

Human Trafficking (260140228) - Summary of Findings V1 (12th April 2017)

Background and methodology

The Scottish Government is developing a strategy to tackle human trafficking and exploitation in Scotland. As part of this strategy, research was conducted by Kantar TNS to assess public awareness of human trafficking.

The research was conducted using a face-to-face, in-home, CAPI Omnibus survey, the Scottish Opinion Survey (SOS), as the method for data collection. A sample of 1,025 adults aged 16+ was interviewed across Scotland between 1st and 26th March 2017, with the data being weighted to match population profiles to ensure it was both demographically and geographically representative of the adult population of Scotland.

Main findings

When asked spontaneously¹ what they understand by the term “human trafficking”, respondents were most likely to say ‘transporting/recruiting people for purposes of prostitution / sexual exploitation’ (40%). The second most common mention was of ‘(modern) slavery’ (37%), which was mentioned by a significantly higher proportion of males than females (42% vs. 32% respectively). 27% mentioned ‘transporting/recruiting for purposes of forced labour’, with 29% citing ‘transporting/recruiting for other improper purposes’.

Overall, one in ten were unable to say what human trafficking is, with significantly higher levels recorded among females (13% vs. 6% males), 16-24s and 65+ (18% and 13% respectively vs. 5% of 45-64s), those in the DE social grades (16%) and 24% among those in ethnic minority groups (vs. 9% among white respondents)².

Respondents were then asked the extent to which they believe human trafficking is an issue in a number of places, and the results indicate that it is seen as less of an issue closer to home. Three fifths (63%) feel that human trafficking is an issue to ‘a great extent’ in the rest of the world (i.e. not in Europe). This declines to 53% in relation to Europe and 30% in relation to the UK. When considering Scotland, however, 14% believe human trafficking is an issue to ‘a great extent’, falling to 5% when respondents are asked about their local area.

Those in the ‘West’ of Scotland are significantly more likely to think that human trafficking is an issue ‘to a great extent’ in Scotland (22% vs. 9% in East/South and 8% in North) and in their local area (8% vs. 3% in North and East/South)

Respondents were asked a series of questions to understand which industries and activities in Scotland they thought might involve human trafficking. Firstly, when asked to consider which industries and activities might involve **adults** who are victims of trafficking, the top three activities mentioned **spontaneously**³ were:

- Sex industry / prostitution (70%)
- Drugs (40%)

¹ Respondents answered spontaneously, but responses coded to an answer list available to interviewers

² NB: Ethnic minority sample size of 42, so caution should be taken when interpreting results.

³ Respondents answered spontaneously, but responses coded to an answer list available to interviewers

- Manual labour (33%)

Respondents were then prompted with a list of possible industries and asked which they thought applied to adults who are victims of trafficking. Taking **both spontaneous and prompted** responses into account, the top five activities mentioned were:

- Sex industry / prostitution (84%)
- Drugs (69%)
- Manual labour (57%)
- Begging (54%)
- Benefit fraud (47%) / Working in private houses (47%)

The same questions were asked about **children** who are victims of trafficking, and the top three **spontaneous** answers respondents gave were:

- Child sexual exploitation/sex industry (59%)
- Drugs (24%)
- Begging (22%) / Manual labour (22%)

After being prompted with the same list, taking **both spontaneous and prompted** responses into account, the top five activities mentioned in relation to children were:

- Child sexual exploitation/sex industry (76%)
- Begging (53%)
- Drugs (47%)
- Manual labour (39%)
- Benefit fraud (37%) / Working in private houses (37%)

Broadly speaking, the pattern of responses to awareness of activities and industries involved in human trafficking was similar across demographic groups. Of note, however, is that those in the AB social grades tended to be significantly more likely than those in the lower social grades to cite a number of industries where adults can be victims of trafficking. In relation to children this group still appear to be more informed, but not always as significantly so.

When asked what they would do if they suspected someone had been trafficked / exploited, 80% of respondents said they would report it to the Police. At least seven in 10 across all sub-groups said they would contact the Police. 16% said they would tell friends/family, 15% would find out more information and 14% would stop using/visiting the service where the exploitation is taking place. 1% said they would do nothing.