



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
agus Comhionannais
Department of Justice
and Equality

Trafficking in Human Beings in Ireland

Annual Report 2018

www.blueblindfold.gov.ie



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INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Justice and Equality is pleased to present the tenth annual report on Trafficking in Human Beings in Ireland (2018), which covers the period between 1 January and 31 December 2018.

The report meets Ireland's reporting obligations under Article 19 of the EU Human Trafficking Directive (2011/36/EU)¹.

The report is structured in the following way:

- Chapter 1 provides a definition of human trafficking and explains its characteristics
- Chapter 2 provides statistics on the victims of human trafficking identified by Ireland in 2018
- Chapter 3 provides an outline of the extent of trafficking in Europe
- Chapter 4 describes Ireland's State and NGO-led response to the crime of trafficking and the provision of care to its victims
- Chapter 5 notes international assessments of Ireland's efforts to combat trafficking and to provide supports to victims
- Chapter 6 describes notable actions and progress made in 2018 in delivering on the objectives of the National Action Plan against human trafficking.

In Ireland, there were 64 victims of human trafficking identified by An Garda Síochána in 2018. 35 of these were victims of labour exploitation, 27 were victims of sexual exploitation and two were victims of forced criminality.

A statistical study on trafficking in human beings in the EU was published by the European Commission. The report shows that 20,532 men, women and children were registered as victims of trafficking in the EU in 2015-2016. However, the actual number is likely to be significantly higher as many victims remain undetected.

There were no convictions for human trafficking offences in 2018, and the difficulties in securing convictions against traffickers are well understood. An Garda Síochána continue to vigorously pursue a number of cases where action was initiated prior to 2018, and commenced action in 2018 in a number of new cases.

Each year the US Department of State evaluates the actions of countries around the world in combatting human trafficking. Although the 2018 Trafficking in Persons Report noted that the Irish government "made significant efforts to meet the minimum standards during the reporting period by collaborating in international investigations and increasing funding for victim services," the report saw Ireland fall from a Tier 1 to Tier 2 rating.

¹ 'Member States shall take the necessary measures to establish national rapporteurs or equivalent mechanisms. The tasks of such mechanisms shall include the carrying out of assessments of trends in trafficking in human beings, the measuring of results of anti-trafficking actions, including the gathering of statistics in close cooperation with relevant civil society organisations active in this field, and reporting'.

The Second National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Human Trafficking in Ireland commits the Department to ensuring the availability of funding to NGOs who are active in the field of human trafficking. This commitment recognises the role played by NGOs in assisting victims of human trafficking to access necessary supports to aid their recovery from their ordeal. Funding was provided by the Department to Ruhama: €325,000 and Migrant Rights Centre Ireland: €50,000.

In July 2018, Pope Francis visited Ireland and met with President Higgins. Human Trafficking was a topic of discussion during the meeting of families that took place as part of the Pope's visit to Ireland.

EU Anti Human Trafficking Day on 18 October was marked by the AHTU through hosting a screening of an award winning documentary, "The Price of Sex" in the Odeon cinema, Point Square, Dublin.

On 6 April 2018 the Minister for Justice and Equality, Charlie Flanagan TD, launched a revamp of the 'Blue Blindfold' website, www.blueblindfold.gov.ie. The newly designed blueblindfold.gov.ie site provides a user-friendly overview of how the crime manifests in Ireland, how members of the public can spot and report the signs of trafficking, and how the State supports these victims once identified. The 'Blue Blindfold' motif urges the public not to close their eyes to the signs of human trafficking.

Department of Justice and Equality
August 2019

1. HUMAN TRAFFICKING EXPLAINED

WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human Trafficking is a crime and a human rights violation. For a situation to be one of trafficking, three distinct elements (act, means, purpose) must be fulfilled:

- The ACT of recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons must be done by...
- The MEANS such as the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or the giving or receiving of payments, and it must be for...
- The PURPOSE OF EXPLOITATION i.e. sexual exploitation, labour exploitation, forced begging, forced criminality or organ removal.

Child trafficking: an important note:

A child cannot consent to being trafficked, therefore the MEANS element does not apply to children. In the case of a child, the mere ACT of recruiting, transporting, transferring, harbouring or receiving a child for the PURPOSE of exploitation constitutes trafficking.

Similarly, exploitation of a child in and of itself, without the 'Act' element, while constituting another criminal offence, will rarely amount to human trafficking.



The presence of the three distinct elements is observed in the definition of human trafficking as set out in both the **Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings** and the **UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime**:

“Trafficking in persons 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.”

In Ireland, these definitions have been incorporated into the **Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) Act 2008** and the **Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) (Amendment) Act 2013**.

WHY DOES IT HAPPEN AND WHERE DOES IT HAPPEN?

Trafficking in human beings is a high profit–low risk crime based upon the principles of supply and demand. Criminal networks or individuals take advantage of a series of what are known as ‘push and pull’ factors, which explain why vulnerable individuals who lack opportunities and seek better living conditions in their own or a foreign country, end up being part of a human trafficking chain. This, in combination with the demand for cheap labour and sexual services, fuels human trafficking.



Poverty is a risk factor for people becoming victims of trafficking

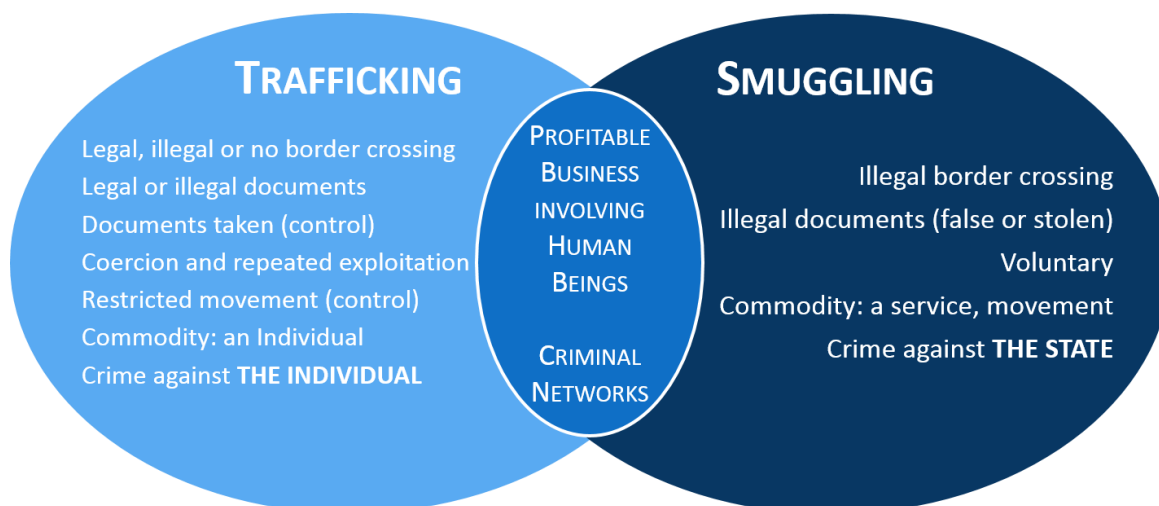
People can be trafficked into different types of work in agriculture, in the manufacturing sector and in the service industry. This can include restaurant and hotel work, domestic work, construction, agriculture and entertainment. They can be trafficked into prostitution, forced begging and forced criminality, sometimes in the form of cultivating or dealing in illegal drugs.

PEOPLE SMUGGLING VS. HUMAN TRAFFICKING

It is important to note the distinction between people trafficking and people smuggling. The relevant distinction is that being **trafficked is involuntary**, whereas people smuggling involves the consent of the individual being smuggled.

What begins as smuggling may become a trafficking situation when a person who has been smuggled is then subjected to exploitation through force, coercion, deception, etc., during or after the smuggling event.

- People smuggling involves migrants being facilitated with entry into a State through illegal means whereas trafficking must have the threat or use of force, coercion or deception against a (adult) victim.
- People smuggling facilitates an individual’s illegal entry into the State whereas victims of trafficking can enter into the State both legally and illegally.
- People smuggling must take place across international borders but there is no requirement that a person must have crossed a border for trafficking to take place – it can and does take place within national borders.
- People smuggling, while often undertaken in dangerous or degrading conditions, involves migrants who have consented to the smuggling. Trafficking victims, have either never consented or, if they initially consented, that consent has been rendered meaningless by the coercive, deceptive or abusive actions of the traffickers.
- People smuggling ends with the arrival of the migrants at their destination; unlike trafficking it does not involve the ongoing exploitation of victims.



2. EXTENT OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN IRELAND

A note on statistics:

Estimating the prevalence of trafficking is difficult due to the low numbers of identified victims each year, and the characteristics of human trafficking, including its clandestine nature and its overlap with other illegal activities. In addition, due to the relatively small number of victims in a given year, one-off incidents involving large numbers of victims can have a significant impact on the overall figures.

Therefore the statistical reports in this section provide a detailed analysis of the information that is available to authorities, rather than a precise account of the extent of the phenomenon in Ireland.

The 2018 annual report follows the approach to classification from the previous year in relation to victims of crimes prosecuted under section 3(2) of the Child Trafficking & Pornography Act 1998 (as amended by Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) Act 2008). Based on international best practice, these victims are not counted as victims of trafficking.

2018 OVERVIEW

There were 64 victims of human trafficking identified by An Garda Síochána in 2018. 35 of these were victims of labour exploitation, 27 were victims of sexual exploitation and two were victims of forced criminality.

Table 1 Total number of victims identified in Ireland in 2018		
	No.	% Total
Total Victims Identified	64	100%
Adult	59	92%
Minor	8	8%
Offence occurred in Ireland	51	80%
Offence occurred outside Ireland	13	20%

In relation to victims for whom the crime occurred outside of Ireland, these people were admitted to the system of State supports known as the National Referral Mechanism and provided with the same services as if the crime had occurred within the country.

Table 2 Source Countries	No.	% Total
Romania	17	27%
Nigeria	14	22%
Egypt	9	14%
Ghana	6	9%
Other	18	28%

Table 3 Trafficking by Exploitation Type	No.	% Total
Trafficking for labour exploitation	35	55%
Fishing industry	16	-
Farming industry	10	-
Domestic servitude	6	-
Car- wash industry	3	-
Trafficking for sexual exploitation	27	42%
Trafficking for forced criminality	2	3%
Total	64	100%

2014-2018 DATA

The tables that follow outline the number of victims that have been identified in Ireland over the last 5 years, the nature of the exploitation they have been subject to and their region of origin.

VICTIMS BY YEAR, AGE AND GENDER

Table 1 shows the number of suspected victims of human trafficking identified by An Garda Síochána by year of detection, age and gender. There have been 314 victims detected over the last 5 years with 64 victims identified in 2018.

Year	Age	Female	Male	Transgender	Total
2014	Adult	26	8	-	34
	Minor	2	2	-	4
	Total	28	10	-	38
2015	Adult	35	19	1	55
	Minor	6	1	-	7
	Total	41	20	1	62
2016	Adult	38	36	-	74
	Minor	1	-	-	1
	Total	39	36	-	75
2017	Adult	42	30	-	72
	Minor	3	-	-	3
	Total	45	30	-	75
2018	Adult	30	29	-	59
	Minor	3	2	-	5
	Total	33	31	-	64
Total	Adult	171	122	1	294
	Minor	15	5	-	20
	Total	186	127	1	314

Overall, there has been a trend for an increase in the number of victims detected annually over the last five years, but a decrease in the male to female ratio. However, given the relatively small numbers of victims detected in Ireland annually, one off incidents where a large number of victims are detected in one instance can influence the male to female ratio.

There was a shift in the gender breakdown of victims of human trafficking in Ireland from 2017 to 2018. In 2017, males accounted for 66% of victims and females accounted for 34% of victims. In 2018 males accounted for 48% of victims and females accounted for 52% of victims.

VICTIMS BY REGION AND EXPLOITATION TYPE

Table 2 provides a breakdown of the 314 victims of human trafficking by region of origin and gender.

Table 5 Suspected victims by year, region of origin and exploitation type					
Year	Region of Origin	Sexual	Labour	other	Total
2014	Africa	5	2	1	8
	EEA	11	5	4	20
	South America	8	-	-	8
	Asia	-	-	1	1
	Non-EEA Europe	-	-	1	1
2015	Africa	14	5	1	20
	EEA	16	14	6	36
	South America	1	-	-	1
	Asia	-	3	-	3
	Non-EEA Europe	1	-	-	1
	Other	-	1	-	1
2016	Africa	13	4	-	17
	EEA	11	31	5	47
	South America	4	-	-	4
	Asia	3	3	-	6
	Non-EEA Europe	1	-	-	1
2017	Africa	16	12	-	28
	EEA	5	8	9	22
	South America	4	-	-	4
	Asia	5	14	-	19
	Ireland	1	1	-	2
2018	Africa	18	16	1	35
	EEA	4	14	1	19
	South America	2	-	-	2
	Asia	2	4	-	6
	Non-EEA Europe	-	1	-	1
	Ireland	1	-	-	1
Total	Africa	66	39	3	108
	EEA	47	72	25	144
	South America	19	-	-	19
	Asia	10	24	1	35
	Non-EEA Europe	2	1	1	4
	Other	-	1	-	1
	Ireland	2	1	-	3
	Total	146	138	30	314

In the last 5 years, 46% of suspected victims came from the EEA region, with 34% from Africa region and 11% from Asia region.

VICTIMS BY YEAR, EXPLOITATION AND GENDER

The Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) (Amendment) Act 2013 came into effect in August 2013 and expanded the definition of human trafficking to include exploitation of a person for the purpose of forced begging and for forced participation in criminal activities for financial gain.

These specific categories of alleged exploitation were previously recorded as ‘uncategorised exploitation’ or ‘labour exploitation’. The one remaining “unknown/ other” categorisation in 2014 related to immigration exploitation.

Table 6 below illustrates the trend in exploitation type in Ireland.

Table 6 Victims by year, exploitation and gender					
Year	Exploitation	Female	Male	Transgender	Total
2014	Sexual	23	1	-	24
	Labour	3	4	-	7
	Forced	-	4	-	4
	Criminality	-	1	-	1
	Other	1	-	-	1
	Sexual & Labour	1	-	-	1
	Forced Begging				
2015	Sexual	30	1	1	32
	Labour	8	15	-	23
	Forced	1	4	-	5
	Criminality	2	-	-	2
	Sexual & Labour				
2016	Sexual	32	-	-	32
	Labour	6	32	-	38
	Forced	-	4	-	4
	Criminality	1	-	-	1
	Sexual & Labour				
2017	Sexual	28	3	-	31
	Labour	11	24	-	35
	Forced	5	3	-	8
	Criminality	1	-	-	1
	Forced Begging				
2018	Sexual	26	1	-	27
	Labour	7	28	-	35
	Forced	-	2	-	2
	Criminality				
Total	Sexual	139	6	1	146
	Labour	35	103	-	138
	Forced	6	17	-	23
	Criminality	-	1	-	1
	Other	4	-	-	4
	Sexual & Labour	2	-	-	2
	Forced Begging				

Table 7 Victims by year, region of origin and exploitation type				
Region of Origin	Sexual	Labour	Other	Total
Africa	5	2	1	17
EEA	11	5	4	25
South America	8	-	-	1
Asia	-	-	1	1
Non-EEA	-	-	1	1
Europe				
Africa	14	5	1	20
EEA	16	14	6	36
South America	1	-	-	1
Asia	-	3	-	3
Non-EEA	1	-	-	1
Europe	-	1	-	1
Other				
Africa	13	4	-	17
EEA	11	31	5	47
South America	4	-	-	4
Asia	3	3	-	6
Non-EEA	1	-	-	1
Europe				
Africa	16	12	-	28
EEA	5	8	9	22
South America	4	-	-	4
Asia	5	14	-	19
Ireland	1	1	-	2
Africa	18	16	1	35
EEA	4	14	1	19
South America	2	-	-	2
Asia	2	4	-	6
Non-EEA	-	1	-	1
Europe	1	-	-	1
Ireland				

3. EXTENT OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN EUROPE

A major statistical study² on trafficking in human beings in the EU was published by the European Commission in December. It presents a compilation of statistics at the EU Member State level on trafficking in human beings. This data collection exercise approached all 28-Member States and covers the years 2015 and 2016 and updates the 2014 data collection as relevant.

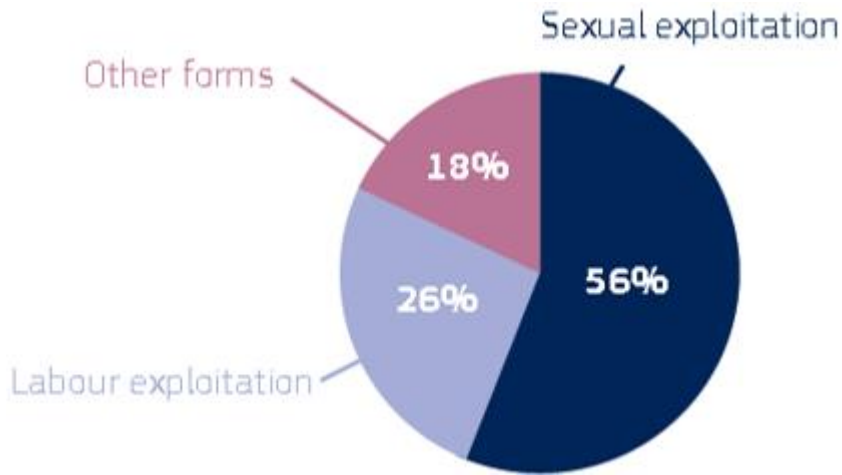
The report shows that 20,532 men, women and children were registered as victims of trafficking in the EU in 2015-2016. However, the actual number is likely to be significantly higher as many victims remain undetected.

Women and girls continue to be most vulnerable to trafficking (68%) while children represent 23% of registered victims.



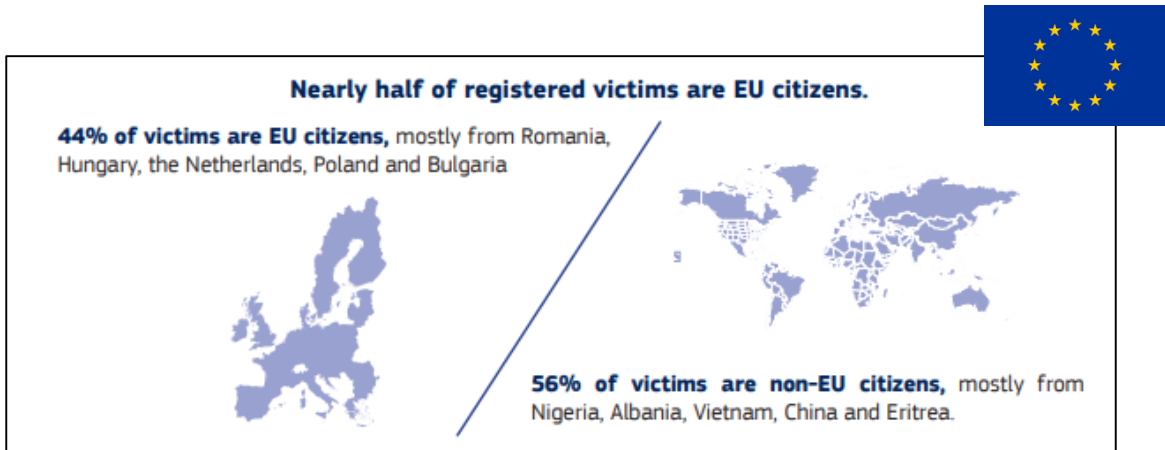
Sexual exploitation is the most common form of exploitation, accounting for over half (56%) of registered victims of trafficking in human beings. Labour exploitation was the purpose of trafficking for around one quarter (26%) of the registered victims. ‘Other’ forms account for 18%.

² Full report available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-security/20181204_data-collection-study.pdf ; factsheet available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-security/20181204_agenda-on-security-factsheet-report-thb_en.pdf



The level of prosecutions and convictions is low, with 5,979 prosecutions and 2,927 convictions reported. Only 18 reported convictions for knowingly using services provided by victims.

The Commission noted that while the judgement of experts was that there were no discernible trends, they did note the continuing stability in some data, e.g.: 95% of the victims of sex exploitation are female; ¾ of prosecutions relate to sex trafficking.



4. IRELAND'S RESPONSE TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING INTERNATIONAL LAW

Ireland's national legislation has its foundation in the global and European commitment to fight human trafficking. The key international instruments are:

- The UN **Palermo Protocol** of the year 2000: A Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime³.
- The **Council of Europe Convention** against Human Trafficking: A 2005 Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings ratified July 2010⁴.
- **EU Directive 2011/36/EU**

THE LEGAL FRAME- WORK IN IRELAND

Ireland's legislation, combined with administrative measures for victim support, fully implements these international treaties.

The key legal instruments in Ireland are:



- The Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) Act 2008⁵. This is the main human trafficking Act which defines the crime and its penalties, with the exception of child sex trafficking. The Act criminalises: the trafficking of adults; child trafficking for purposes other than sexual exploitation (dealt with by 1998 Act – see below); prostituting a trafficked person; and the payment for sex with a trafficked person.
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act, 1998⁶. This Act covers child trafficking, child sex abuse and child pornography. In relation to human trafficking, the legislation criminalises child trafficking for sexual exploitation.
- The Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) (Amendment) Act 2013⁷. The 2013 amending Act modified the definition of Labour Exploitation to bring it into line with ILO definitions of forced labour and gave effect to the EU Directive 2011/36/EU.

³ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/protocoltraffickinginpersons.aspx>

⁴ <https://rm.coe.int/168008371d>

⁵ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2008/act/8/enacted/en/print.html>

⁶ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/22/enacted/en/print.html>

⁷ <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2013/act/24/enacted/en/print.html>

STATE SUPPORTS FOR VICTIMS

IDENTIFICATION OF VICTIMS

A victim of trafficking may access help in a number of ways. They may come forward themselves to the Garda Síochána or another State service. They may be rescued by the Garda Síochána in a police operation. They may approach an NGO (some of which are State-funded), such as Ruhama or Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (MRCI). These NGOs also provide ongoing support to victims of human trafficking. Victims may also be encountered by the Health Service Executive, Tusla, Workplace Relations Commission, embassies and members of the public. The importance of public awareness is crucial to recognising potential victims of trafficking. More information on the indicators of human trafficking may be found on the Blue Blindfold website (www.blueblindfold.gov.ie).

Potential victims are referred to the Garda Síochána to be identified as such, and to enter the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), the name given to the State supports.

NATIONAL REFERRAL MECHANISM AND ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES FOR SUPPORT

Ireland provides a victim-centred system of State supports for victims of human trafficking that have been identified by An Garda Síochána. These supports are available through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), which is a framework through which the State fulfils its obligations to protect and promote the human rights of trafficking victims, working in partnership with civil society. These include accommodation, medical services, legal aid and advice, amongst other supports.

Where victims of trafficking, or those acting on their behalf, do not wish to engage with An Garda Síochána, they do not enter the National Referral Mechanism and cannot avail of all services provided directly by the State. However, the Department of Justice and Equality recognises the reluctance that some victims may have in coming forward, and so provides funding to several NGOs to provide support and services to potential victims outside the National Referral Mechanism.

At any stage of the process, or if the victim is a non-EEA national without an investigative or personal need to remain in the State, their return home is facilitated by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). IOM runs assisted voluntary return and reintegration programmes. This assistance is available to victims of trafficking regardless of nationality who wish to return home voluntarily but do not have the means, including the necessary documentation, to do so. IOM has offices in many countries, most of which have developed a strong network of support ranging from housing facilities, to medical assistance, all aiming to support victims in the difficult process of reintegration.

Full details on the National Referral Mechanism may be found at www.blueblindfold.gov.ie, where formal written procedures are published to guide public officials in the identification and protection of victims of trafficking:

- A Statement of Roles and Responsibilities⁸ is in place outlining the roles and responsibilities of State agencies and NGOs. The Statement describes the process of identification, the range of available services and assistance measures, information on access to these services, and the part played by relevant organisations at different stages.
- Administrative Immigration Arrangements⁹ are in place to provide a means to remain in the State pending a trafficking investigation for Non-EEA suspected victims of trafficking who do not otherwise have such permission. This temporary protection can evolve into permanent residence.
- A Guide to Procedures for Victims of Trafficking in Ireland¹⁰ provides information to victims of trafficking in relation to their rights.

PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

The close co-operation between stakeholders in the fight against trafficking is recognised internationally as a key element of a successful anti-trafficking strategy. Three dedicated State bodies focus directly on human trafficking.

The **Department of Justice and Equality** coordinates policy on human trafficking in Ireland and works in collaboration with other Irish government agencies, and non-government organisations.

The **Human Trafficking Investigation & Co-ordination Unit** (HTICU) is part of the Garda National Protective Services Bureau (GNPSB) and officers of this Unit have particular expertise in regard to trafficking in human beings.

The **Anti-Human Trafficking Team** (AHTT) of the Health Service Executive (HSE) delivers an individual care plan for each victim of human trafficking.

Additionally, solicitors of the **Legal Aid Board** provide legal aid and advice to trafficking victims. The Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) provides potential and suspected victims with accommodation, on the basis of a referral by An Garda Síochána.

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<http://www.blueblindfold.gov.ie/en/BBF/Statement%20of%20Roles%20and%20Responsibilities.pdf/Files/Statement%20of%20Roles%20and%20Responsibilities.pdf>

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<http://www.blueblindfold.gov.ie/en/BBF/Administrative%20Immigration%20Arrangements%20for%20the%20Protection%20of%20Victims%20of%20Human%20Trafficking%20-%20March%202011.pdf/Files/Administrative%20Immigration%20Arrangements%20for%20the%20Protection%20of%20Victims%20of%20Human%20Trafficking%20-%20March%202011.pdf>

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<http://www.blueblindfold.gov.ie/en/BBF/Guide%20to%20Procedures%20June%202015.pdf/Files/Guide%20to%20Procedures%20June%202015.pdf>

Potential and suspected victims who are in the asylum process remain in RIA accommodation while a determination is being made in relation to their claim for asylum or associated processes (e.g. application for Leave to Remain or Subsidiary Protection).

Ruhama is a Dublin-based NGO which works on a national level with women affected by prostitution and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation. Ruhama provides a service to women who are currently involved in on-street and off-street prostitution, women who are exiting prostitution, women who are victims of sex trafficking and women who have a history of prostitution.

Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (MRCI) is a national organisation working to promote justice, empowerment and equality for migrant workers and their families. MRCI provides information, advocacy and legal support to migrants and their families all over Ireland. The organisation works to identify and support victims of trafficking for labour exploitation and supports the growth and development of a number of action groups that enable vulnerable migrant workers to work together and improve working conditions in specific sectors.

Other organisations active in the provision of services to victims of trafficking include:

Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI) works to secure improvements in the rights and protections of migrants and their families in Ireland through working on policy and awareness on issues of migration, integration and human trafficking. The ICI has an independent law centre and operates a helpline for immigration queries.

Sexual Violence Centre Cork (SVCC) is a Cork-based organisation working towards the elimination of sexual violence in society by raising awareness about the prevalence, incidence and dynamics of interpersonal violence within society. Its services include crisis support counselling, advocacy, a telephone helpline and a Sexual Assault Treatment Service (SATS).

Doras Luimní is an organisation that works to support and promote the rights of migrants living in Limerick and the wider Mid-West region. The organisation provides specialised direct support to victims of human trafficking and to women engaged in, or exiting from prostitution.

The **International Organisation for Migration (IOM)** is an international organisation whose primary responsibility lies in assisting persons in returning to their country of origin if they so wish. Assistance is provided to both EU and non-EU nationals alike.

COMBATTING THE CRIME OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

There were no convictions for human trafficking offences in 2018, and the difficulties in securing convictions against traffickers are well understood. An Garda Síochána continue to vigorously pursue a number of cases where action was initiated prior to 2018, and commenced action in 2018 in a number of new cases.

Due to the international nature of this crime, An Garda Síochána also participate in international actions against trafficking and significant activity in this sphere is noted below.

SANTA MARTA GROUP – NORTH ATLANTIC MARITIME PROJECT

The Santa Marta Group is an alliance of international police chiefs and bishops from around the world working together with civil society to eradicate human trafficking and modern day slavery. Ireland leads the North Atlantic Maritime Project with the United Kingdom, Spain and Portugal. As a consequence of its participation in the Santa Marta Group, Ireland is conducting investigations into human trafficking in the fishing industry. Under the auspices of the North Atlantic Maritime Project, in 2018, the Garda Síochána have made a number of operational interventions and investigations. As a result of these interventions and investigations, a total of 16 victims of human trafficking were identified in the fishing industry in 2018. All victims have been offered services under the National Action Plan and are actively assisting with the investigation. A number of suspects have been identified and investigations are continuing into their activities.

EUROPEAN MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PLATFORM AGAINST CRIMINAL THREATS (EMPACT)

In 2018 AGS joined the EU Cycle 2018–2021 EMPACT Group for Human Trafficking. The EMPACT Group meets at Europol in The Hague and is the Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats. It is part of an intelligence-led policing approach to tackling organised crime and human trafficking is one of its priority areas. Ireland is also a member of the EMPACT group ETUTU, which focuses on human trafficking from Nigeria into the European Union.

During the course of 2018 Ireland participated in EMPACT Joint Action Days on labour exploitation, sexual exploitation and forced criminality and child trafficking.

Border Management Unit at Dublin Airport undertook a day of action in April to raise awareness of the threat of Human Trafficking and in May, An Garda Síochána conducted targeted interventions and examinations of



selected flights at Dublin, Shannon, Knock and Cork. Analysis of passengers was carried out with a view to identifying victims of human trafficking.

Other international activities in 2018 included regular exchanges of information through the Interpol Channel with other Interpol members in the field of human trafficking, and co-operation with the Police Service of Northern Ireland in a number of investigations into human trafficking and organised prostitution.

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

A Second National Action Plan was published in October 2016 and identified 65 separate actions to combat trafficking and assist victims. These actions were built on the response delivered under the First National Action Plan and on international and domestic experience to date and provides for new initiatives in order to address human trafficking in all its forms.

This National Action Plan complements our commitments under Ireland's Second National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 on Women Peace and Security and those set out in the Working Outline of the National Plan on Business and Human Rights.

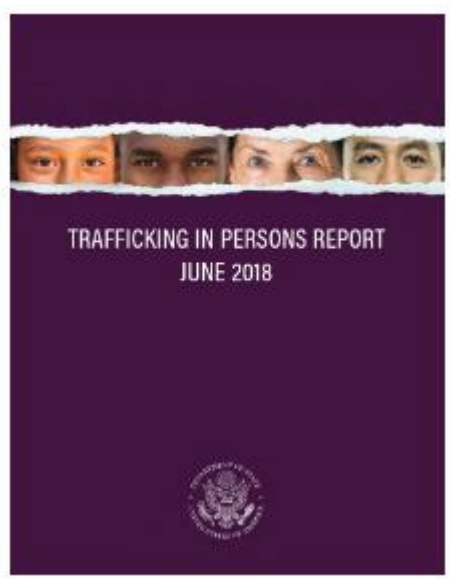
Work has proceeded throughout 2017 and 2018 on the implementation of the plan. Many of the actions have been delivered, and work to complete others is underway.



5. INTERNATIONAL EVALUATIONS AND COOPERATION

US ‘TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS’ REPORT 2018

Each year the US Department of State evaluates the actions of countries around the world in combatting human trafficking. The US places each country into one of four tiers. The placement is based on the extent of governments’ efforts to meet the standards set by the US Trafficking Victims Protection Act for the elimination of human trafficking, which are generally consistent with the Palermo Protocol. Tier 1 is the highest ranking, the other tiers being Tier 2, Tier 2w and Tier 3.



The 2018 Trafficking in Persons Report¹¹ saw Ireland fall from a Tier 1 to Tier 2 rating.

The report noted that the Irish government “made significant efforts to meet the minimum standards during the reporting period by collaborating in international investigations and increasing funding for victim services.” The report also made a number of recommendations to be implemented which would improve victim services and make Ireland a hostile country for traffickers to exploit their victims in.

UNODC research Using Multiple Systems Estimation

In 2017 Ireland participated in United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) sponsored research on multiple systems estimation of the numbers of presumed human trafficking victims. The study covered the period 2014-2016 and was published in November 2018. The study concluded that for Ireland, the overall level of trafficking was approximately 50% higher than what is currently detected. This conclusion seems to show that the Irish identification/reporting mechanism is relatively effective compared to those of other countries in the study, including the United Kingdom (three to five times higher) and the Netherlands (four to five times higher).¹²

¹¹ <https://www.state.gov/reports/2018-trafficking-in-persons-report/>

¹² https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/MSE_Research_Brief_Ireland.pdf

Data Collection on Trafficking Human Beings in the EU

EU Member States including Ireland contributed, to a major statistical study on human trafficking in the EU, which was published in December 2018. The report found that on average across the EU 44% of victims of trafficking were EU citizens and 55% of victims from non-EU citizens. It also found that between the reporting countries sexual exploitation was the most common form of exploitation involved in trafficking with over two-thirds of the identified victims were female.¹³

Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)

The Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) visited Ireland in late 2016 and reported on Ireland's efforts to combat human trafficking. This was the second such evaluation of Ireland by GRETA and involved a comprehensive and constructive dialogue process between GRETA, the Irish authorities and representatives of civil society.

Ireland provided an update to GRETA in 2018 on progress to date in addressing the recommendations of the Committee of the Parties in respect of Ireland's implementation of the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. This update is noted in the 8th "General Report on GRETA's activities" which covered the period of 1 January – 31 December 2018.¹⁴

In November 2018, Kevin Hyland, the former UK Modern Slavery Commissioner, was elected to the 15 member Council of Europe GRETA committee, following his nomination by Ireland. His election was welcomed by the Minister for Justice and Equality

"The election of Kevin Hyland to GRETA is a significant achievement and a tribute to his broad international expertise and experience in the area of human trafficking at national and international level. I am confident that he will make a substantial contribution to the important work of GRETA. I wish to extend my congratulations to Mr. Hyland and wish him every success in this vital role."

Mr. Hyland succeeded Professor Siobhán Mullally who was first elected a member of GRETA in 2012 and held the position of President of the committee during her second term.

¹³ https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-security/20181204_data-collection-study.pdf

¹⁴ <https://rm.coe.int/8th-/168094b073>

6. PROGRESS IN 2018

PROJECTS UNDER THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

PROVISION OF SPECIALISED ACCOMMODATION

At present, it is the practice that victims of trafficking are placed in full board accommodation and ancillary services delivered by RIA. While this accommodation is flexible, secure, and works well with other state actors, it is recognised that best practice thinking is to place victims in specialist centres where they may receive specialist care and support each other.

AHTU will work with potential partners (NGOs, Department of Housing, landowners such as church bodies) to develop a specialised accommodation solution that will meet the needs of victims, while taking account of their safety and privacy. Opportunities for a pilot or open request for tenders funded by the Department of Justice and Equality will be pursued in 2019.

VICTIM IDENTIFICATION PROCESS

The current process for victim identification requires victims to liaise with AGS before receiving access to State-delivered supports, which is thought may deter possible victims from coming forward to seek identification.

A fundamental shift is planned to this approach, to transfer responsibility for identification from AGS to a civil State agency. As part of this transition, it is planned to introduce greater transparency, including a written statement of victim status. A project is underway to effect this change, and detailed discussions are underway between the relevant parties.

Although this change project is expected to be challenging, the Irish Government believes it will move the State response considerably forward in providing an integrated, victim-centred approach to delivering services to these victims, often vulnerable women, who seek to escape from criminal exploitation.

AWARENESS RAISING EVENTS

VISIT OF POPE FRANCIS

In July 2018, Pope Francis visited Ireland and met with President Higgins. Human Trafficking was a topic of discussion during the meeting of families that took place as part of the Pope's visit to Ireland. Both leaders agreed on the importance of protecting vulnerable communities and individuals, at home and abroad. Pope Francis and President Higgins also discussed climate change, inequality, poverty, migration and violent conflict. They agreed that human rights must be at the centre of political and personal responses aimed at tackling such issues

RELAUNCH OF BLUE BLINDFOLD WEBSITE

On 6 April 2018 the Minister for Justice and Equality, Charlie Flanagan TD, launched a revamp of the 'Blue Blindfold' website, www.blueblindfold.gov.ie. The newly designed blueblindfold.gov.ie site provides a user-friendly overview of how the crime manifests in Ireland, how members of the public can spot and report the signs of trafficking, and how the State supports these victims once identified. The 'Blue Blindfold' motif urges the public not to close their eyes to the signs of human trafficking.

Launching the updated site, the Minister said:

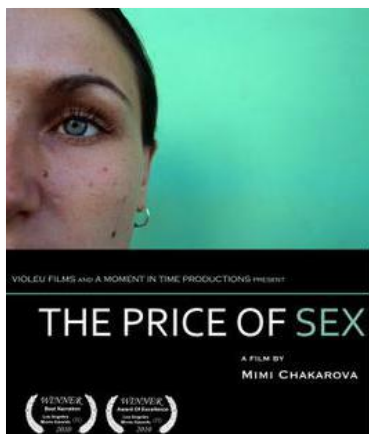
“A key element in the fight against human trafficking is an informed society, who are aware that exploitation, tantamount to slavery, continues to happen today in Ireland. Our revamped 'Blue Blindfold' website seeks to further educate the public on what human trafficking is and how it occurs in Ireland.”

The Minister concluded:

“Every year Gardaí depend on information from the public who are in a unique position to provide vital intelligence for both victim identification and criminal investigation. Don't close your eyes to human trafficking, visit our website and see how you can help us eradicate this crime in Ireland.”

EU ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING DAY

EU Anti Human Trafficking Day on 18 October was marked by the AHTU through hosting a screening of an award winning documentary, “The Price of Sex” in the Odeon cinema, Point Square, Dublin.



The documentary showcases stories from victims of sex trafficking, as told through their own words. Mimi Chakarova, photojournalist by profession, directed, wrote and produced the film. Fiona Broadfoot, a survivor of sex trafficking, and founder of the Build A Girl project, a survivor-led NGO, spoke to the audience about her experience and work in this area.

OTHER PUBLIC EVENTS

In September, Minister Stanton met with the **Immigration Council of Ireland (ICI)**, the AHTU and the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) with regard to accommodation. The Minister noted that there have been improvements in RIA accommodation in recent years in terms of the quality of the accommodation and the privacy on offer and the catering arrangements and move towards more independent living. These improvements continue to make the accommodation a better place for all residents. The Minister also noted at this

meeting that the AHTU are also looking closely at appropriate accommodation solutions which account for the needs of the most traumatized victims, in future tenders within the existing RIA framework.

In October, on EU Anti-Human Trafficking Day Minister Flanagan met with representatives of **MECPATHS (Mercy Efforts for Child Protection Against Trafficking with the Hospitality Sector)** to discuss their awareness raising efforts around the potential risks of child sex-trafficking in Ireland.

In November, a UN anti-human trafficking event **entitled “Practical Solutions to Eradicate Human Trafficking”** was held in New York. During this event, Ireland’s UN Ambassador, Geraldine Byrne Nason, underlined Ireland’s commitment to ending human trafficking, highlighted through mention of our national action plan, our legislative and policy framework and the assistance provided to victims through the NRM. The Ambassador put forward that an effective response to human trafficking also requires partnerships to be formed both within, and across, international and regional bodies, and mentioned that Ireland will continue to ensure coherence and co-ordination in the external and internal dimensions of our anti-trafficking policy.

In December, the Irish Embassy to the Holy See, in conjunction with the British Embassy to the Holy See, organised an event to mark **UN Anti-Slavery Day** which was held in the premises of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG), an umbrella group for senior religious Sisters worldwide. Ambassador Emma Madigan spoke on the Sexual Offences Act 2017, and on tackling the push factors such as conflict and lack of economic opportunity to help prevent the scourge of trafficking.

A pack for the **Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)** curriculum in Secondary schools was developed in recent years, and in 2018 was distributed to a number of newly trained CSPE Teachers across Ireland. Each pack contained leaflets, a poster, a booklet entitled ‘Don’t Close your Eyes to Slavery’ and information cards which facilitate a group learning activity for students in the junior cycle. This pack is available for schools on request.

The Department of Justice and Equality worked with RTÉ to ensure that information on supports and appropriate contact points was provided to viewers following a high profile docudrama on human trafficking, “Doing Money”. The Department also worked with a researcher on “Fair City,” a popular soap opera, to ensure that a storyline of human trafficking was factually accurate.

TRAINING

TRAINING ACTIVITIES

A three-day course in relation to human trafficking was delivered to frontline Gardaí, investigators and immigration officers on two occasions in 2018. Over 120 members of the Garda Síochána received this training. In total 1,431 members of the Garda Síochána have now been trained specifically in human trafficking.

Specialised training course on human trafficking and links to organised prostitution was also delivered by Operation Quest to forty Garda personnel and staff attached to the Forensic Science Laboratory. The members attached to Operation Quest are primarily involved in investigations targeting organised prostitution and habitual brothel keeping nationwide.

As part of An Garda Síochána's continued awareness-raising efforts, the Human Trafficking Investigation and Co-Ordination Unit took part in the National Ploughing Championships as part of a campaign to raise awareness of human trafficking and labour exploitation in those who work in or alongside the agricultural and food sectors.

Awareness-raising training continues to be delivered to a variety of targeted groups. These include third-level students, secondary-level students, social workers, diplomats going abroad on missions from Ireland and members of the Defence Forces.

Training is also delivered to staff of financial institutions. The objective of this training is to create improved identification of suspicious transactions with a view to aiding financial investigations into perpetrators of human trafficking. 120 staff were trained in 2018.

RESEARCH

UNODC RESEARCH USING MULTIPLE SYSTEMS ESTIMATION

In 2017 Ireland participated in United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) sponsored research on multiple systems estimation of the numbers of presumed human trafficking victims¹⁵. The study covered the period 2014-2016 and was published in November 2018. The study concluded that for Ireland, the overall level of trafficking was approximately 50% higher than what is currently detected. This conclusion seems to show that the Irish identification/reporting mechanism is relatively effective compared to those of other countries in the study.

HTEPII PROJECT

The Human Trafficking and Exploitation Project, the island of Ireland (HTEPII - the Santa Marta project) began in June of 2018, led by Mary Immaculate College of Education. This

¹⁵ https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/MSE_Research_Brief_Ireland.pdf

research project is part-funded by An Garda Síochána and is supported by the Department of Justice and Equality. The project is expected to conclude in 2020.

The project is aimed at identifying high-quality data sets that exist in Ireland on human trafficking; enhancing existing information; collaborating with NGOs; analysing human trafficking and slavery information data; holding workshops to disseminate awareness-raising information to bodies such as schools and institutions; and delivering a report and handbook.

FUNDING

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND EQUALITY FUNDING

The Second National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Human Trafficking in Ireland commits the Department to ensuring the availability of funding to NGOs who are active in the field of human trafficking.

This commitment recognises the role played by NGOs in assisting victims of human trafficking to access necessary supports to aid their recovery from their ordeal.

Funding was provided by the Department to the following NGOs:

Ruhama

€325,000 was provided to Ruhama to

- enable it to offer support, assistance and opportunities to women who have been the victims of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, and
- offer assistance and opportunities to explore alternatives to prostitution and long term recovery from the trauma of sex trafficking
- work to change public attitudes, practices and policies which allow the exploitation of women through prostitution.

Ruhama supports on average of 300 women per year affected by prostitution or sex trafficking.

Migrant Rights Centre Ireland

€50,000 was provided to MRCI. The emergence of precarious working conditions and the associated risk of human trafficking in certain sectors places MRCI in a central role in raising awareness among migrant communities and recognising trafficking indicators among that community. MRCI also provides training to a wide range of professionals and agencies on the issues of trafficking for labour exploitation.