

1. Child trafficking

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What's the difference between child trafficking and child smuggling?

Child trafficking is a crime against a person, and child smuggling is a crime against the state. Human trafficking victims are tricked, forced, threatened or otherwise coerced into moving to a situation in which they are then exploited for labour, sexual acts, domestic services, identity abuse, removal of organs or other criminal acts. This movement can be between countries or within their own country. People smuggling is a business transaction between a person wishing to enter a country illegally and their facilitator. Once the service has been rendered, the transaction is complete. People smuggling always involves illegal border crossing and entry into another country.

In practice, especially when dealing with vulnerable children who have been moved from their country of origin, it is best to understand smuggling and trafficking as a spectrum. A child may begin their journey thinking they are being smuggled but end up being exploited. It is therefore important to assess each case carefully, and identify the protective and risk factors in each child's life to ensure they are adequately protected.

Definition of child trafficking

The Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (also known as the Palermo Protocol) is the internationally accepted definition of human trafficking. It was ratified by the UK on 6 February 2006.

Article 3 of the Palermo Protocol (2000) defines trafficking as follows:

- (a) "Trafficking of 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;
- (b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used;
- (c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in persons" even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;
- (d) "Child" shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

This definition is used in government guidance on Safeguarding children who may have been trafficked. Child trafficking is a form of slavery that often involves immigration and criminal offences.

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What do we know about victims of child trafficking?

Research provides some insights into the modes and characteristics of trafficking from different countries of origin, as well as the destinations of children and the situations they find themselves in.

The trafficking of African children tends to be more opportunistic, perpetrated by one or a small number of individuals, compared to the structured and organised criminal networks that traffic Vietnamese and Chinese children. Whereas the latter employ covert techniques such as clandestine entry and circuitous routes with agents avoiding UK border controls, West African traffickers often accompany children at border control having flown directly to the UK with the victim, who has adopted an identity of a family member of the trafficker (CEOP, 2010).

The UK Human Trafficking Centre, in its baseline assessment report, found that the number of potential victims trafficked for cannabis cultivation increased by 130% from 2011 to 2012. Evidence shows that the most prevalent form of child trafficking in the UK is for forced labour in cannabis cultivation and data from the NRM consistently shows that Vietnam is the single largest source country for child victims of trafficking, (Brotherton, 2014).

Research also highlights other communities where trafficking is prevalent. Between September 2007 and the 31 July 2015 the NSPCC Child Trafficking Advice Centre received 1,281 referrals for cases involving foreign national children. Of these, 137 were Romanian nationals. It is acknowledged that, like other ethnic minorities across world, children from the Roma ethnic minority have specific vulnerabilities, may face discrimination and abusive adults may use 'culture' to justify abuse (Hurley, John-Baptiste and Pande, 2015).

Link: <https://www.communitycare.co.uk/2018/08/01/definition-child-trafficking/>

2. Sexual harassment in education

The House of Commons Library has published a briefing paper on sexual harassment in education. The briefing gives an overview of the relevant policies that schools are expected to have in place and recent policy developments in England. It covers: Keeping children safe in education guidance; advice for schools on sexual violence and harassment; behaviour and bullying policies and relationships and sex education and PHSE. Links to key relevant information for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are included.

Link: <http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-8117>