



Press release – Thursday 14 June 2018

NEW REPORT ILLUMINATES EXTENT OF MODERN SLAVERY IN SCOTLAND, REVEALING 297 POTENTIAL VICTIMS INDICATED IN 18 MONTHS THROUGH CONTACTS TO NATIONAL HELPLINE

A new report to be launched on Thursday 14 June by anti-slavery charity Unseen casts light on the extent and types of modern slavery in Scotland, based on contacts to its UK-wide Modern Slavery Helpline.

The report, 'Modern Slavery in Scotland: a view from the Modern Slavery Helpline', shows that there were 172 calls and 34 online reports to the Helpline relating to situations in Scotland over the 18 months since it launched in October 2016 to end March 2018. These indicated:

- 82 cases involving 297 potential victims of trafficking and exploitation in Scotland.
- 60.9% of cases related to labour exploitation, making this the most prevalent form of exploitation reported. 17% related to sexual exploitation, making this the second most prevalent form.
- Car washes (15 cases) and nail bars (11 cases) were the most common locations of modern slavery reported to the Helpline
- Romanians made up 10% of potential victims where nationality was known, making them the biggest group, with 30 individuals reported.
- Britons made up the third biggest group, comprising 5.7% of potential victims where nationality was known. Of the 17 individuals indicated in Scotland, 12 were reported to be from Scotland, three from Northern Ireland, and two from England.
- 11% of potential victims were children (34 individuals). Among children, Scots made up the second largest group, 26% of all child victims where nationality was known (5 individuals).

Quotes

Justine Currell, Executive Director of Unseen:

"We have been able to identify more and more potential victims as awareness grows around this hidden crime, and the numbers of contacts to the Helpline increase. In particular, we saw a spike in calls when the Scottish Government ran its trafficking awareness campaign last Autumn. Partnership is key in tackling this crime, and we look forward to working further with the Scottish Government, Police Scotland and NGOs to support more people out of exploitative and abusive situations. Our approach shows that collaboration is vital and everyone has a part to play in recognising and reporting slavery."



Andrew Wallis, CEO of Unseen:

"With cases in 19 out of 33 Scottish counties, this report underlines the fact that slavery is all around us. It's at the car wash, the nail bar, the takeaway and the hotel, as well as the farms that grow our food. It's not a problem taking place far away that we can't do anything about, it's under our noses and we can arm ourselves by learning to spot the signs of slavery and report it to the Helpline. Your call could mean somebody's freedom."

The Helpline report's publication coincides with the Scottish Government's report on the first year of its Scottish Strategy on Trafficking and Exploitation, and aims to support Scottish efforts to increase awareness and prevention of this crime.

ENDS

Notes for editors

About Unseen and the Modern Slavery Helpline:

Unseen is a modern slavery charity that operates a micro to macro approach to tackling slavery: by directly supporting survivors of human trafficking and modern slavery through safe accommodation, reintegration and outreach services; equipping frontline staff and businesses with the training and tools to correctly identify victims and take appropriate action; and influencing governments at a strategic level to create long-lasting global solutions to modern slavery. Unseen also operates the UK-wide Modern Slavery Helpline and provides consultancy and training to businesses to help them better understand the issue of modern slavery in supply chains and their own organisation. In 2015, Unseen was awarded, Charity of the Year: with an income of less than £1 million, by Charity Times Awards.

The UK-wide Modern Slavery Helpline and Resource Centre, established in October 2016, provides victims, the public, statutory agencies and businesses with access to information and support on a 24/7 basis. Potential victims, who call the Helpline, can talk to fully trained call handlers who will guide and assist them to access relevant services including Government-funded support through the National Referral Mechanism. Statutory agencies calling the Helpline will be supported in dealing with potential victims and signposted to the range of information, guidance and tools available through the associated resource centre. To raise awareness of the Helpline and ensure that it provides the services that potential callers want, we are working closely with a range of diverse stakeholders including law enforcement agencies, non-governmental organisations, businesses, media and faith organisations.

Calls and reports to the Modern Slavery Helpline can be made 24 hours a day, seven days a week by calling 08000 121 700, submitting a report online at <https://www.modernslaveryhelpline.org/report>, or by using the Unseen App.