack of evidence which might support a successful prosecution for human trafficking. Most of these factors are also likely to be relevant in England and Wales, but the comparatively lower scale of identified cases in Scotland and the lack of precedence may account, in part, for the differences in prosecutions.

Conclusions and recommendations

The purpose of this report was to construct a more detailed national picture of the extent and nature of human trafficking in Scotland and to examine the implications for policy and practice in a Scottish content. This section examines the main conclusions and recommendations of the study with respect to: the extent and nature of the problem; policy framing; policing and multi-agency working.

Extent and nature

While it will always be difficult to be sure about the extent of a phenomena such a human trafficking, the analysis carried out as part of this research represents the most evidence-based estimate available in Scotland and it is the first in the UK to take into account the breadth of experiences from law enforcement agencies to NGOs. The qualitative data drawn by interview data with individual organisations also helps to build on what we already know about individual experiences from other international research. There are still numerous gaps which could be filled by future research in Scotland.

Policy framing

In policy terms, human trafficking for sexual exploitation should be understood and treated in the context of organised crime, mass economic migration and asylum, and where applicable, the organised sex industry, gender based violence and inequalities and child exploitation. This study has drawn clear links between human trafficking, facilitated illegal immigration, smuggling, organised prostitution and other forms of organised crime, including Class A drugs trafficking and distribution, cannabis cultivation, money laundering, and serious fraud. It is likely that tackling those involved in human trafficking will contribute to more effective understanding, prevention and disruption of these other manifestations of serious organised crime. Human trafficking and facilitated immigration also appear to overlap with issues of asylum and economic migration and the complexities of these issues need to be considered in the formulation of policies and practice. The wide range of experiences of victims should be documented. Some of the stereotypes associated with human trafficking victimisation may be unhelpful in identifying it, and in understanding the needs of victims. The nature of the sex industry in Scotland has changed in recent years in terms of where it tends to be located and the demographics of those working in it. These issues are relevant to the consideration of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. A wider understanding of how child trafficking (including internal trafficking) manifests itself in the UK would be beneficial to appropriate multi-agency responses.

Policing

Interview data gathered in this research indicate some confusion in terms of the focus of Pentameter 2. Whilst significant inroads have been made in devolving the terms and remit of UK wide policing operations to NGOs and statutory service providers, it is recognised that this is an area for further future development. Effective cross organisational commitment and contribution will require further communication to support the role of this Scottish Human Trafficking Group (SHTG). Some of the greatest challenges in policing human trafficking and other forms of organised crime relate to the initial difficulty of gathering actionable intelligence, especially in communities which are effectively 'closed' to routine policing due to language barriers or mistrust of authorities. It would be useful for profiles of these communities to be created, and it may be worth considering the secondment of police officers from the relevant countries of origin for the purpose of operational assistance. One force carried out exchanges with countries such as Turkey and Germany in the past and these were reported to have worked well. Other difficulties relate to the identification

and retention of victims. Good practice, including initial engagement, interview techniques and link-in with appropriate victim care services, needs to be developed and formalised in liaison with multi-agency partners. It is of great concern that most of the victims and suspected victims encountered by police fled before initial interviews could be conducted or shortly afterwards.

It is sometimes more effective to target organised crime networks or a number of linked premises rather than individuals or single premises, both in combating human trafficking and other forms of serious organised crime. However, the opportunity to impact on such organised groups may, at times, require an initial focus on individuals or single premises. Both approaches require extensive collaborative work across forces.

Multi-agency working
Despite good working relationships between enforcement agencies and victim care services and some mutually beneficial examples of good practice, such as third party reporting, there remained some misunderstanding about the respective aims and roles of various organisations. Where protocols existed they remained in draft form and in some respects, were not as comprehensive and inclusive as they should have been. At the conclusion of fieldwork steps were being taken to replace the Glasgow protocol with a more formal memorandum of understanding between TARA, Strathclyde Police and the UKBA. If this has proven to work efficiently during the time it has now been in place, it would be worth considering whether this could form the basis for a wider Scottish memorandum of understanding. Some of the most important aspects of this would be the formalisation of good practice in initial interviews with victims and suspected victims and appropriate follow-up care. Inclusion of all relevant agencies would be essential. It would also be valuable to develop a mechanism for baseline data which could be supplied by, and shared between all relevant agencies would help to produce a more reliable picture and could also reduce duplication of effort and lessen the burden on victims to repeat information. Although various conferences on various aspects of human trafficking and organised crime have taken place in Scotland, more solution focused multi-agency workshop events involving participation of representatives from all main stakeholder and practitioner groups may be useful.

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