# Trafficking in Persons in the UK: Women's Identities-Stigma and Struggles

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*"By breaking down the stigma and by empowering
trafficked women to step forward and speak of their experiences,
global efforts to counter human trafficking,
particularly of women and girls for sexual exploitation,
will be much more successful.
But this can only be done by tackling ignorance
and prejudice among the public at large
as to why women fall prey to traffickers."*

*- Ndioro Ndiaye,
Former Deputy Director International Organization for Migration.*

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To my family, I would like to thank them everything: for always believing in me, for always encouraging me to be the best person I can be, and most of all, for encouraging me to not be afraid of pursuing new goals and challenges. Because distance can't really separate us, I would like to thank them, because I wouldn't be here without their support and love.

## ABSTRACT

This dissertation is about trafficked women's identities, stigmas and struggles in the United Kingdom. Trafficking in persons is a clear violation of human rights. It threatens rights such as: liberty, equality, decent work, personal safety, self-determination, and so forth. Human trafficking has as its purpose the exploitation of women, children and men throughout sexual exploitation, forced labour, and other slavery-like practices. Furthermore, the profit achieved from this illegal practice is such, that it is placed third after the trafficking of drugs and trafficking of weapons.

Regarding women who are victims or alleged victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, it is relevant to analyse and contextualise their situation and therefore have a core vision of this social problem that although it is close to our reality, is still unknown by society, which consequently leaves victims voiceless. This may lead to situations where women who have been trafficked don't receive the necessary guarantees that would protect them from vulnerable situations. Hence, women may remain marginalised and oppressed by gender roles, sexual labour division, stigma and labels ascribed to them, among others. The aims of this dissertation is to have an insight of the current situation women who have been trafficked are facing after arriving to the UK. By undertaking interviews with anti-trafficking practitioners, it is hoped that this research could provide useful information about the struggles trafficked women face when they come to the UK, the support they receive, and how those experiences shape their realities.

This study engages semi structured interviews, report analysis and a feminist theoretical approach of analysis. All the research has been developed under a feminist perspective and a qualitative approach. The former, given that feminism have had an active role in the international agenda and policy making of anti-trafficking laws. And the later, given that a feminist qualitative approach allows us to comprehend different knowledges, such as women's experiences as part of the scientific method, which has been relegated throughout history under the patriarchal umbrella.

# RESUMEN

Esta tesis trata sobre las identidades, estigmas y dificultades que viven las mujeres que han sido tratadas en el Reino Unido. La trata de personas es una clara violación a los derechos humanos. Debido a que atenta contra derechos como: la libertad, la igualdad, a un trabajo justo, a la autodeterminación, entre otros; la trata de personas tiene como propósito la explotación sexual y laboral de mujeres, hombres, niños y niñas, a través de la mendicidad, el trabajo forzado, la venta de sexo forzado, y otras prácticas análogas a la esclavitud. Asimismo, las ganancias derivadas de este comercio ilegal son de tal magnitud que lo ubican en un tercer lugar después del tráfico de drogas y armas.

Con respecto a las mujeres víctimas o presuntas víctimas de trata con fines de explotación sexual, es importante analizar y contextualizar su situación con el fin de tener una visión holística sobre este problema social, que aunque cercano a nuestra realidad, sigue siendo desconocido por la sociedad, dejando como consecuencia sin voz a las víctimas. Esto puede dar lugar a situaciones donde las mujeres que han sido tratadas no reciban las garantías necesarias que las protejan de situaciones vulnerables. Por lo tanto, las mujeres pueden permanecer marginadas y oprimidas por los roles de género, la división sexual del trabajo, el estigma y las diferentes etiquetas que se les atribuye, entre otros. Esta tesis tiene como objetivo tener una mejor perspectiva de la situación actual que viven las mujeres que han sido tratadas en el Reino Unido. A través de entrevistas a los profesionales de lucha contra la trata, se espera que esta investigación pueda proporcionar información útil sobre las luchas que enfrentan las mujeres objeto de trata cuando vienen al Reino Unido, el apoyo que reciben, lo que el sistema tiene para ofrecer, y cómo estas experiencias da forma a sus realidades.

Este estudio involucra entrevistas semiestructuradas, análisis de informes y una aproximación feminista de análisis. La investigación se ha desarrollado bajo una perspectiva feminista y un enfoque cualitativo. Lo primero, dado que el feminismo ha tenido un papel activo en la agenda política y decisiones a nivel internacional de las leyes contra la trata. Y lo último, dado que un enfoque cualitativo feminista nos permite comprender diferentes conocimientos, tales como las experiencias de las mujeres como parte del método científico, el cual ha sido relegado a lo largo de la historia bajo la hegemonía patriarcal.

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# INTRODUCTION

*"You may choose to look the other way but you can never say again that you did not know"*
*- William Wilberforce, 1789.*

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Following article four of the Declaration, *"no one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms"*. Trafficking in human beings is a violation of human rights. It takes different forms including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, domestic servitude, among others, which must be taken into account in order to make all victims visible. In essence, trafficking is the control of one person's will to another. It is a form of compelled service in form of deceit, fraud, coercion or force, which normally includes the removal of passport or other forms of identification. Most of the time it involves physical and psychological abuse. It may include as well, hard or denigrating work for little or no pay due to the economic profit the traffickers obtain from the victims. It is not necessary for a person to be trafficked to have entered the country illegally; in fact, there may be cases where they have done so knowingly. Furthermore, trafficking may also occur internally within the borders of a country.

From a literature review[1] there are several reasons why this phenomenon exists. Among them, the feminization of poverty, the socio-economic structures, internal war or conflicts, inequalities, and so forth within countries of origin has resulted in the feminization of migration. Thus, the social, economic and political difficulties encountered by people and especially women in their countries of origin along with the strong immigration barriers

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[1] Several studies and reports conducted annually by various entities such as UNODC, U.S Anti-Trafficking States Report, ATMG, and Women's Link, among others explain the multiple causes of trafficking.

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imposed from recipient countries, enables the emergence of criminal networks that 'help' women to migrate legal or illegally taking advantage of their needs and vulnerabilities. This type of needs and situations of vulnerability, makes women more likely to be grasped by traffic networks, and suffer various types of exploitation. Due to the constant state of risk, victims of trafficking are stripped in many ways of their dignity by traffickers; by being forced to exercise demeaning work against their will, violating their rights consecutively.

Gender relations and in particular the disparities in power between women and men are an important contextual factor. Within the overall phenomenon of global migration, the process of human trafficking is dominated by trafficking of women and children by men (UNODC, 2010). Albeit there are some instances of women being used as recruiters, they are usually at the bottom of the chain. Demand fuels both domestic and international trafficking (APROSERS, 2013). One of the main causes of this demand has to do with gender inequality which creates and reinforces the belief that women are objects that can be bought and sold perpetuating their situation in time. In this sense;

> "Women are used commodities subjected to abuses, fragmented in their bodies, whether they agree or not, as they objectively suffer an impact on the health and well-being that affects all exploited women [...] they suffer from society's violence defamation, stigmatisation and criminalisation. While trapped in a life of abuse and exploitation" (Javate de Dios, 2006).

Given the different circumstances and forms trafficking may take, it is important to take into account that not all sex work is involuntarily, and not all migrant sex workers are trafficked women. We cannot universalise women's experiences, particular situations and contexts since that would make invisible women's voices. However, what most of these women have in common is the way they may be subjected to stigma by society and the struggles they may face during and after their trafficking process.

The UK discourse in trafficking is followed and demarcated in accordance to the three P's[2] of its trafficking policy – Prevention and Protection of victims and the consequently Prosecution of traffickers -. This discourse, however, negates the importance of agency because it constructs trafficked persons as being in a state of victimhood. In the case of women who have been trafficked and the imaginary of them as 'ideal' victims, this tends to reify them as passive and helpless victims.

**Purpose of the research**

Trafficking is a highly sensitive area of study and women who have been trafficked will often respond to their experience through their particular cultural lenses, which is why is very important to take into account their individual contexts, realities and the way they perceive themselves. I learned that after having the opportunity to do my internship in a foundation[3] that works with trafficked women and women at risk or in vulnerable situations while doing my first master[4] in Spain. After the internship I decided I wanted to research further on these women's stories, their experiences after, during and before their trafficking process. During this placement, my work was sustained in a feminist ethic of care and affect, which helped me consider women's reactions, situations and predisposition to work by my side and be their own story-tellers.

Over the past several years trafficking started being in the spotlight of the international agenda and anti-trafficking organisations in order to combat this crime, settled a human trafficking universal definition, and developed a plan of action that would protect the victims

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[2] The three P's trafficking policy paradigm works as the fundamental framework used by States around the world to combat human trafficking. It was developed in the United Nations Palermo Protocol.
[3] Solidaridad Amaranta Foundation, aims to promote personal integration and social inclusion for women and girls involved in prostitution or that have been victims of trafficking in Granada, Spain. For more information about the foundation see: http://www.fundacionamaranta.org/
[4] Master in Migration Studies, Development and Social Intervention at the Universidad de Granada.

and prosecute the offenders. Yet, while Conventions, Protocols and Treaties have been accomplished and more states are committed with the implementation of anti-trafficking policies, trafficked victims are still left aside, their voices still unheard.

At the beginning of the research and in order to have a better insight of these women's current situation, the aim was to carry out semi-structured interviews not only with the anti-trafficking practitioners but with the women as well, focusing more on the way women perceived themselves. However, after contacting several organisations such as: Kalayaan, Unseen, Ashiana, Palm Cove Society, the Poppy Project, Anti-Trafficking International, City Hearts, the Salvation Army, among others, it was impossible to follow that plan of action due to several limitations. On the one hand, from all the letters send to the organisations, three responded back claiming they were interested but didn't have the staff or the time to help me with the research, while at the same time encouraging me with the investigation. From the remaining organisations only two others – Salvation Army and City Hearts – were willing and interested in participating on the study. On the other hand, due to the difficulties to contact the organisations it was impossible to reach the women given they were in their recovery period. Therefore, after consideration I had to reformulate my research and focus more on the needs, stigma and struggles these women have from the reports analysis and interviews held with the practitioners.

It is hoped that this research could provide useful information about the struggles trafficked women face when they come to the UK, and how those experiences shape their realities. It is also hoped that this research may help to raise awareness of the lack of women voices in trafficking research and the consequences of naturalising trafficked women in a state of victimhood.

Throughout this dissertation the use of the term 'trafficked women' or 'women who have been trafficked' will be used considerably more than the term 'victims' – depending of the context -, following Wijers (2015) idea, that the latter term tends to reduce the identity of women to that of a passive victim rather than recognising them as persons with agency, decision-making abilities and rights.

**Research outline**

The research is developed in six parts: introduction, methodology, three chapters and the conclusions. The introduction and methodology, aims to explain the purpose of this study and the way it has been conducted. The first chapter, will focus in the European and United Kingdom settings; where the trafficking protocol takes into account a 'new' international problem, establishes for the first time a definition of trafficking in international law and consolidates a series of measures for international co-operation to tackle this problem. In the same way, this chapter will analyse the UK achievements and limitations in its anti-trafficking policy.

The second chapter will give a theoretical approach to the Identity and Labelling Theory, how it is linked with trafficking in persons, and how feminists have approach this phenomenon. The third chapter will analyse the research findings and the current situation trafficked women are facing in the UK. Followed by the conclusions and general recommendations about what can be done from here to improve women's situation.

# METHODOLOGY

*"We cannot rely on the silenced to tell us they are suffering"*
*- Hanan Ashrawi.*

This study engages semi-structured interviews, reports analysis, an extensive literature review, data analysis, and a feminist theoretical approach of analysis; it relies as well upon a qualitative and quantitative method in order to provide a holistic perspective on this phenomenon.

At the beginning of this research the original plan was to interview both trafficked women and service providers to have a holistic perspective on women identities and struggles. The idea was to undertake at least four interviews with the women and five with the anti-trafficking practitioners. However, it wasn't possible to undertake the interviews with the women because they were in their recovery period; in the same way, it wasn't possible to undertake more interviews with the service providers, given the lack of time and staff (in some occasions) they had. Therefore, I had to reformulate the research and focus more on the point of view of the practitioners –on what they thought were women greatest needs and struggles- and the reports analysis, instead of the women stories and perceptions.

Under a feminist ethic-based logic, the semi-structured interviews were intended to be conducted in a way that the interviewee could begin answering less sensitive questions, moving forward to more complex issues. With these interviews it was intended to have a closer idea of these women experiences, needs and struggles from the point of view of the practitioners taking into account the diversities and peculiarities of trafficked women as a heterogeneous group. In order to conduct the interviews, my Ethical Form and interview schedule were approved. In the same way, an information sheet, topic guide and consent form

were provided in every interview[5]. Throughout the research there were some difficulties and limitations conducting the interviews, given the special needs and prioritising women's safety it wasn't possible to interview the women itself. Therefore, at the end I was able to conduct only two interviews: one to the Research and Development Manager for the Anti-Trafficking and Modern Slavery Unit from Salvation Army in London; the second interview, was to the Women's Anti-Trafficking Manager from City Hearts in Sheffield.

In researching into trafficking in persons and the interview process, feminist research outlines "the importance of establishing non-hierarchal relationships with interviewees" (Oakley, 1981: 44) given that researcher and researched should share some commonalities, which in this case are the women who have been trafficked into the UK, the stigma and struggles-needs they have. Further, the decision to approach this study from a feminist perspective is dictated by the study topic itself.

The importance to research under a gender and feminist approach with a qualitative method of analysis comes from the gender-power relations involved in the representation of otherness and the production of scientific knowledge. Therefore, feminist methodology as a set of theoretical and epistemological principles allows me to guide how I understand the research, as a form to approach social reality. According to Ramazanoglu et al. (2002: 2) any researcher trying to understand gender-power relations and grasp their impact on people's lives has to consider "how (or whether) social reality can be understood; why conceptions of sexuality and gender have some meanings rather than other; how people make sense of their experiences; and how power inhabits knowledge production". Nonetheless, the central challenge for methodology lies in how to remain accountable on one side, to women's

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[5] The documents can be found in the Annexes.

interpretations and representations of identity-stigma and struggles within a trafficking experience, and on the other, on the interpretations and representations society may have upon them as victims of trafficking or illegal immigrants.

**Considering trafficking in persons from a feminist approach**

Over the years qualitative approaches have been recognised as a feminist approach to research knowledge. Part of feminist methodology consists of 'including us' in our research, and from our own process include our constraints. In this approach, it is also valid to include emotions and feelings, make visible power relations, expose those power relations between men and women, rescue the lived experiences of women, and depoliticize[6] that knowledge comes from the academy. In fact, feminists such as Haraway (1988) (1991) and Harding (1986) (1991) propose the concept of *situated knowledge* as a knowledge specific to particular situations and context, which subverts the idea of truth given that "offers a more adequate, richer, better account of a world, in order to live in it well and in critical, reflexive relation to our own as well as others' practices of domination and the unequal parts of privilege and oppression that makes up all positions" (Haraway, 1991: 187).

Ramazanoglu et al. (2002: 2) assert that "it is easy to class feminist knowledge as unscientific, biased and lacking in authority. But the problems raised by feminist methodology are not peculiar to feminism: they are also problems for social research more generally". In the same line of thought, for Gregorio Gil (2006) feminist research is guided by: in the first place, the visibilization of power relations and in the second place, the support to oppressed groups. As a result of disparities in power between women and men, and consequently women's secondary status in patriarchal societies, the sensibilities involved in doing feminist research

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[6] Consists of emptying a concept of its content – in this case political categories. Is a way of naming realities so as to avoid science androcentrism while at the same time displaying those gender-power relations.

(Oakley, 1981; Watts, 2006; Fonow & Cook, 1986) this study will privilege women's experiences and needs from the anti-trafficking professionals interviews and the reports analysis.

It is important to apply a feminist approach as women's lives have not been recognised, recorded nor documented for centuries in opposition to that of men. Authors such as Beauvoir (1949), Cixous (1975), and Nielsen (1990) argue that women's lives and role in history have remained invisible due to binary structures of power. Thus, in the late 1960's and early 1970's feminists try to break the binary logic questioning the androcentric interpretation of the world that has been established from a universal male point of view. They also question notions and categories that have been produced throughout history by a male subject, and that have emerged as a universal category. In the same way, feminists propose to revalue concepts and categories normally associated as female, hence considered as inferior. Feminist researchers often apply their findings in the service of promoting social change and social justice for women and other oppressed groups.

One of the reasons for using a feminist perspective as a research guide has to do with the active role the feminist movement had in the international agenda and policy making of trafficking in the United Nation's negotiations over the trafficking protocol, despite divisions within feminism regarding the differentiation between prostitution / trafficking and sex work/ forced migrations. This is in part because women in recent decades have started being part of contemporary discourse, which has been possible thanks to the feminist agenda exposing women's issues such as: transnational families, the increase of female migrations for domestic labour, the feminization of poverty, among others (Oso Casas, 2008; Aradau, 2004; Kabeer, 2007).

This research focuses principally on women instead of men. Although it recognizes that men also suffer from this type of crime, women's possibilities to be subjugated are higher due to gender inequalities. In this way, the relation between prostitution/sex work/trafficking is linked with women's oppression/submission in society. Finally, a feminist qualitative approach allows us to comprehend different knowledge as women's experiences as part of the scientific method, which has always been relegated under the patriarchal umbrella.

**Considering trafficking in persons from a Gender Perspective**

Within the interpretive framework of trafficking in persons, it is necessary to analyse this phenomenon from a gender perspective and women's rights, since women and girls are the vast majority of the victims of this crime. Therefore, we cannot analyse the phenomenon of sexual exploitation without making reference to patriarchy as a system of power that prioritizes the masculine over the feminine. It is important to analyse trafficking from a gender perspective, given that it brings us closer to the heart of the problem. As manifested by Lamas (2003), gender is a cultural confirmation of sexual differentiation that symbolizes what is 'proper' for men and women. As historically constructed, it changes over time imposing what is considered appropriate for each sex while the biological difference remains the same, which ultimately creates the hierarchies that discriminate against human beings. Historically, the conceptualisation of women as a 'complement' of men has blurred its recognition as subjects of rights and interests, hindering their access to various public spheres of society, thereby resulting in exclusion, given that sexual differentiation operates as a physical structure and symbolic reference.

A gender perspective, on the one hand helps us to understand and analyse more clearly the way in which certain social phenomenon – such as sexual exploitation in this case -, affect

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men and women differently. This can be evidenced in power relations and gender inequalities, where women are at a disadvantage compared with men, reifying traditional gender roles in time[7]. In the same vein, it allows us to delve into the socialization and the construction of differences to consider what is the degree of reproduction of traditional gender roles of women and men. On the other hand, trafficking through this perspective reflects a discrimination especially towards migrant women both by trafficking networks and by recipient countries, due to barriers deeply rooted in stereotypes that represent women as the 'other' where they are seen as prostitutes, as procreative sources, as victims, and as illegal migrants (Gregorio Gil, 2009). Such entrenched discrimination facilitates the violation of their rights, exposing them to gender violence and exploitation.

It is clear then that feminist research is a complex process that intersect theory, epistemology and methods (Hesse-Biber, 2007). By exposing gender-biased stereotypes and documenting women's lives, their experiences and concerns, feminist research challenges the basic structure and ideologies that oppress women and other marginalized groups.

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[7] Various Conventions, Conferences and Treaties such as the CEDAW –Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women-, The Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals, have been developed in order to reduce inequalities and increase gender equality between men and women. In fact the CEDAW (1979) states: *"the term "discrimination against women" shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field"*.

# CHAPTER 1. TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS: THE EUROPEAN AND UK SETTING

*"In this great land of the free we call it human trafficking. And so long as we don't partake in the luxury, ignoring slavery is of no consequence. It is much easier to look away and ignore the victims. The person who ignores slavery justifies it by quickly deducing the victim is a willing participant hampered by misfortune."*

— *D'Andre Lampkin (n,d).*

Trafficking in human beings is a violation of human rights given that it undermines a person's right of freedom, equality, personal safety, dignity, and so on. It has the purpose of exploitation including labour or sexual exploitation, forced labour and marriage, domestic servitude, begging, cannabis farming and other similar practices on women, children, and men. A report held by the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNDOC), *'The globalization of crime: a transnational organized crime threat assessment'* (2010), states that, due to the high profit of this illegal trade, it is ranked third after the illegal trafficking of drugs and trafficking of firearms[8]. Further, these profits may be used to fund organized crime activities.

It differentiates from *smuggling of migrants* given that according to the definition provided by the UNDOC, in the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Article 3), migrant smuggling is the "procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident".

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[8] See Annex A.

Trafficking in persons is a global phenomenon although it is not a recent one. It has gained visibility over the past few years as a result in the increase of migration flows, globalisation and modern technology. In fact, according to the International Labour Office (2004), in Europe the trafficking of human beings became a major source of concern in the 1990s, when a high number of reports stated that women from Central and Eastern Europe were being trafficked for sexual exploitation, which made this situation impossible to ignore. Given that it affects all countries, considered whether countries of transit, origin, or destination, the challenge for these countries is to not only fight against this kind of crime targeting trafficking networks, but also to assist and protect the victims, as stated by the Palermo Protocols.

This phenomenon directly affects the most deprived sectors in society. It is fuelled by social injustice, poverty, the migratory flows and their restrictions, war, lack of education programmes, and other types of socioeconomic and socio-political vulnerable contexts. Traffickers in persons see human exploitation as another way of economic profit. As an economy of illegal nature there are no exact figures on the number of victims given that reliable data is hard to obtain, due to, on the one hand, that victims are not properly identified by the competent authorities on the subject, and on the other, the lack of complaints by the victims – which has to do with their irregular migrant situation, fear, and multiple forms of coercion. Nonetheless, the International Labour Office (ILO) estimated in 2015 that almost 21 million women, men and children in the world are in a form of slavery. The UNODC *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* (2014), declared that the most common form of trafficking is 79 per cent for sexual exploitation – where the victims are predominantly women and girls - followed by forced labour with 18 per cent. It is also important to highlight that worldwide, almost 20 per cent of the victims are children. Furthermore, similar statistics

are presented in the *Trafficking in Persons Report* from the U.S. Department of State (2015), estimating more than 20 million victims of trafficking, from which, over 44,000 survivors were identified in the past year.

However, there are those who are critical of these statistics (Brennan, 2014; Weitzer, 2015) given that they are considered to be politicized, incongruent, or lacking of a solid methodology. Although, it is clear that trafficking has increased over the years in some parts of the world, there is no methodology available to know the magnitude of the trafficking problem. For Weitzer (2015: 456) there is an "incongruity between the estimated number of victims trafficked and the number of victims found, which can mean that state efforts are still not enough". That is, because of the underground nature of this illegal economy, is highly difficult to estimate the extent and changes over time, which makes it more difficult to confirm the growing of this problem. This leaves several organisations –for example the UNODC or ILO- to rely on the official data reported by the national authorities, which only represent the number of victims they have detected.

As stated above, women and children are the groups most frequently reported as trafficked persons because of the risk they constantly live. One of the causes of these alarming estimations is due to human rights violations based on gender, as gender violence and other forms of discrimination against women – unequal wages and unequal allocation of work on grounds of sex, among other -, create situations that increases their vulnerability and promote the success of trafficking networks. In the same way, Ollus (2004: 16) estates that;

> "Trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual exploitation is also directly linked to the increasing proportion of women among the world's poor and to women's disadvantaged social, economic and legal situation in many countries […] Trafficking does not only exist due to an increase in supply of potential persons to be trafficked. The global demand for cheap

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and undeclared labour as well as the demand for women and children in the globalised sex market together with large numbers of potential immigrants form a lucrative ground for traffickers to engage in this crime".

This study focuses specifically on women who have been victims or who are at risk of suffering the scourge of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, and other types of exploitation since the population most affected by this type of exploitation are overwhelmingly mostly women.

Trafficking is a complex problem that can be approached from different perspectives in order to create strategies that help on the one hand, repress and combat this type of crime, and on the other hand, to deliver assistance to the victims. These approaches according to Ollus (2004) can be categorised into the following five problems: the first one, *migration problem*, focus trafficking in persons as highly linked with migration. Most of the time people that are trafficked wish to migrate in order to have better opportunities, which leave them in a vulnerable position as they might be more subtle to accept 'job offers abroad' or promises of a 'better life' without knowing they are going to be exploited in the country of destination. Measures to prevent migration includes monitoring the movement of persons by increasing border control, and by increasing travel control documentation. One of the problems of this approach, is that, by focusing trafficking as a form of migration, there is the risk of leaving the victims aside by focusing mostly on protecting the state and its borders from undesired non-nationals. In fact, Geddes (2005: 324), argues how "distinct social and political contention associated with migration and the presence of immigrants in the UK plays a large part in structuring responses to ostensibly 'new' migration challenges such as people smuggling and human trafficking […] This repertoire includes the impact of state policies on

the creation of 'unwanted' migration flows; fears of floods and invasions by 'unwanted' migrants; concerns that the state is losing control of migration" and so forth.

In fact, in recent years, routes for legal migration to the UK, particularly from outside Europe, have been drastically curtailed – which logically, if legal channels are reduced, this acts as an impetus for illegal channels to prosper – as desperate people who no longer have a legal route instead see themselves turning to traffickers.

The *criminal problem* approach sees human trafficking from a legal point of view, that is, it takes trafficking in persons as a crime. This approach aims to enhance effective ways of investigation, prosecution and punishment of human trafficking, as well as intensifying co-operation within public entities in order to facilitate prosecution of international trafficking organisations. Although this approach seeks to find and improve better ways to convict this kind of crime, the problem lies on how the victims of trafficking may be considered. In some instances as Ollus (2004) claims, "the victims' security and protection is placed in a subordinate position to the interests of prosecution and trial" or in the same way, the victim can be proven guilty of offenses, which leaves the person in a vulnerable position given that it can be considered a victim, an illegal immigrant, a potential witness, and an offender at the same time. Similarly, on the majority of the cases the individual has to cooperate in the prosecution of the crime in order to receive help, which also leave them with very few options to improve their situation.

In the third approach, *human rights problem*, trafficking in persons is considered a violation of human rights. In this approach, every action taken to combat and prevent the crime, and protect, support and assist the victims is guided by basic human rights principles. However there are different viewpoints on how this approach should be assessed: some advocates, for

instance, see human trafficking for sexual exploitation as highly linked to prostitution (see Barry, 1995 & Jeffreys, 1997); other advocates, don't take into account prostitution and only focus on the violating aspects of trafficking (see the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women, the GAATW). All the different approaches, however, share the same view of trafficking as a serious violation of human rights, where the rights of the victims should be guaranteed and considered a priority. Furthermore, this perspective stresses that trafficked persons should not be considered as migration criminals as they perceive trafficking as a form of exploited migration, beyond the victim's own agency.

Regarding *health problem*, this approach focuses on the impact trafficking in persons may have as a contributor of the spreading of diseases, especially when trafficking has been for the purpose of sexual exploitation and sexual infections can be transmitted more easily. In this perspective as Ollus (2004) indicates "the focus is on the trafficked persons as transmitters of disease and as a threat to the health of the rest of the population […] Preventive measures include awareness raising about sexually transmitted diseases. In some instances, it also includes health control of women in prostitution". One of the critics to this approach is that it doesn't take into consideration the health risks, consequences, and barriers to services for trafficked women, which are similar to those experienced by other marginalised groups.

The last approach, the *labour issue problem*, sees trafficking in persons as a result of foreign migrants' poor status (Ollus, 2004). This instance proposes to guarantee worker's rights for migrants as a way of preventing trafficking in persons both at home and destination countries, in this sense, by protecting the working conditions people would have more opportunities of traveling as a legitimate migrant worker instead of illegal, and in the same way, by having their rights protected in their home countries they wouldn't feel the necessity to migrate.

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However, one of the critics towards this approach, is that, focusing only in the working conditions wouldn't solve the problem itself but rather oversimplify it.

Although these approaches may be considered too broad to be categorised, it give us a grasp of how they can be used as strategies to repress human trafficking and provide support to the victims. It also brings into consideration the possibility of states and non-governmental organisations to combine different approaches, efforts, and strategies in order not only to combat this phenomenon but also to guarantee victims' rights, due to the fact that in some cases the status of illegal immigrant is considered of more relevance than their status as victims. In fact, the majority of countries focus their efforts on protecting their sovereignty and combating the trafficking network, leaving aside the protection of the victims. According to Ollus (2004), "in some instances, their interests are opposed. Non-governmental organisations tend to highlight victims' rights, while States are more interested in combating organised crime and protecting State sovereignty, be it sometimes at the expense of individual victims".

**1.1.Policy Framework**

**1.1.1. The European setting:**

Trafficking in persons has been on the agenda of States and international organizations in order to create global strategies - Treaties, Conventions, and General Recommendations - to help diminish the impact and significance of this phenomenon worldwide.

As mentioned above and in a brief historical review, from the relation of human trafficking with the growing illegal immigration and people smuggling to Western Europe, North America and other countries considered as 'developed', governments became interested in

fighting trafficking. In this sense, the policies started taking into consideration the issue of trafficking, emphasizing the control of migration flows and the fight against organised criminal networks. Over time, these policies have been incorporating a gender perspective, a human right point of view, as well as the care and recovery of the victims. Notable among them are:

- 1910: International Convention for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic, League of Nations.

- 1949: Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others.

- 1979: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

- 1995: Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing.

- 2000: United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, including the 2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. (UN Women, 2012)

The last one, more known as the Palermo Protocols, has become the worldwide reference and an international instrument to combat this type of crime and provide protection to the victims. These are a series of three protocols that were adopted by the United Nations (UN) to enhance the 2000 Convention against Transnational Organized Crime or the Palermo Convention. Which are:

- The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.

- The Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air.

- The Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition.

These protocols and convention fall within the jurisdiction of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Ratified by the European Commission and the United Kingdom (UK), the protocol give a universal definition for human trafficking and provides fundamental aspects for international regulation. In this instance the article 3 of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, states that:

> "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" (UNODC, 2004: 42).

Within the framework of the European Union exist to the same extent, conventions and protocols linking Member States by a directive of the Council of Europe and to those States which ratify the European Convention against Trafficking in Persons. In this context, one of the most important is: the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, also known as the Warsaw Convention (2005), which came into force on February 2008 and "set measures to protect and promote the rights of victims of trafficking which States are obliged to implement, including standards in relation to: identifying victims, providing assistance, putting in place a recovery and reflection period, residence permits,

compensation and legal redress, and ensuring any return to the home country is safe and dignified" (ECPAT UK, 2015).

Moreover, each protocol and convention has a section in relation on victim protection. The Protocol of Palermo, for instance, in article 25 *assistance to and protection of victims*, proclaims that: each State Party shall take appropriate measures within its means to provide assistance and protection to victims of offences covered by this Convention, in particular in cases of threat of retaliation or intimidation. In the same way, they must establish appropriate procedures to provide access to compensation and restitution for victims of offences. Further, subject to its domestic law, enable views and concerns of victims to be presented and considered at appropriate stages of criminal proceedings against offenders in a manner not prejudicial to the rights of the defence.

For its part, the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, (chapter 3), establishes, in relation to victim protection, a series of provisions designed to: identify the victims, protect their private life, assist the victims in their physical, psychological and social recovery, provide them a recovery and reflection period, facilitate repatriation and return of the victims when it is safe for them, and aim to promote gender equality and use gender mainstreaming in the development, implementation and assessment of the measures.

### 1.1.2. The United Kingdom setting:

The United Kingdom is a source, a transit, and a destination country for women, men, and children for the purposes of sexual exploitation, forced labour, domestic servitude and other forms of modern slavery. According to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) latest statistic (2015) the majority of victims of trafficking identified come from Eastern Europe,

Africa and Asia; where the most common countries of origin for people referred were Albania, Vietnam, Nigeria, Romania and United Kingdom. In recent years the number of victims continues to increase in the UK. Statistics from the NRM estimates that in 2015 there were more than 3,266 referrals, where 53% were females and 46% were males (NCA, 2015). Overall, statistics provided from the Salvation Army show that from the total of clients they supported: the highest number of female clients who entered the service were Albanian, followed by Nigerian women. Whereas, the highest number of male clients who entered the service were from Poland followed by Romania and Slovakia (The Salvation Army, 2015).

The high number of trafficked persons from the countries mention above, may be influenced by several factors. According to Andrew Wileman[9] (2016) of Salvation Army this might be explain in several terms;

> "In terms of the top ten [nationalities coming to the UK], Albanian would be the number one and seven out of the top ten would be from the Eastern European countries and that is interesting because I think that is part of our geography, in terms of where we are as the UK as the destination country for traffickers and for bringing people over. I think is also about partly political in terms of the European Union and being able to have right of access, so somebody can travel right from the borders of Ukraine and Albania right across and not being stopped at all and finally arrive here to the UK".

The UK signed on December 2000 and ratified on February 2006 the Palermo Protocol, it also signed, on March 2007 and ratified on December 2008 the Warsaw Convention, which came into force on April 2009 bounding the State by its provisions.

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[9] Andrew Wileman, is the Research and Development Manager for the Anti Trafficking and Moderns Slavery Unit at Salvation Army.

Regarding the policies, the UK fully complies with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. Over the past few years, in order to meet the obligations of the Convention and Protocols, the country has developed a series of strategies which aim to improve its victim identification mechanism and has increased the penalties that condemn the traffickers. Thus, the Government introduced in 2009 the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking and ensuring they receive the appropriate support; it is also the mechanism through which the United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre (the UKHTC) [10] collect relevant data about the victims and contributes to build a clearer picture about the scope of human trafficking and modern slavery in the UK (NCA, n.d). Moreover, in 2014, the UK issued its first 'modern slavery strategy' with the purpose to improve its victim identification mechanism, and launched a pilot program to reinforce protections for child trafficking victims (Modern Slavery Act, 2015). Subsequently, the government appointed an Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner (IASC) to coordinate anti-trafficking efforts, his first annual report, published in October 2015, asserts that the Government has improved the crime recording to ensure investigations, convictions and justice for victims, has created a modern slavery network for police and crime commissioners, has implemented trafficking survivor care standards and has established a series of priorities in order to enhance the process (IASC, 2015). It also passed the Modern Slavery Act in March 2015.

Although there has been over the years a policy progression towards improved care and rights for trafficked persons, the provisions are still too heavily inclined towards prosecuting

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[10] Which is part of the Organised Crime Command in the National Crime Agency. The UKHTC is a Competent Authority, with legal responsibilities in human trafficking matters.

traffickers, without providing enough support for the victims. In fact, the U.S Department of State declared that:

> "While authorities continued to identify a large number of potential trafficking victims, the victim identification and referral system failed to assist many victims of trafficking, particularly children. Government funding for specialized services remained limited. Some victims were detained and prosecuted for crimes committed as a result of being subjected to trafficking" (U.S Department of State, 2015).

This leaves victims in a particularly vulnerable position given that, they not only have to overcome the brutal experience their traffickers have subjected them to, but also, many have to endure an excruciating post-escape process, which involves persuading the authorities to believe them or, in other cases, finding themselves in detention centres[11] or imprisoned for crimes the traffickers forced them to commit. Whilst this subject will be approached in the following chapters, it is also important here to highlight how these circumstances impact women who have been trafficked, giving that the lack of support and fear for the consequences might make them more reluctant to come forward and assist in the prosecution of their traffickers.

## 1.1.2.1. Trafficked persons and the National Referral Mechanism process:

As mentioned above, the process for helping persons who have been trafficked is the NRM. In order to receive help, the potential victim of trafficking (PVoT) must have an initial referral by a first responder or authorised agency to one of the two Competent Authorities

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[11] There is a policy guidance within the Home Office Staff that people identified as victims of trafficking shall not be detained. Furthermore, the Asylum Policy Instruction on Gender Issues in the Asylum Claim provides: "where it is accepted that an individual is a potential victim of trafficking (PVoT), the individual is allowed a 45 day reflection period to recover and consider their options. The PVoT cannot be detained on immigration grounds or removed during this period but may be interviewed for asylum or humanitarian protection purposes". However, a report conducted by *Women for Refugee Women* in 2014, find that despite that guidance there are in detention many women who have been trafficked.

(CAs). A first responder agency are the following: the National Crime Agency, police forces, UK Border Force, Home Office Immigration and Visas, Local Authorities, Gangmasters Licensing Authority (Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority from June 2016), Health and Social Care Trusts, Salvation Army, Poppy Project, Migrant Help, Medaille Trust, Kalayaan, Barnados, Unseen, TARA Project, NSPCC, Bawso, New Pathways, and the Refugee Council.

The first responder completes and forwards the referral form to one of the CA – which are the UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) and the Home Office Immigration and Visas (UKVI)[12]- in these cases, the PVoT must consent to being referred. Following the implementation of the Modern Slavery Act in 2015, in all UK referrals, the CAs must contemplate if the person is a victim of human trafficking. Once the referral has been made, trained decision makers from the CA will assess the case and decide whether or not a person is being trafficked. There can be two stages during the process:

The *reasonable grounds*: in this stage, the NRM team has five business days after the referral to revise and decide whether or not there are 'reasonable grounds' to consider if the person is a potential victim of trafficking in persons[13]. If the CA approves the referral, the PVoT will be granted a 45 days reflection and recovery period in a safe environment with medical, health, counselling and care help. In the same way, during this period, the PVoT has the opportunity to reflect if they want to return home, co-operate with the authorities, and so on.

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[12] The UKHTC is in charge of the referrals from the police, local authorities, and some NGO's. Whereas the UKVI –former UK Border Agency which closed in 2013- is concerned with referrals identified as part of the immigration process.
[13] In order to carry out the resolution, the decision maker may seek for additional information about the PVoT from any of the first responders.

The *conclusive decision*: in the stage two, before the end of the 45 days reflection and recovery period, the Competent Authority, after having gathered further information and evidence about the PVoT situation, will make a 'conclusive decision' on whether the referred person was a victim of trafficking (VoT), which triggers victim protection. In the case the person is found a victim, the VoT recovery period might be extended, they can be granted a discretionary leave to remain, or they can return home. It depends on the particular circumstances of the VoT. However, the 2015 Trafficking in Persons report from the U.S Department of State, indicated that data on positive conclusive ground decisions was unavailable for 2014. It is also clear that there has been an inner conflict among the Home Office representatives when deciding whether the individual was a victim of trafficking or an illegal immigrant. As indicated below;

> "Experts reported there was an inherent conflict among Home Office officials in deciding whether someone was an illegal immigrant or a trafficking victim. Officials and NGOs noted low awareness of the NRM in parts of the country, observing that many trafficking victims were not referred through the NRM, and some were treated as criminals. Some victims did not see the benefits of referral or were fearful of the consequences of being brought to the attention of authorities due to immigration status or fear of law enforcement" (U.S Department of State).

In the scenario where the referred person is found not to be a VoT by the decision makers, according to their circumstances the person may have the opportunity to ask the CA to review the decision or they may be referred to the relevant police force or the Home Office, as required. Here, the appropriate law enforcement agency will after previous consideration offer support to the individual to voluntary return to their country of origin.

### 1.1.2.2. Limitations and critics to the system:

In response to the Modern Slavery Bill and the way the system works when it comes to prosecute and protect individuals who have been trafficked, experts from organisations such as: Anti-Slavery International, Amnesty International UK, Poppy Project, Focus on Labour Exploitation (FLEX), and other organisations from the Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group (ATMG), have criticised the Modern Slavery Bill, for being exclusively about law enforcement instead of being victim-based. They also have denounced the low awareness and lack of training from the authorities in some parts of the UK, without the knowledge and skills needed to manage VoT, which leads many trafficked victims to be treated as criminals instead of being referred through the NRM. This also happens because of discrimination in the identification process[14], where the status of a person as an illegal immigrant takes precedence over their status as victims of trafficking. Similarly, according to Aidan McQuade, Director of Anti-Slavery International, in an interview with The Guardian complains of,

> "[…] an "inbuilt institutional racism" in the NRM system, with migrants from EU countries much more likely to be confirmed as trafficking victims than those from elsewhere. "You have less than a 20% chance if you're from outside the EU of being positively identified as a victim of trafficking" (The Guardian, 2015).

Further proof of racism in the immigration service per-se – treatment of Asylum Seekers -, can be evidenced in an article for The Guardian where former worker at the Border Agency

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[14] Although the Article 3, Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings implies that: The implementation of the provisions of this Convention y Parties, in particular the enjoyment of measures to protect and promote the rights of victims, shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

Office, Louise Perret, alleged how asylum seekers were being mistreated, tricked and humiliated by the staff working for the UK Border Agency. In fact, Perret claims that;

> "one official boasted to her that he tested the claims of boys from African countries who said they had been forcibly conscripted as child soldiers by making them lie down on the floor and demonstrate how they shot at people in the bush […]interviews were conducted without lawyers, independent witnesses or tape recorders." (Taylor et al, 2010)

In recent years there has come to grow within society a belief that the majority of asylum appeals are false or 'bogus'. This happens to be a result of the culture of disbelief and denial grounded in the media and government anti-asylum seeker discourse, as they make it seem a bigger problem than what it is. Therefore, the suggestion that the UK has been "taking more than its fair share of asylum seekers and indeed that it was in danger of being swamped" (Inequalities, n.d). Following Souter's (2011: 48) idea;

> "the culture of disbelief and denial has arisen from the Home Office's acceptance of the familiar and widespread assumption among politicians and the general public that large numbers of asylum claims are unfounded, mendacious or 'bogus', and are made by 'economic migrants' as a means of improving their standard of living, rather than by 'genuine' refugees as defined by the 1951 Refugee Convention".

They often disbelief asylum seekers claims because of their difficulties to supply documentary evidence of persecution or an accurate chronology of events, without taking into account that many of these people are forced to flee without time or the opportunity to gather proof of their situation and that the traumatic events can significantly hamper their ability to recall the chronology of the events coherently (Souter, 2011).

Many victims are reluctant to admit their situation since they fear the consequences, and because of the stigma attached to having been forced into sex work. Hence, VoT have a high

risk of being doubly victimised, because they are treated as perpetrators of crimes if they are found by the authorities.

Regarding, women who have been trafficked into the UK and the situation they currently face, we can say it differs on whether they are European citizens or non-EU citizens. According to Andrew Wildman from Salvation Army,

> "For non-EU women there is quite a lot of political disturbance going on to make sure they leave the country. The law enforcement agency will rather get people out of the country than keep them in, so from that point of view, many of them are pushed down the asylum route, first of all, so therefore the access that women have to support, services, advice, counselling and health care, etc. sometimes can be difficult for them to reach" (Wileman, 2016).

In the same vein, Klara Skrivankova from Anti-Slavery International on an interview with The Guardian, stated that:

> "Trafficking in human beings is a crime that is committed against a person. That's very different from the issue of immigration. In cases of trafficking the obligation is on the UK to proactively identify victims […]The international obligations the UK has signed up to make it very clear that whoever is established as a potential victim of trafficking should have the same access to protection and assistance. But if you look at the numbers, the likelihood you are going to get access is much lower if you're from Nigeria than, say, Poland." (The Guardian, 2013)

Another weakness of the system reported by anti-trafficking groups has to do with the 45 days reflection and recovery period for the VoT. An investigation by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (2006: 3), recommend to "implement a recovery and reflection period of a minimum of 90 days to ensure women's cognitive functioning has improved to a level at which they are able to make informed and thoughtful decisions about

their safety and well-being, and provide more reliable information about trafficking-related events". Given that once the reflection period is over they do not receive support to move on – which means moving on into the community, finding jobs, education, and economic social programme. In the same instance, Labour MP Fiona Mactaggart in a statement to The Guardian, declared that;

> "[P]ressure to leave the UK after a positive identification as a trafficking victim has stopped people entering the NRM process: "If people are trafficked they usually have 45 days after the [Home Office] decision [to stay in the UK], then they are dropped like a stone. The problem is that someone who has been a victim of trafficking, often for many reasons, cannot return to their country of origin, for example because their traffickers are threatening them and their families". (The Guardian, 2015)

Therefore, not providing the best next step in terms of accessing services and support, might leave them as some NGO's have reported, returning to prostitution or ultimately, being re-trafficking at some future point due to lack of long terms support.

Whilst the UK has undertaken the provisions bounded by the Council of Europe, it would be wise, in order to improve the system and reduce discrimination and disbelief during the identification process, to increase training for local police, prosecutors, and judges, and also to ensure VoT are not prosecuted for the crimes they were forced to commit by their traffickers. In the same way, PVoT should be allowed to access services from care providers before engaging with respective authorities and consider extending the reflection and recovery period. Prove of this are the reports by ATMG about the lack of appropriate reception and investigation by immigration officers leads to trafficking cases not being identified. For instance, the report *Wrong Kind of Victim* (2010), find how some of the Competent Authorities don't understand fundamental issues associated with trafficking –

whether because of disbelief, denial or lack of training –, which puts at risk those referred to a Competent Authority to receive a negative decision and not being recognised as a presumed victim of traffic. As shown in the following quote;

> "Your claim to have been forced to sleep with men against your will, that you were 'extremely unhappy' and 'always crying' is considered to be inconsistent with your claim not to have taken advantage of the ample opportunity you had to seek help from the police on the numerous occasions you left the house and the occasion when you took the time to visit the police station. Your credibility has been damaged as a result and it is not accepted that you were trafficked to the UK or forced to work as a prostitute by traffickers as you claim." (ATGM, 2010: 28).

Other example about the flaws and limitations of the system can be evidenced in the ATMG report *Hidden in Plain Sight* (2013: 21), which found after analysing the quality of NRM decisions several causes of concern "including the Competent Authority's misunderstanding of the trafficking definition: misunderstanding of the effects of trafficking on the victim; focusing on small inconsistencies as grounds to question the credibility of the whole account; rejecting claims on the basis of a lack of corroborative police evidence to support the claim, and rejecting claims on the basis of trafficking being historic and the individual no longer needing the protection of the Convention". Further, a story from a woman from Uganda who was trafficked to the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation, describes how after she escaped and managed to contact the police they didn't belief her story, as she explains;

> "They were asking each other: 'Did she come here legally or illegally?' The way they were talking was very intimidating. They didn't ask about the attack. They were more interested in why I was staying in the country without a visa" (Gentleman, 2014).

### 1.1.2.3. Failure to sentence appropriately the traffickers:

Since the adoption and implementation of the Protocols and the Convention to fight against trafficking in persons over the years, there appears to be specific impediments to implementing laws on preventing and prosecuting exploitation. In fact, some organisations assert that the government lacks the necessary provisions to successfully prevent and prosecute modern slavery offences, and protect the victims of these crimes. One of the causes of the government's failure, has to do with the legislation not always complying with the Protocol. Although, there are some successful trafficking prosecutions, they are usually linked to areas where the police and competent authorities are properly trained and have a deeper understanding of the problem (ATMG, 2013).

Research by ATMG (2013) found a disproportionally low number of convictions for trafficking compared to the increasing number of potential trafficked persons. The reasons for this are multiple, including trafficking not being made a priority in policing plans. Another reason, involves the system of data collection which gives a potentially confusing perspective on how successful the UK is in tackling trafficking. As explained below:

> "Two government departments gather different statistics on trafficking prosecutions and convictions: a) the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) collects data on convictions and prosecution of trafficking where the trafficking offence charged is the principal offence on the indictment; and b) the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) collects data from their case management system where cases involving a trafficking charge are flagged even if the trafficker is found guilty of other offences at trial and not the trafficking charge. The result is a situation, where different statistics are presented by different departments, leading to confusion over the number of perpetrators actually brought to justice for trafficking" (ATMG, 2013: 10).

However, according to the Crown Prosecution Service[15] (CPS), "the number of defendants being taken to court for trafficking offences is higher than ever before. 183 people were taken to court for trafficking offences between April 2015 and December 2015 while 187 people were taken to court for trafficking offences for the whole of 2014-15" (CPS, 2016).

Furthermore, the system still fails to protect victims of trafficking from being prosecuted for crimes which they have been forced to commit because of their illegal servitude even when the convention stipulates otherwise. In this sense, there should be more join efforts in order to ensure that all VoT can access adequate protection. For that matter, the Modern Slavery Act explicitly states that victims should no longer be prosecuted – yet, only time will tell if judges and magistrates will follow that edict.

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[15] The CPS is the principal public prosecuting entity for conducting criminal prosecutions in England and Wales.

# CHAPTER 2. IDENTITY AND LABELLING THEORY: A THEORETICAL APPROACH TO TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

*"By breaking down the stigma and by empowering trafficked women to step forward and speak of their experiences, global efforts to counter human trafficking, particularly of women and girls for sexual exploitation, will be much more successful. But this can only be done by tackling ignorance and prejudice among the public at large as to why women fall prey to traffickers."*
*- Ndioro Ndiaye,*
*Former Deputy Director IOM.*

As it is known, trafficking in persons, especially in women is a severe form of violence against women and a violation of human rights. Women who face trafficking suffer countless acts of abuse, violence, exploitation and degradation affecting their well-being. The experiences they endure throughout their trafficking situation and after it shapes their realities as well as their identities. Yet, despite the fact that this phenomenon over the past few years has been gaining visibility and there is more awareness and condemnation over the pain the victims have to overcome inflicted by the traffickers, there remains relatively little action to identify and meet the needs of survivors (Zimmerman et al, 2006). Meanwhile, for some in society there is still a common belief -an imaginary- of what would or should a victim be, which normally is: as eternal victims. Hence, leaving them in a place where they are considered as the 'other'.

The notion of the 'other' was developed by thinkers as an epistemological concept in social theory (Lacan, 1964; Said, 1978 & Mohanty, 2003). Put into simple words the concept of the 'other' would come to be the state of being different from and alien to the social identity of a person and to the identity of the Self (Miller, 2008). Throughout history an individual's identity has always been formed in opposition to the other, by doing that, they tend to identify

with other individuals that share similar beliefs, and that are part of the same ethnic group or culture. As Mountz (2009: 9) states, "the term 'other' serves as both a noun and a verb. As a noun, the 'other' is a person or group of people different from oneself. As a verb, 'other' means to distinguish, label, categorize, name, identify, place and exclude those who do not fit a societal norm". The construction of the 'other' begins then, when the belief of those who are different from the societal group are considered as problematic. Othering can lead to the exclusion and alienation of a person or group of people by reinforcing a category upon them that discriminates and leaves them aside from the collective social norm, since they are seen as different, as deviants that should be cultured by the group that is othering them (Mountz, 2009).

In social sciences, specifically in migration studies, with the increase in the migration flows from south to north and east to west, the phenomenon started gaining more visibility as different cultures started to cohabitate in the same space. Similarly, with the feminisation of migrations over the last decades -which has to do with the changes occurred since the late eighties in the European migration process[16]- immigrant women started being more visible in the transformation of labour and social spaces (Oso Casas, 2008). This led to arise in recipient countries the idea of the 'other' and the 'culture of others' by linking culture with immigration and citizenship. Thus, creating binaries such as north/south, developed/underdeveloped, civilized/uncivilized, emancipated/submissive, and so forth, generating an unequal context when taking into account all the different cultures with it different gender roles.

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[16] On the one hand, southern Europe –Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal- stopped sending labour force to northern Europe, giving space to labour force from third countries to enter this market. On the other hand, with the fall of the Berlin wall migrations east to west started increasing as well.

Several scholars like Gregorio Gil (2009), emphasize the notion of citizenship and the imaginary society has towards immigrant women, to the extent that, the representations and discourses on immigration has made immigrant population be perceived as a threat to the economic, social and cultural well-being of the country. As a result immigrant women begin to take greater visibility given the links that are made with prostitution, lack of education and culture, among others, leading to social exclusion. Thus, the 'borders' that stand and are embodied in these women and their representation as 'others' not only occurs in their vision as prostitutes but also, as procreative sources - i.e. as eternal pregnant.

However, the proliferation of discourses about the characteristics of the 'other' is related with their places of origin and culture, since the image of immigrant women is built over the idea that they come from patriarchal countries, hence having backward cultural practices. It is to this extent, that they are seen as disempowered, which eventually results in the demeaning of immigrant women, in comparison with the European women, who are perceived as more emancipated and liberated (Gregorio Gil, 2009). There is also a paradox that takes place around the agency of women as they are victimised as passive women who come from poor and patriarchal countries without recognising their agency. It is clear then, that there is a homogenisation of the subject -in this case immigrant women- in Western discourse, who consider women from countries of the so called 'Third World' as subjects without agency, sexually repressed, submissive, and uneducated; in opposition to the modern, educated, autonomous and with agency western women.

Noted in this context, women who have been trafficked, in their condition of 'otherness' are alienated from the centre of society and placed at the societal margin for being the other. By being put into this category, reinforced by divisions of connotation and denotation that perpetuate the negative representation of the non–Western 'other', there has been a

"hegemonic construction of these women as 'passive/docile/conflicted/dominated' by oppressive traditions and men" (Bhachu, 1993: 102).

## 2.1. Feminist approaches to trafficking: between voluntary and forced prostitution

Within feminism there has always been a debate regarding the distinction between voluntary prostitution and forced prostitution. Such discussions around the voluntary/forced prostitution dichotomy have tended to focus merely on whether women work in slavery-like conditions or if women choose prostitution as a profession and way of living, leaving aside the experiences and realities of sex workers.

In a brief historical review, at the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century campaigns against the 'white slavery' were promoted by feminist activists such as Josephine Butler in order to protect morals of both women and men and stop the "sexual slavery' of prostitution and the 'trafficking' of women across international boundaries for the purposes of prostitution" (Sullivan, 2010: 68). In this way, during 1903 and 1949 a series of international agreements were adopted being the last of them the *United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others*, which not only combined and superseded the earlier agreements (Doezema, 1998) but also declared that prostitution and trafficking were incompatible with the dignity and worth of a person. However, it did not specify what the Convention referred to as 'trafficking' and the 'exploitation' of prostitutes.

After the 1949 Trafficking Convention, which had low international support, the international and feminist concern for trafficking and prostitution in women subsided for a few decades. It wasn't until the 1980's when a new wave of feminists began to bring into the international agenda issues such as: trafficking in women, sex tourism and child prostitution.

Yet, these new anti-trafficking campaign brought with them an ideological split between radical feminists and sex work feminists, being the focus of discussion: "whether or not a person can choose prostitution as a profession" (Doezema, 1998: 37). For some feminists from the radical movement like Kathleen Barry[17], prostitution is a form of sexual exploitation just like rape, in fact, for her "[s]exual exploitation is a political condition, the foundation of women's subordination and the base from which discrimination against women is constructed and enacted" (Barry, 1995 in Sullivan, 2010), hence a violation to women's human rights. In turn, radical feminist approaches were severely criticised by both the international feminist movement and the international sex workers rights movements[18]. Their argument, being based on how prostitution should be considered as work, demanded a new perspective in the eyes of international law in order to give sex workers labour rights –thus having the right to self-determination- while at the same time, protecting victims of forced labour and other forms of exploitation.

Both the feminist and sex work approach aimed to improve sex workers' position by shifting political and social debate away from an abstract consideration of exploitation, morality and ethics (Sullivan, 2010), or from what prostitution has been considered over history: the 'social evil'. Instead, they sought to focus the discourse towards the economic, social and political conditions reinforcing sex work, and to subvert the popular representations of prostitutes as sexually unmoral women by legitimating prostitution as a chosen occupation. Thus, Bindman and Doezema (1997) cited in Sullivan (2010) argue;

> "The terms 'sex work' and 'sex worker' have been coined by sex workers themselves to redefine commercial sex, not as the social or psychological characteristic of a class of women,

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[17] Founder of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women –CATW-.
[18] Such as The World Charter for Prostitutes Rights and the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women (GAATW).

but as an income-generating activity or form of employment for women and men. As such it can be considered along with other forms of economic activity. An employment or labour perspective is a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for making sex work a part of the mainstream debate on human, women's, and workers' rights at local, national and international level."

This suggestion, vindicates the experiences sex workers live as similar to those working in other labour sectors. What is more, given the existing stereotype towards this form of work, sex workers, trafficked women for the purpose of sexual exploitation, and others that end up working in the sex industry, live under the constant stigma, discrimination and criminal lens that prostitution is attached too. Therefore, they are more likely to fall into vulnerable situations such as exploitative terms of employment and to serious violations to their human rights, which might lead them to suffer from trafficking or slavery-like practices (Sullivan, 2010). Thus, for the sex workers feminist approach the way to diminish trafficking in persons –especially for the purpose of sexual exploitation- is to treat prostitution as a form of work while taking into account the abuses going under the sex industry. Following the words of Wilson (2016);

"sexual exploitation, a lot of people say this is forced prostitution. However, I wouldn't like to class it as forced prostitution because prostitution is a choice, and sexual exploitation and trafficking is slightly different, where people are forced to sleep with men, they do not receive any money for it, all the money goes to the trafficker, or it might be someone having a sex slave in their house for their own pleasure".

Thus, the radical feminist approaches to prostitution and trafficking have been considered to be fundamentally flawed, whilst the sex work feminist approach has significant discursive and practical usefulness in advancing the position of both sex workers and victims of

trafficking (Sullivan, 2010). In this instance, trafficked women represent the threat of the 'other' in the midst of the European social, political and moral order (Aradau, 2004: 260). They are represented and perceived by society and law both as prostitutes and victims, which only reinforces the conception of the 'other' where their identities fluctuate between a double victimisation: on the one side, as prostitutes without morals and, on the other, as suffering bodies.

## 2.2. A theoretical approach to *Identity*

The concept of identity and social identity has been highly discussed throughout history by several disciplines –anthropology, sociology, philosophy, and psychology-, schools of thought, and scholars (Tajfel, 1974; Erikson, 1979; Jenkins, 1996; Lawler, 2008; among others). Questions such as 'who we are?', 'who we seem to be?', 'where do we belong too? And so forth, have been at the core of such debates.

Although there are different approaches to the term, the most common definitions, consider identity as a complex framework of beliefs, qualities, and expressions that constitute a person –the self- or a social group. There are two traditional approaches: identity as 'the sense of self' and identity as 'the self' belonging to a social or ethnic group due to common ancestry or biological characteristics, which is predominantly fixed.

As a result, the formation of one's identity is addressed through the interaction with others. As Weinreich et al. (2003) suggest, identity processes encompass biographical experiences, historical eras and cultural norms in which the self's autonomy varies according to the flux of power relationships with others. In this way, in the process of assessing the others a person divides the world into 'them' vs. 'us' by creating social categories where individuals are put into social groups. Moreover, the human being has always used categories in order to have a

better grasp of the world, for James (2015: 175), "categories of identity are the basis of human life and crucial to living with others across the complex boundaries of difference [...] Identity is foundational to social life, and it is that which makes it a terrain of colonization, cultural management and contestation".

For some scholars, such as Jenkins (1996), the human world wouldn't exist without social identity. Where frameworks of similarity and difference are crucial in order for people to be able to relate to each other in a consistent and meaningful sense. Jenkins defines identity as:

> "The human capacity – rooted in language – to know 'who's who' (and hence 'what's what'). This involves knowing who we are, knowing who others are, them knowing who we are, us knowing who they think we are, and so on: a multi-dimensional classification or mapping of the human world and our places in it, as individuals and as members of collectivities" (1996: 5).

This concept is then, a basic instrument that individuals use in order to sort out themselves and the others, both in an individual and collective way.

Other scholars, such as Lawler (2008), although she, as with Jenkins, articulates the combination between sameness and difference into the social character of identity –in that we are all identical to the degree that we share common experiences and identity-categories, yet, we are concurrently unique and different- yet for her the paradox of identity is best understood as an ongoing and never-answered question given that it is not something fixed. In this sense, identity is a product of social and collective relations rather than an individual possession. Lawler goes beyond the concept of identity, arguing how we construct identities through the narratives we tell about ourselves and others, "by drawing from varied memories, notable events, and ideologies, we endlessly tell tales about our lives that allow us to make sense of the world, our place in it, and the relations between us" (Lawler, 2008).

Nonetheless, there are some researchers that argue how in social science 'identity' as a concept is too ambiguous and essentialist to be of any further use in the discipline. Thus, Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 8) cited in Jenkins (1996) state;

> "[T]he term 'identity' is made to do a great deal of work. It is used to highlight non-instrumental modes of action; to designate sameness across persons or sameness over time; to capture allegedly core, foundational aspects of selfhood; to deny that such core, foundational aspects exist; to highlight the processual, interactive development of solidarity and collective self-understanding; and to stress the fragmented quality of the contemporary experience of 'self', a self unstably patched together through shards of discourse and contingently 'activated' in differing contexts."

In this regard, what both scholars suggest is that over the years social scientists have overused the concept to a point where it has become confusing, given that it encompass too many meanings and processes. Nevertheless, to this respect Jenkins (1996) argues how discarding 'identity' as a social analytical instrument would not solve the problem as it is inherent to society, but rather, the term should be considered as a holistic analytical tool given that it can be used in a wide range of disciplines.

All in all we can state that 'identity' is a process socially constructed and influenced by both external agents, social interactions and by personal choices, thus, it is fluid. However, this 'identification' process –that is the way we identity or the others identity us- will vary depending on the sex, gender, ethnicity, religion, age, context and so forth, affecting our experiences. In the case of women, and for the purpose of this research, in the case of women who have been trafficked the intersection of race, nation, gender, sexuality and class shape women's complex situations. If the former statement is so, then questions such as: *how*

*women perceive themselves?* And *how society perceive them?* Are key to understand how their identities are constructed and reconstructed.

Within trafficking in persons, especially women for the purposes of sexual exploitation, there is a wide range of experiences women may face, thus, even though there might exist similar cases, nonetheless, each women experiences trafficking in a different way - according to their individual context. However, it is usual for these women to be defined by assigned identities that, in words of Afshar (2012: 1), confine them to categories developed and used by others: "These constrain their participation to the political process and access to economic and social resources that would help them improve their lives". For example, in some cases women metamorphose from suffering beings worthy of pity into risky beings who are to be contained and disciplined (Aradau, 2009). It is important then, to emphasise the variety of their experiences and focus on the complexity of the different realities they occupy both in the present and the past (Bhachu, 1993). In this case we must take into account how these women perceived themselves before, during and after their trafficking experience, given that it would provide us with a clearer and more effective approach to their identities.

Given that identities are not stable and rather embedded to specific contexts, they shift according to events, surroundings, and realities that have an effect on them. Along the same line of thought, Afshar (1993) argues, how for some women, identities can be ascribed instead of chosen. What is more, identities are not mere choices or clearly allocated facets of selves and therefore, women have to negotiate and struggle to move beyond the stranglehold placed on them by such ascriptions. This way;

> "The static, negative identities ascribed to them place socioeconomic and political barriers in
>
> their path that may seem, at the first instance, to be insurmountable. The limitations that they
>
> impose mask, undermine, and devalue the rich diversities and the gamut of daily strategies

that pave the paths of women across differing and fluid identities as they accommodate the needs of their daily lives." (Afshar, 1993: 1)

Therefore, many women that are ascribed to multiple identities by society and themselves as illegal migrants and victims, prostitutes and suffering bodies, recognise identities as something dynamic that can be changed and be negotiated through different interpretations of the self in order to move beyond the barriers imposed and justified on behalf specific cultures, societal norms or stereotypes. As Baumann (1996) quoted in Afshar (1993: 1) suggests, women reconceptualise their understanding of self and move beyond boundaries that remain fluid, hard to define, and culturally and historically constructed and reconstructed within specific socioeconomic contexts.

## 2.3. A theoretical approach to *Labelling Theory*

Following the idea of *identity* and *self-identity* as a malleable concept that is culturally and historically constructed, and therefore, may be reconstructed according the specific peculiarities of each context, labelling theory is related to the conception of identity, since it focuses on how both self-identity and individuals' behaviour can be determined or influenced by the terms used by society to classify or designate a label upon them. All individuals are subject to social control, it is the way society has to regulate how people follow the norms, think and even behave. Depending on the way society is organised people may be considered as deviant or with social stigma. Thus, Goffman (1968) cited in Jenkins (1996: 106) acknowledge that,

> "Identity can be 'spoiled'; that identification, particularly within institutions, can be heavily biased in favour of its external moment; and that identification is often a matter of imposition and resistance, claim and counter-claim, rather than a consensual process of mutuality and negotiation."

According to Macionis (2014) there are three social foundations of deviance: the first one suggests that deviance varies according to cultural norms, this means that not all persons or actions are inherently deviant, but instead a person becomes deviant only in relation to particular rules, it depends on the particular circumstances of each context. The second foundation posits that people become deviant as others define them that way, on a daily basis everyone breaks the norms to some extent however, and it depends on how others perceive, accept and respond to it that one does or does not become a deviant. The third approach, sets forth that how societies set norms and how they define rule breaking both involve social power, which means that the way society constructs and applies the norms is a reflection of social inequality.

However, not all deviance involves action or even choice. The very existence of some categories of people can be troublesome to others (Macionis, 2014). An example of this are people who have been trafficked, the binaries such as suffering bodies/prostitutes, illegal immigrants/trafficked victims that are imposed on them, leaves them in a position where they have to constantly negotiate or resist their place in society.

Deviance is an essential part of social organisation, given that, as proposed by Durkheim (1964), it affirms cultural values and norms, clarifies moral boundaries, brings people together, and encourages social change. Deviance is also charged with stigma. Over the years several thinkers have defined stigma in different ways, for example, for Stafford et al. (1986: 80-81) stigma is a "characteristic of persons that is contrary to a norm of a social unit where a "norm" is defined as a "shared belief that a person ought to behave in a certain way at a certain time". On the other hand, Crocker et al. (1998: 505) state that "stigmatized individuals possess (or are believed to possess) some attribute, or characteristic, that conveys a social identity that is devalued in a particular social context". Being the one provided by Goffman

(1963: 3) the most popular: stigma is an "attribute that is deeply discrediting and that reduces the bearer from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one".

Society tends to develop, construct, and reconstruct stigmatised ideas which trigger prejudices and preconceptions used as a reference for analysis on how a person should or should not be. Furthermore, these framework of stigmas and prejudice standards which operate on an unconscious level, filter out what is acceptable and what is not throughout the entire society. The conceptualisation of stigma may have some major components such as: blame, discrimination, loss of status, isolation, and shame. There are also "social and cultural contexts that may add to the stigma surrounding issues that include: sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, immigration status, language barriers, and religious norms and values" (Murray et al., 2015; 273). What is more, this can be in such way that victims of trafficking may experience multiple levels of stigma from multiple sources.

If we apply this to human trafficking, stigma can occur in many ways. For example, survivors may be blamed for their victimisation, that is to say, they might be viewed as having chosen to enter prostitution or for having put themselves into the hands of traffickers for an illegal migration. They may also face discrimination in seeking help, housing or employment. Which more often than not will make them feel as if they have no control over their lives. Consequently, survivors may often feel shame as a result of their trafficking victimisation.

The effect that these preconceptions may have on the stigmatised individual on how others identify and receive them, can adversely impact the way they feel in society. As Goffman (1963: 24) states,

> "The awareness of inferiority means that one is unable to keep out of consciousness the formulation of some chronic feeling of the worst sort of insecurity, and this means that one

suffers anxiety […] the fear that other can disrespect a person because of something means that he is always insecure in his contact with other people."

Even when deviation can be understood as a normal product of stable societies, a vital resource which is guarded and preserved by forces found in all human organisations (Durkheim, 1958 cited in Erikson, 1960: 307), the uncertainty of status within society, poses a dilemma for the 'stigmatised' since not knowing which of several categories the individual may be placed within –even when it is a favourable one[19]-. By perpetuating their situation, women might feel as if they are being assessed as victims of trafficking, illegal immigrants, and so forth. In the same way, women might feel that is the only way for being perceived and approached, given the imaginary society has upon them there is a chance of other persons being incapable of accepting these women as anything else. As Goffman (1963: 27) notes,

> "The society surrounding them by stigmatizing them discredit their capability to be more than what they are: "when the stigmatized person's failing can be perceived by our merely directing attention (typically, visual) to him –when, in short, he is a discredited, not discreditable, person- he is likely to feel that to be present among normals nakedly exposes him to invasions of privacy" for example when people stare pointedly at them."

Deviance is also linked to social inequality. That is to say, whom is labelled deviant depends on which categories of people hold power in a society (Macionis, 2014). As an act of resistance or solidarity, those others who share the same stigma in some instances may provide the stigmatised individual with instructions and advice on what the person can do or where can they withdraw for moral support - and for the comfort of feeling more than accepted, to feel there are others that share certain similarities with them.

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[19] Meaning that the stigmatised individual can be defended by others in terms of their stigma.

According to Goffman (1963), stigma management is a general feature of society, a process occurring whenever there are identity norms. However, it can vary depending on the social forces that enforce the norms. In this regard, the mass media play an important role in the production and reproduction of stereotypes as they build and condition who may or may not be a deviant. The mass media is nowadays a considerably source of power, they are usually aligned around specific centres of power –i.e. political parties, corporate and financial centres, trade unions or other institutionalised entities- that are normally biased. This fact is reflected in phenomena such as the traffic of persons, where we can appreciate how in some instances the information has been treated from a sensationalist dimension (Alemany et al., 1981, Prats, 1997). The image the media has helped to construct upon persons who have been trafficked has contributed to a number of attitudes within society based on pity, suspicion and rejection. According to Alemany et al. (1981), the attitudes of society are consequences of fantasies and fears that arise against something unknown that is not easily understood, especially when they also disrupt the values, ideas or norms prevailing in that particular society.

All in all we can say that deviance is intrinsic to the way society is organised, and stigma is a negative label that changes a person's self-concept and social identity. In this regard, there is a significant stigma that survivors of trafficking face, the assumption or absence of the label 'victim of trafficking' is a main factor on how these women are viewed within society: as unfortunates, deserving of support or as illegal migrants, prostitutes and (potential) criminals. Furthermore, trafficked women are a cause of insecurity; thus, as victims, they are also simultaneously vulnerable and made insecure themselves (Aradau, 2009).

# CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH FINDINGS: AN INSIGHT INTO TRAFFICKED WOMEN'S CURRENT SITUATION

> *"None who have always been free can understand*
> *the terrible fascinating power of the hope*
> *of freedom to those who are not free."*
> *-- Pearl S. Buck*
> *Nobel Prize in Literature.*

Whilst human trafficking is a serious violation to human rights, there are no exact figures on how many trafficked women and children are working in the sex trade in the UK. The U.S Department of State (2015) has estimated that up to 800,000 people are trafficked across national borders annually, 80% of whom are women and children trafficked for sexual purposes. Anti-Slavery International (2016) estimated that at least 10,000 women and 4,000 children have been trafficked into the UK over the last decade for the purpose of sexual exploitation. While these figures are only an underestimate it gives an idea of the magnitude of this phenomenon.

As mentioned in the first chapter, there are various definitions of trafficking. However, throughout this research one of the most comprehensive definitions I came across is the one provided by the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women (GAATW), who define it as:

> "All acts involved in the recruitment and / or transportation of woman within and across national borders for work or services by means of violence or threats of violence, abuse of authority or dominant position, debt bondage, deception or other forms of coercion." (GAATW, 1999)

Another definition of trafficking is the one proposed by Marjan Wijers (1998: 69), who describes trafficking in the narrow sense as:

"[T]he process in which migrant women are brought into prostitution through the use of coercion, deceit, abuse or violence and in which they are denied fundamental human rights and freedoms such as the right to decide to work as a prostitute or not, the right to decide on the conditions of work, the right to enter and leave the sex industry, the right to refuse certain customers, the right to refuse certain sexual acts, the right to freedom of movement, the right not to be exploited, and so forth."

Contrary to popular beliefs, trafficking is not limited to prostitution and not all prostitution involves trafficking. Defined in a broader sense, traffic in women involves a wide category of various forms of exploitation and violence in different labour sectors where migrant women –normally in an irregular administrative situation- are more prone to work in, such as prostitution, domestic work and entertainment industries. Yet, despite the different experiences within the specific circumstances these women may live during and after their trafficking process, it is more possible than not for all of them to experience certain degree of discrimination and stigma at some point of their situation, which at the end alters the way they feel and shapes their realities – making it more difficult for some to find their way in the UK.

To have a better insight of women's situation for the purpose of this research, it was of great importance to analyse several reports[20] regarding: the sex industry in the UK, the health risk and consequences for trafficked women, the criminal justice and the identification process, and the victim's stories and situation in the UK, among others. In the same way, two interviews –one from Salvation Army in London, and the other one, from City Hearts in

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[20] The majority of the reports and studies relevant for this research were developed by organisations and institutions such as: The Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group, Salvation Army, the London Metropolitan University, and the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, UNDOC, and the US Department of State.

Sheffield[21]- were carried out in order to provide a better understanding about the struggles trafficked women face when they come to the UK, how those experiences shape their realities, what is the position of the organisations regarding trafficking, the services they offer to the victims, and how the current situation can improve in their favour. Therefore, key questions such as: What do you consider are women's greatest needs? From your experience of working alongside trafficked persons, what actions, steps and strategies can they as individuals take to improve their situation? From your experience of working with trafficked women, can you impart how you feel it impacts upon their individual identities? And so forth, were fundamental to gather information and comprehend the state of the situation.

It is important to highlight how in the beginning of the research it was intended to interview both women survivors of human trafficking and the practitioners that work with them on a daily basis. However, there were some difficulties after contacting several organisations such as: Kalayaan, Unseen, the Poppy Project, Palm Cove Society, Ashiana, among others. On the one hand, I was unable to interview both the staff and women, given the lack of response by some of them, and also given the lack of staff and time to do the interviews in other occasions. On the other hand, I wasn't able to reach the women neither in Salvation Army nor in City Hearts, given that the majority of these women were on their 45 days recovery period after the trafficking experience, which make it impossible to access them.

This chapter will focus on the research findings. It will be divided in four parts in order to cover the principal relevant points. The first part, will focus on the position of trafficked women as victims and the consequences that trafficking have upon them. The second part, will discuss the identity-stigma perception of trafficked victims. The third part, is intended

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[21] The interviewees were: Andrew Wileman, Research and Development Manager for the Anti Trafficking and Moderns Slavery Unit at Salvation Army; and Kirsty Wilson, Female Anti-Trafficking Manager at City Hearts.

to analyse the impact of media and campaign awareness in the construction of trafficked women identities. The last part, will review trafficked women's current situation in the UK, the struggles they face, the options they have to move forward, what is available for them, and so forth.

## 3.1. Position of trafficked women as victims and the consequences of trafficking upon them

Identity, criminalisation / decriminalisation, working conditions, rights, abuse, deceit, coercion, exploitation, victims, illegal migrant, *inter alia*, have been some of the central issues addressed by states, NGOs and institutions for many years when it came to developing a wide definition for trafficking in persons. Through these debates the concept of trafficking has emerged from the different perspectives such as: migration, crime, public health, human rights and the anti-trafficking framework. In the same vein, the historic and biased debate of 'trafficking in women' – regarding women from one viewpoint as innocent victims in need of rescue, and from the other, as both illegal and as deviant women who must be reformed - continues to define nowadays the debate on trafficking. This has led to the implementation of the Protocol to be more inclined towards the aspects of recruitment and movement of the traffickers and the trafficked, rather than on the protection and support of the victims.

Not only have the states had focus in how a victim should be – where the agency of women is imagined as negative - but also their priority has been to prosecute and penalise traffickers following the Protocol requirements. As Wijers (2015) argues, "the focus on the purity and victimhood of women, coupled with the protection of national borders, not only impedes any serious effort to address the exploitation of human beings under forced labour and slavery-like conditions, but actually causes harm". Evidence of this, is the HM Inspectorate of Prisons

(HMIP) inspection of Yarl's Wood Detention Centre in 2013, which revealed "detainees displaying clear trafficking indicators were not always referred to the national referral mechanism" (Girma et al., 2014). Similarly, Klara Skrivankova from Anti-Slavery International in an interview for The Guardian (2013) argued that, "the government appeared resistant to fully meeting its obligations (to victims of trafficking), in part out of fear of appearing soft on immigration".

Indeed, some of the key problems of the debate on the trafficking protocol and its subsequent implementation, were around the recruitment and transportation of victims, along with concerns about reinforcement of national borders – to keep undesired aliens away -, instead of the precarious or abusive conditions trafficked persons are forced to work and live. In words of Wijers (2015) "the preoccupation with the innocence, read: the morality, of the women concerned; the conflation of trafficking and prostitution; and the reduction of women to passive victims without regard to conditions of coercion or consent". Furthermore, it was also hotly debated within the coalitions whether or not to use the term 'trafficked persons', rather than 'victims', given that the latter term tends to diminish the identity of (in this case) women to that of a passive victim failing to recognise them as persons with agency, self-determination and rights (Wijers, 2015).

Negotiations around the Trafficking Protocol tended to present an idealisation of the 'victim' of trafficking that is: how a victim should be, how a victim should act, and how a victim should look like, among others. However, contrary to contemporary popular perceptions women who are trafficked are a heterogeneous group. Each one of them come from different realities and contexts, where their nationality, age, culture, personality, marital status and education level vary from another.

There are clearly patterns of vulnerability to being trafficked or being targeted by traffickers (Zimmerman et al., 2006). For example, a study developed by Zimmerman et al. (2006: 6 - 8) *Stolen smiles: a summary report on the physical and psychological health consequences of women and adolescents trafficked in Europe*, shows how from 207 women interviewees all of them had been trafficked, and had suffered physical and emotional trauma:

> "The study interviewed adolescents and women who had been trafficked intro sex work or who had been sexually abused while working as domestic labourers [...] the 207 women interviewed for this study came from a total of 14 countries [...] the findings presented on health largely represent women who were starting to emerge from an extremely violent, frightening and traumatic period of their lives".

However, another research project by Mai (2009: 4) on *Migrant workers in the UK sex industry*, found that from 100 interviews with migrant women from the most relevant areas of origin - South America, Eastern Europe, EU and South East Asia-:

> "Approximately 13 per cent of female interviewees felt that they had been subject to different perceptions and experiences of exploitation, ranging from extreme cases of trafficking to relatively more consensual arrangements. Only a minority, amounting approximately to 6 per cent of female interviewees, felt that they had been deceived and forced into selling sex in circumstances within which they had no share of control or consent."

Trafficking may be multi-dimensional and may vary depending on the experiences and context of each person, which means that women react differently to each individual experiences of abuse, coercion and exploitation. Therefore, many women do not fit into the image of 'destroyed' victim. With this in mind, if there is then, a preconceived idea of how a trafficked woman shall look, be, or behave, important questions should be taken into account such as: what happens with those that do not 'fulfil' the image of destroyed / ideal

victim? What are the consequences of naturalising trafficked women in a state of victimhood? And more important, how do women who have been trafficked perceive themselves?

More often than not women who have been trafficked are subject to high levels of sexual, psychological and physical abuse. For this reason, in many occasions women do not wish to be identified as victims of trafficking or turn to the authorities for assistance. Nonetheless, when they come to the attention of the police or competent authorities, despite all the evidence, sometimes identification is not possible because the victims, either through fear of reprisals from their traffickers or for moral or cultural reasons, do not wish to tell their experiences (particularly to strangers) and especially in cases of violence and humiliating episodes. In this sense, "being a victim is not a thing, an objective phenomenon. It will not be the same to all people in situations externally described as being the "same". *It has to do with the participants' definition of the situation*" (Christie, 1986:18), which is why it may take women time to disclose the full length of their experiences and co-operate with the authorities. According to Wileman (2016), it also depends on how each women react to their own experiences and the ability of case workers to bond with them;

> "For some people you will never get very far because they are so closed. For others, it will take a long time just to build up a rapport and of course as long as they stay with us [Salvation Army] whilst the decision is being made, so that might be from 45 days to 100 / 120 days sometimes. So from that point of view it might take a long time to build a relationship with them [to disclose]".

Due to the particular situations, many times the victims do not have or receive the necessary guarantees to protect them against their vulnerable situation, leaving them in a dangerous position where they may remain marginalised by the continued existence of structural factors

including patriarchal ideology, gender roles, inequality, gender-specific division of labour, and the attribution of stigma and deviance to female sex workers and trafficked women.

> "They are all vulnerable people on one level or another. Many of them are vulnerable people maybe back in Albania or in Nigeria or whatever. There are some people who have illness or have mental health problems, addictions and addiction issues, etc., so they were vulnerable in their home country and of course you take them out of that and take them somewhere else and they are completely, totally vulnerable because they don't know the language, they don't know where they are very often, they don't know in which part of the UK they are in, I mean, it wouldn't be unusual for us (The Salvation Army) to rescue some girls from the brothel and they have no clue they are in London, or that they are in Hull, or that they are in Sheffield, so from that perspective they just know they are in the United Kingdom and they have been exploited in this way, so therefore the vulnerabilities and the experiences can be very traumatic, can be very damaging for them." (Wileman, 2016)

The position of women who have been trafficked can take many forms. For some women, they don't consider themselves as victims either because they don't fully understand what trafficking is or because they weren't aware of the magnitude of their situation. Other women may be aware of what has happened to them and consider themselves as victims of trafficking. There are several cases as well, where women knew what they were going to do when migrating to another country, however, they didn't know the slavery-like conditions they were going to work in and that they would have to endure. Evidence of this, are some of the cases mentioned below:

- In an article from The Guardian, an Ethiopian girl who was eventually send to the UK by a close relative to work in domestic servitude didn't receive any pay and suffered repeated rapes and abuse from her employers. However, it wasn't until she was able to escape, put

subsequently into a detention centre, and got in contact with the Poppy Project that she became fully aware of her situation. As she shares;

> "I am very angry and very scared when I think about all the things I went through. I was relatively healthy when I went in [the detention centre], but I became ill quickly because of the stress of being locked up. It was only when I had an interview that I managed to ask through an interpreter why I was there. *It was only when I was referred to Poppy that I understood what trafficking was*." (Gentleman, 2014)

For Memey a former victim of trafficking and now spokeswoman for the UNODC at the Conference of States Parties to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, states how from her experience, "women who become victims of human trafficking usually do not understand what human trafficking is, or that they are being trafficked" (Memey, 2012).

- For the female anti-trafficking Manager from City Hearts, the vast majority of women that the organisation support perceive themselves as victims, meaning they are aware of the situation and the exploitation conditions they lived through. As Wilson shares, "not every women feels the same because it depends of each contexts and realities. But I do think most of them see themselves as victims" (Wilson, 2016).

Furthermore, in Mai's study (2009) about 'Migrant workers in the UK sex industry', the research found how some of the interviewees knew they were going to work selling sex as part of their migration process to the UK, but not of the exploitative working conditions that they were required to undergo, and where they felt they didn't have control of the situation or consent. As explained by a 30 year old woman from Lithuania;

"I mean, when I got there the guy told me that I had to work for a year... I only wanted to stay

long enough to pay back the expenses and earn £3000! Then he kept all the money (...) When

I got to this flat to work I felt safe... I then told the maid and she called the police immediately"

(Mai, 2009: 32).

Given the different forms and positions trafficking and victims of trafficking can take, it

would be an error to consider women who have been trafficked as a homogenous, weak and

helpless group. Their agency and strategies they have to overcome their particular situations

are highly linked to the opportunities, protection and support they receive from organisations,

competent authorities, and other entities involved in combating trafficking.

### 3.1.1. Effects and consequences of trafficking for VoT

Trafficking has a serious impact upon women's well-being and health – physically

and psychologically – which can result in serious injuries and lasting health problems. As

stated by Zimmerman et al. (2006: 2) "trafficked women have very different experiences

while in the trafficking setting. Some are held captive, unremittingly assaulted and horribly

violated. Others are less abused physically, but are psychologically tormented, and live in

fear of harm to themselves and their family members". There are different forms of abuse

trafficked women may suffer at any point of their trafficking process, which are: pre-

departure; transit and migration; destination; detention, deportation, criminal evidence;

integration and in some cases re-trafficking. For Zimmerman et al. (2003), by breaking down

the trafficking process into chronological stages, it makes visible the need to take into account

the risks and abuses associated with each stage, in order to understand more their experiences

and to address the singularities of their situation. Each stage may involve the following risks

and abuses: physical, sexual, psychological, forced / coerced use of alcohol and drugs, social

restrictions, imprisonment, debt bondage, manipulation, economic exploitation, legal insecurity, abusive working and living conditions, risk of being marginalised.

According to Zimmerman et al. in *Stolen Smiles*, (2006) a study by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, of women and adolescents trafficked in Europe found that 60 per cent of women reported being physically and/or sexually abused prior to being trafficked; 95 per cent reported physical and/or sexual violence whilst in a trafficked situation. 58 per cent reported injuries. The women were frequently forced into a situation of extreme dependency that is comparable to that of being a captive. They had limited or no access to health care. By the time they were freed they often needed medical support. As another report explains;

> "We have seen women with black eyes, bruises, injuries from rape, and internal bleeding, complications from botched abortions. Two-thirds have STDs and at one point ten of twelve women at the shelter had syphilis. Approximately 5-10% are HIV positive. Chlamydia is also a problem. Last year 3-4 had hepatitis B. A few women have fertility problems, not many but it does happen. We hear stories about women who eat very poorly while they are under the control of traffickers." (Zimmerman et al. 2003: 89)

In the same way, victims of trafficking may also face serious legal consequences, they may face prosecution for criminal offenses that were forced to commit as a direct result of their situation. They may (due to their illegal status in some instances) be detained or deported for immigration violations that are the result of being trafficked (Stop Violence Against Women -SVAW, 2005). As a consequence, many victims do not dare go to the authorities and report against their traffickers – whether because they fear police will not believe their stories and therefore report them on immigration or because fear of retaliation. Further, the majority of

trafficking victims don't want to return back to their home countries, where they may face stigmatisation and socio-economic adversities.

At times, the lack of training and awareness on the part of competent authorities prevents them from understanding the full impact trafficking has on victims (Wilson, 2016). This results in inappropriate responses to protect trafficked victims or to give them the guarantees they need to act as witness. Victims may also fear retaliation from their traffickers, either against themselves or their families. Traffickers will frequently use threats of retribution to control women who have been trafficked (ATMG, 2013; Zimmerman et al. 2006).

There are different mechanisms of control used in different ways by traffickers. According to a report held by ATMG (2011: 21) "to do so, traffickers engineer a continuum of control by abusing trafficked persons' vulnerability, using methods such as deception/fraud, coercion or imprisonment. They may also be used in combination". These criminal gangs trick women into believing they are travelling to legitimate work in other countries with the promise of life chances simply not available at home. They are promised work in cafes and restaurants, in factories, as au pairs, among others. Some bring their children with them and threats to these are then used as a form of blackmail against them. Others are told if they run away the gangs will replace them with their younger siblings or will kill their families. Women trafficked to the European Union including the UK from developing countries are likely to come from rural areas, where they are often illiterate and generally more easily deceived (UNODC, 2008). Another tactic used by the traffickers include keeping them on isolation so they don't really know where they are and the magnitude of their situation. As explained below:

> "Traffickers like to isolate them, traffickers would very much like to do that, because if they talk to each other and they network with each other, then they perhaps will get to know where

they are, and perhaps they will know they are in a trafficking situation. Therefore, traffickers don't like to necessarily move them around as large groups, one or two maybe, but they tend to try isolate victims and keep them separate because obviously therefore, they can control them, and isolate them more and they can have more control over their movements. So they tend to not work in groups." (Wileman, 2016)

As the trafficking situation develops, control exerted by the traffickers over the victims may rely more on psychological coercion than physical confinement, where the focus is more on the victim's mind rather than their physical self. As explained *In the dock* (2011) a study held ATMG, the different techniques they use like misinformation and mind games are meant to disempower victims and disconnect them from reality. As outlined below by Dr Michael Korzinski, the former clinical director of the Helen Bamber Foundation, who describes "the totality of the process as dehumanising, "designed to deconstruct the person's sense of identity ... [and] take the person back to earliest stages of development in a process of enforced psychological regression" (ATMG, 2011: 23). Due to the strong influence traffickers may have upon their victims even after they have escaped or have been rescued from their trafficking situation, women are at risk of being re-trafficked[22], as stated below;

"Some of the women are still in touch with their traffickers, some of them will end up re-trafficked even from the safe house. Getting picked up from the safe house, and that can be very traumatic, not only for them but also for the staff and for everyone else, because there is that whole thing of: they have been rescued, they have been picked up, they have escaped from a place of torment and they have come to a place of safety in the safe house but still the only people that they know, the only people who they think they know are the traffickers. So

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[22] Following the IOM report, *The Causes and Consequences of Re-trafficking: Evidence from the IOM Human Trafficking Database* (2010: 17): "Re-trafficking shall mean a situation in which a person has been trafficked on one occasion as set forth in the definition provided in the United Nations Palermo Protocol; has then exited that trafficking situation by any means; and has then later re-entered another trafficking situation, again as stated in the United Nations definition."

even if they felt that, like you know, 'at least I know someone, he might be the trafficker, he might not treat me well, but at least he is someone who is looking after me or looking out for me'…exploiting them in the worst possible way sometimes but at least that is someone that they know. So that pull that they have as traffickers on that particular woman for instance is quite strong" (Wileman, 2016).

Criminal groups control the markets for trafficked women and girls. From criminal networks from Russia controlling trafficking markets in Poland and Germany, as well as criminal Ukrainian groups reportedly controlling Hungary and Austria, or even in Italy where the market is controlled basically by Russian and Albanian mafias (UNODC, 2008). Depending on the traffic network, the gangs may use different instruments of subjugation that are used according to the type of exploitation and the contexts it occupies. Although the majority of trafficking processes begin by the use of fraud or deception as to the working conditions and the type of work, various mechanisms of control may be exerted by the traffickers to oppress their victims. Therefore, it is not the same being trafficked from Nigeria by a Nigerian gang, as being trafficked from Albania by an Albanian gang, or being trafficked from Vietnam by a Vietnamese gang. For example, it is known that trafficking gangs from Nigeria make use of rituals such as 'juju'[23] in an abusive way to control Nigerian trafficked persons, which leaves them in a vulnerable position as they find themselves tied to the traffickers. Another means of coercion is the use of *debt bondage* to perpetuate victims' exploitative situation for an indeterminate period. Most of them use physical and sexual abuse to achieve compliance from the victim, as well as threats and other forms of intimidation.

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[23] 'Juju' is a West African form of witchcraft. It refers to the supernatural power manifesting from spirits being ascribed to objects and in the use of spells. Although traditionally a benign belief system, entrepreneurial priests have manipulated it for darker purposes. The Juju priest is called upon to bind a trafficked person to comply with their trafficker or enforce contract terms. The ritual generally consists of cuts to their body, taking of blood, hair and clothing and swearing oaths" (ATMG, 2011: 22).

### 3.2. Identity and Stigma: the perception of victims of trafficking

Although there is an increasing awareness of trafficking in persons within society, nowadays, there still exists a lack of knowledge regarding women's experiences before, during and after their trafficking process, which leaves them in a constant risk of being re-victimised due to the stigma attached to prostitution and sex work. In some cases, fear of rejection or shame of the things they were forced to do discourage women from seeking help. A recent research on stigma surrounding sexual violence by Murray et al. (2015) suggests that stigma occurs when seeking help from professionals – such as judges and attorneys, law enforcements, health care professionals - or close relatives – family and friends -. Among the stigma-related statements in the study the most frequent occurring stigma was feeling dismissed and denied, blamed and discriminated.

There are other social and cultural factors that may fuel the stigma surrounding a person. These may include age, ethnicity, nationality, language barriers, religious norms and values, immigration status, among other, all of which calls to action for a deeper understanding of the stigma related to victims of trafficking, in order to understand what can be done to eradicate stigma in all levels of society. As pointed in an interview by Wileman (2016);

> "There is a lot of stigma as well as cultural barriers. Some of the victims are really defensive because of all the situation they have been through, so they tend to be on guard always, to be wary about the people they would talk with."

The shame of trafficking, especially for sex work can lead to risks associated with marginalisation. For instance, the trafficked may be marginalised and disowned by their families and communities (depending on where the victims are from). According to Zimmerman et al. (2003: 27) the risks associated with marginalisation and stigma may

include: cultural and social exclusion, including limited adaptation to social and cultural norms, language limitations; limited access to public services and resources, including health care services; limited quality of care due to discrimination, language and cultural differences; public discrimination and stigmatisation related to gender, ethnicity, social position, form of labour; reduced income, weak negotiating power and financial hardship resulting from immigrant status and language limitations; clandestine movements and high mobility; limited access to potential sources of assistance (e.g., law enforcement, public officials, national representatives); fear of law enforcement and other authorities.

In this regard, according to Mai (2009; 4) the majority of interviewees in the report stressed the way the stigma associated with sex work was implicated in legitimating violence against sex workers from a small minority of clients and from petty criminals.

Stigma deeply affects the identity of trafficked persons, the way society may perceive them and the way they may perceive themselves. For example, during the identification process victims may often be stigmatised once they share their story through judgmental questions such as: 'how did you get into trafficking?', 'where is your passport?', 'why didn't you leave?', 'why didn't you do anything to stop it?', 'how many times where you sexually assaulted?' among others. In this aspect, stigma may take the form of blame both from others and the victims; some "people have perceptions about what victims are supposed to act like, and when they don't present the way they expect them to and when the facts don't "look right" they fail to believe or support victims" (Murray, 2015: 277). Hence, blame becomes more visible if the trafficked person has been involved in any deviant behaviour – such as substance misuse, drug dealing, not leaving their situation quickly enough, being a sex worker, and so forth. For some people the fact that someone can fall into trafficking is a sign

of weakness and lack of awareness, but this is a misunderstanding of the reality of their circumstances, as Wileman (2016) relates.;

"Well it easy to say don't get trafficked isn't it? But the reality is of course, some of the factors in terms of poverty, war, civil unrest, and exploitation, you know a lot of them coming from -even some of the girls and some of the women coming from Eastern Europe-, they have very limited access to employment and opportunities in their home country, so therefore somebody comes to them that they know perhaps, or a friend of a friend that they know and says: 'hey!, there are jobs in the United Kingdom, we can get you accommodation, we can get you money" […] if you have been long term unemployed, you are going to jump to that possibility. But you know, there are these things in terms of 'are they asking me for my passport? Are they asking me for money? Are they asking me for my contact details and bank account?' There should be a number of warning signs coming up, but again, very often these are vulnerable men and women who are being exploited, who don't have access to those things anyway. There are vulnerable girls and women in their own societies and so it is really difficult to say 'what can they do to stop it?' that's easier said than done in most cases."

In some cases women who have been trafficked don't identify themselves as victims because they are not aware of what is happening to them, given that they don't have the conception of slavery. In other cases, women are unwilling to be categorised as trafficked victims given their legal or illegal status. Moreover, when asked to one of the anti-trafficking practitioner about how these women perceive themselves and how trafficking impacts upon their individual identities, she stated;

"Not every women feels the same because it depends of each women contexts and realities. I think most of them see themselves as victims and I think it is our job to take them out of that victim mentality into a survivor mentality, which is important."

"So I think it takes away a lot of their self-confidence, I think it takes away a lot of their self-esteem to leave them in the point where they are now, is to really break someone down. So it is important to build them back up" (Wilson, 2016).

In the same vein, women's identities are also highly linked to papers (such as the ID) and passport. This happens, because most of the times women aside from suffering various forms of sexual, physical or psychological abuse, are removed from any form of identity. Thus, traffickers in order to control and subdue women may strip them of their prior identity by removing personal possessions and / or forcing them to wear a working uniform. Questions from the interviews regarding women's identities, how are they linked with physical identification and how the anti-trafficking practitioners work towards enhance or facilitate their sense of personal identity, responded that;

"Yes, but sometimes most of them have fake ID's so it is having to apply for a new identity. We have to work hard with the solicitors to get them a way to get a new identity. Someone might want to change their names like, for example, there is a women who changed her name to Elizabeth because she didn't associate herself to her old life." (Wilson, 2016)

"[T]hey feel that their identities have been removed from them – with passports, identification being removed- so we often work with embassies to get them a new passport, to get them new papers, to get them opportunities for them to be able to work or to be able to move on. So in terms of, in the practical sense of literally providing them with an identity once again, of a passport, in order for them to say: so yeah 'I am this lady from Nigeria, or from Albania, or from wherever… I am this woman and this is my ID to prove it', and so they are not just an object of sexual exploitation or forced labour, so we help them with regards identity" (Wileman, 2016).

In terms of their personal identity it is clear many of the women lose their sense of worth and value due to not only the stereotypes associated by this type of experience but also due to the horrible situations these women have had to endure. Therefore, they need support in practical ways, in emotional ways, and support in financial ways. In all cases, however, each person's situation should be handled individually in order to help them over come in the most effective way the stigma and impact surrounding their experiences.

## 3.3. The impact of media and campaign awareness in the construction of trafficked women identities

Over the past few years media, governments and anti-trafficking campaigns have constructed an official discourse on trafficking identity over the use of a symbolic of "the body in pain: pierced, bleeding, and defenceless" (Aradau, 2004: 262), which engage with aspects of meaning, interpretation, worth and constraint for trafficked women. This discourse is meant to work under a 'politics of pity', following Aradau's (2004) idea, where emotions are used to re-structure the situation of trafficking and direct it to a position that benefits trafficked women. This policy has been supported and practised by different anti-trafficking organisations and charities with the purpose of subverting governmental perspectives around trafficked women as non-desired aliens involved in prostitution and other illicit affairs. Therefore, the policy of pity had the intention of challenging this type of law enforcement approach to trafficking, which considered as Aradau (2004, 260) argues;

> "trafficked women as illegal migrants and promptly deported them. It was argued that besides being victimised by their traffickers, women were also subjected to increased suffering by the state. As a result of these practices of second victimisation, victims of trafficking were thought either to fall easily prey to traffickers all over again, or to experience suffering and stigma when returned to their countries of origin".

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Normally the intention of awareness campaigns is to contribute to a public understanding of human trafficking, by presenting the idea of: vulnerable individuals seeking a better life, being deceived or coerced, transported across borders and forced into denigrating and slavery-like conditions work. Whilst there may exist a genuine desire to combat this injustice by drawing attention of the public to create support and consciousness about the victims' human rights violations, awareness campaigns at the same time perpetuate a form of exclusion through the construction of a typical or 'ideal' victim of trafficking (O'Brien, 2013). Feminists such as Doezema (1998), Aradau (2004) and Sullivan (2010), argue how by naturalising trafficked women in a state of victimhood women's are at risk of being reified under a lens of pity and compassion, "where their trajectory might have coincided with that of a migrant or prostitute, suffering is redeeming. Trafficked women are disidentified from categories of migrants, criminals or prostitutes by the emphasis on raw physical suffering" (Aradau, 2004: 262). Instead they advocate for approaches that challenge those portrayals of powerless, hopeless and defeated victims.

One of the risks involved in determining *who* and *how* a victim should be, is leaving aside other victims who may not fit to the prototypical type of story wanted in the public sphere, which shape a certain construction towards trafficking that prioritises specific types of victims. For some academics such as Wilson et al. (2016: 30) the U.S Department of State have contributed to reify the imaginary of how or what a victim should be. "The depiction of certain types of trafficking victims, and also offenders, within the pages of these annually published documents helps to build and perpetuate a specific picture of 'typical' trafficking victim". For them, human trafficking is politically represented. These reports, for example, demonstrate how human trafficking is predominantly represented as a crime committed by ideal offenders against idealised victims.

In this regard, key questions such as: who is the victim? What do we know about them? What is their particular situation? And so forth, should be taken into account when addressing the identity of the victim, given that very often, and in words of Dignan: (2005: 13) "our attitudes towards victims and how they should be dealt with are likely to be shaped by the assumptions we make about them, which may not always be well founded". This should also be applied by the media and the way they expose not only the trafficking phenomenon itself, but also the victims. Instead, we should go beyond on whether the 'perfect' victim is not a person or category that perceives herself as a victim, that always accepts help, that doesn't return to their trafficking situation, and that is willing to collaborate with the authorities. This is essential, because it is dangerous to suggest that women who don't fit this profile are not real victims, because ultimately they are then left exposed to be further exploited.

## 3.4. An approach to trafficked women's current situation: between progress and struggles

The UK's position has evolved over the past several years with the introduction of new legislation on human trafficking such as: the *Modern Slavery Act 2015*, the *European Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings*. Government has also drawn up a Modern Slavery Strategy, reviewed the National Referral Mechanism, and introduced other legal provisions on trafficking. Although improvements towards the prosecution of offenders, prevention and protection of victims have been made following the Protocol requirements, there is still a lot to do to combat this crime and give a better support to the victims.

Regarding women's situation during the identification process, there is still a persisting failure to identify victims of trafficking – whether because competent authorities misidentify

sometimes trafficked persons as offenders or fail to recognise indicators of trafficking, or because there exists discrimination within the identification process. According to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, in the Article 3 stipulates that;

> "The implementation of the provisions of this Convention by Parties, in particular the enjoyment of measures to protect and promote the rights of victims, shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status."

However, during the interviews conducted throughout the field work the reality is quite different from the one stipulated by the Convention. This means, that the situation may vary depending on whether the victim is a UK citizen, a European citizen, or a non-European, that is, is not the same if a women is from an African or if it is from an Eastern European country. Evidence of this, is the data analysis held by ATMG (2010) which found that in 2009 "only 12 per cent of third country nationals were officially recognised as trafficked, compared with 76 per cent of UK nationals referred into the NRM, and 29 per cent of non-British EU nationals". MacCal (2015) relates the example of a girl who arrived at Heathrow airport accompanied by a British woman. The girl was travelling on a United States passport but was now living in an African country. Raising suspicion of the relationship between the pair, Border staff detained the child and let the woman continue on her travels. However, instead of informing the police and Children's Services straight away, the officials sent instructions for the girl to be flown to the US, even though she'd left there 14 years ago and didn't speak English. The girl was escorted to a holding room to wait for her flight and then taken out again for boarding. It took officials 16 hours after the girl was first detained to inform the

National Referral Mechanism and another 34 hours before she was picked up by a social worker.

The current political scenario in the UK is that 'law enforcements' would rather get people out of the country than keep them in. From that point of view, women are forced most of the time on going down the asylum route, therefore the access women have to support, to services, to advice, counselling and health care, among others sometimes it can be difficult for them to reach. On the question 'what is the situation women that have been trafficked into the UK are currently facing?' this is what the practitioners replied;

> "We [Salvation Army] can provide as the service provider with the Home Office, we can provide outreach support, floating support and things like that, but we therefore, we know the levels of support and the consistency of adequate support can be a challenge sometimes. Not so bad for Eastern European and within the EU, not so bad for women who happen to have that scenario. I mean what is the situation and the reality? I mean obviously while they stay with us they have a safe space, they have access to case workers, they have access to health care and counselling, to support, to legal advice, all of those things under the European Convention and that they are entitled to." (Wileman, 2016)

> "There is a lot of uncertainty [for the women], so basically they have been given this 45 days recovery period and then they answer a 'yes' or 'no' that could change their lives which is hanging by a thread every minute, so I guess is the type of uncertainty, so they can't settle down, they can't make themselves at home, so you try and make them as nice and home as possible, however, is not that easy." (Wilson, 2016)

The weakness in the system within the UK is therefore, what happens with the victims once the competent authorities have made a decision about their circumstances? Once the conclusive ground decision based on women's trafficking experience made by the Home

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Office comes through, the women have to move on from the safe house, and they move either back to their home country or they get leave to remain in the UK. However, as Wileman (2016) argues; "because the weakness of the system is our duty of care technically ends, and therefore we provide support and we provide networking and information about a whole range of another providers, etc. but there is the risk of course that they just fall away and that for whatever reason they don't access these services". Flaws in the system are related, then, to 'moving on' after the 45 days recovery period, in terms of moving on from the safe house, moving on into the community, into a job, into viable either economic and social programs. Following Wileman statement,

> "I don't think the government is interested in that –in my personal opinion, not necessarily the opinion of Salvation Army- is that we haven't understood that fully, and I don't think therefore we are providing the necessary next best step for women particularly in terms of accessing services and support and everything else […] Because they come to the safe house, they will get supported by case workers, etc. but they still don't know anybody, they still don't have really any access to support networks whether it be community work, whether it be language support groups, the people from their own country surrounding them, etc. so from that point of view they don't have access to those things unless they are pointed to that".

In some cases the illegal status of the women who have been trafficked has an influence during the identification process, given that in some instances, decision makers haven't been educated or trained in the right way to fully grasp the concept of human trafficking and the implications it has over the victims (ATMG, 2010). In other cases, the culture of disbelief and denial ingrained in the system especially against non-EU victims, leaves women to prove their situation with back up evidence that ratify their statements in order for them to not be deported. For some this is an impossible task. This also has to do with the pressure decisions

makers receive from the UKVI and the government in terms of reaching migration statistics (Wileman, 2016).

### 3.4.1. The needs of trafficked women

Regarding trafficked women greatest needs, it can vary from each individual situation. For the anti-trafficking practitioners, they outlined the importance of stable accommodation and support given that in many occasions, for example, some women arrive pregnant, they don't have an immediate circle of support; most of the time they don't know anyone in the country. For others, their experiences have been so horrendous they just need someone able to get along with them. As Wileman (2016) explains;

> "For some of them it is just giving them some space and time to be able to recover from their experiences because it's obvious that they're with us, whatever decision is being made about their circumstances, and yet for some women that will take them literally weeks to be able to even just have the most basic of conversations, obviously not only because of the language barrier but because of the trauma of their experiences so that tends to be pretty bad".

Women may need as well support regarding their status in terms of legal advice, visits to the Home Office, visits to lawyers, a full understanding of their situation by case workers, and so forth. Moreover, a lot of the women may need to provide quite detailed information, which may involve multiple rapes and violent situations. Therefore, given the health care implications women may need more time to go through a healing journey where they may come to terms with all of the issues of the nature of their exploitation, which has to be very sensitively supported and handled. With regards of the actions, steps and strategies they as individuals can take to improve their situation, normally as soon as they are identified as potential victims of trafficking, they are supposed to work with the case workers from the safe houses and identify a plan of action that would help them specifically. Depending on

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their circumstances the plan of action may include health advice, health care and support, legal support, counselling, and so forth, which would be assessed on a case by case basis. As cited below;

"they need consistency they need to be empowered, and to reach the next level I guess empowerment is a huge thing to see them succeed in their lives […] So by you providing a support web for them, giving them tasks in the practices where they can develop, so it gives them the responsibility to take care of themselves, so walking step by step with them and giving them goals to reach for themselves." (Wilson, 2016)

"they would have a detailed conversation and they would have a detailed plan with a case worker in terms of what support they need, and also in terms of almost working with them as soon as they arrive regarding their exit and in terms of how that might look and how that might be, and again taking into account everybody's circumstances, everybody's needs. You know, maybe they just want to work here in the UK. We can provide them support, guidance and point them to providers of employment (that are legitimate, that are legal) and we can do that and they can move on very quickly sometimes, and you know, they get safe accommodation, they get safe and good money. So we can do that, but we can also help then through a whole myriad of different plans." (Wileman, 2016)

There should also be offered psycho-therapeutic support to meet the mental health needs of women who have been victims of rape and abuse. As well as support for the physical health needs for women who have suffered forced abortions or who have had STIs. As reported by Zimmerman et al. (2006, 16) in *Stolen Smiles*:

"The findings highlight the range of physical health problems faced by women who have been trafficked […] Trafficked women are at risk of acquiring a range of STIs through their engagement in commercial sex, sexual violence, experiences of coerced sex, and unsafe sex. Nearly half the women (44%) reported having been diagnosed and treated for an STI or RTI

[…] Among the women in this study, 17% reported having at least one abortion during the time that they were trafficked".

Although there is an individual plan, a pathway for each of the victims, the nature of that support is temporary and only last the 45 days they have to recover; sometimes that may extend further to 60/90 days. However there is no obligation to monitor outcomes for people once they leave the safe houses. In fact, a report by Human Trafficking Foundation (2015) disclosed, that those believed to be potential survivors can be given as little as 48 hours' notice to leave a safe house if they fail to satisfy authorities they have been trafficked. According to the report, many survivors felt abandoned once support was withdrawn and "treated like rubbish" with nobody caring for them as they tried to move on with their lives (Davies, 2015).

This leaves us with several questions such as: What is available for victims? Which organisations are available for them? How many bed spaces and where about in the UK? How many are available?

Currently there are 12 organisations (Salvation Army, Poppy Project, Migrant Help, Medaille Trust, Kalayaan, Barnados, Unseen, TARA Project, BAWSO, NSPCC (CTAC), New Pathways, Refugee Council) that act as first responders and that at the same time have connections with other social organisations throughout the country (City Hearts, Palm Cove, Ashiana, Hestia, among others), and that are intended to provide support and housing to the victims, which geographically concentrate most of all in London, and other cities such as Sheffield, Leeds, Bristol, Salford, and through Wales and Scotland. Some of the safe houses provided by the organisations can cover from 10 to 40 bedspaces, depending on the capacity of each organisation. However, the Home Office predicts there may be as many as 13,000 victims in the UK, which if we consider the availability of support it is not enough given the

number of victims, number of organisations and the short period of time they have to support the women. As a report held by Human Trafficking Foundation (2015) *Life beyond the safe house*, find;

> "They may be accommodated and provided with safety and support for a short period of time, but then they must find their own way to survive, instead of being supported and empowered. Unfortunately for some of them, this means either becoming homeless, going back to the control of traffickers or falling back into abusive or exploitative situations. The extent to which this is happening is unclear due to the lack of long-term monitoring, and therefore a lack of data-based evidence" (Human Trafficking Foundation, 2015: 38).

Some NGOs reported cases of victims returning to prostitution or trafficking due to lack of long term support after the 45 days period of reflection and recovery. In an interview for The Guardian, Dorcas Erskine who works for Poppy Project explained how this lack of longer-term support makes victims very vulnerable: "We have several women who are doing survival prostitution, or they slowly drift back into exploitative situations. Victims are being recycled back into the trafficking system" (Gentleman, 2014). Another of the causes as to why women may fall off track again has to do with the lack of financial compensation. Most of the time the identity of trafficked persons is bound to their future prospects, thus, when they leave the recovery period if they have nothing it will affect the construction of their future. For Varsha, an Albanian trafficked victim, her asylum claim was accepted in July 2013: "That felt good, but it was just the beginning of other problems," she says. She no longer had any support with housing and money from the National Asylum Support Service: "When you have nothing, how are you supposed to find somewhere to live?" (Gentleman, 2014). Another statement from the Labour MP Fiona Mactaggart for an interview with The Guardian explained how;

"Too often they [the victims] try to find something to preserve their lives and so they might work illegally or they might revert to prostitution, simply because they need to eat. Because of hysteria around immigration we allow profoundly vulnerable people to drop off the edge and they can't give evidence against cruel, monstrous criminals." (Grant, 2015)

Compensation is one of the rights stipulated under the Convention. Nonetheless, securing realistic access to compensation has not really been in the agenda of the anti-trafficking policy in the UK. According to an ATMG (2011) report; "although there are four avenues available under UK law through which trafficked persons could seek compensation, research by Anti-Slavery International in 2008 identified numerous practical and legal barriers that trafficked persons face in the UK when trying to obtain compensation. [The] report found it unlikely that trafficked persons would receive compensation for their injuries and suffering either from their trafficker or from any statutory agency".

It is clear, that in order to improve the system and provide victims of trafficking the best service there should be strategies from the resources to work with them and properly identify their needs to be able to progress. Regarding funds and compensations[24], there should be a victims of trafficking compensation scheme that is funded by the state. In the same way, there should be pots for victims because the uncertainty of their future has an impact on them, so they would have something to move on. It's also important to know what happens after their process. It doesn't end after leaving trafficking - they should have a support system – it's a right that would help them move from a state of passive victims to one of agency.

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[24] There are now provisions under the Modern Slavery Act for judges to compensate the victims through the confiscate assets of the traffickers. However, there is no evidence that this is being done.

# CONCLUSIONS

*"There is no road to freedom, freedom is the road"*
*-Mohandas Gandhi.*

This research had as its purpose to study the identities, stigma and struggles of women who have been trafficked into the UK. By doing so, it provided a wider insight on the one hand, of women's circumstances and needs; and on the other hand, of what the system has to offer to the victims, its progress and its flaws. The study highlights how the dual roles of media reproductions and policy understandings of trafficking, have reified the image of the 'ideal' type of trafficked women deceived or coerced into leaving, and taken as hostage in brothels, which at the end oversimplifies women experiences of trafficking. In this sense, what does this tell us in the overall? And where do we go from here?

Women's identities and the way they perceive themselves are highly linked to the stigma attached to human trafficking, especially for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Raising awareness within society, and letting these women be their own story-tellers would help to subvert the imaginary of weak, worthless and helpless victims.

Tracking the UK system it is clear there is an inadequacy in its provision as it stands. There is not enough support in the process, the referral system should be improved in order to counter the discrimination and the culture of denial ingrained in the system. Most of authorities only focus on the immigration status instead of on the stories women have to tell. There is a lot of bureaucracy, which leaves victims aside and ignored. As mentioned the by Human Trafficking Foundation (2015), "the UK government has made some significant steps to address modern slavery in the UK by introducing new legislation – the Modern Slavery Act 2015 – as well as drawing up the modern slavery strategy and reviewing the national

referral mechanism […] However, the research shows that there is disparity between theory and practice". Thus, for victims to be taken into account authorities should start by listening the survivors voices –what have they been through? What do they want from the government? Etc. For this instance, academic research should be commissioned in order to have a better idea from field work of these women needs.

The gaps within the current system leave survivors in a very vulnerable situation once the identification process is completed and the 45 days recovery and reflection period has run its course. Another aspect to be considered, and that the agencies could provide in order to improve and support women in a better way, is to have an in-house legal team (in the voluntary agencies) to help them with their legal situation. By making everything in-house, women wouldn't have to tell their stories again and again to different authorities –case workers, judges, among others.

Many of the teams and institutions that have developed protocols and manual care for victims, and even the policies that protect them, had never met or spoken to the victims. And the few who have, have only had a brief contact with them (Wilson, 2016; Flamtermesky, 2016). Many decisions are being taken from the imaginary of what would or should victim be, and that is not the correct way to proceed to either combat this crime or to support the trafficked women. Although there are some facilities in place to support these women, there is still a lot to be done to promote women's well-being and the construction of their own identity. To do that, it is necessary to acknowledge them as agents of their own destinies, providing them with the tools for their own empowerment. Central to this is whether women want to stay in this country or if they want go somewhere else. If they chose to stay, the facilities provided for them must be improved, and this will require appropriate levels of central government funding.

It is also necessary to develop greater international cooperation - both in policing and by statute. That means following the three P's stipulated under the Convention, regularly reviewing the implementation of the Modern Slavery Bill and the Referral Mechanism; and focusing more on the protection of the victims rather than on their migratory status. For tackling the traffickers, technological warfare is a key way forward, which includes internet watch groups, anti-trafficking toolkits, and so forth. However, much more needs to be done –resource wise, the UK facilities currently operate to very limited budgets. Compulsory training for decision makers and front line police officers is much needed as well as the prioritisation of this work from the Centre. Given the appalling abuses that this crime involves, judges should be pressured to apply maximum sentences available for convicted traffickers.

Regarding victim support, saunas, massages parlours and sex clubs should be regulated with regular checks on the health, well-being and working conditions of the women workers. The first responders support agencies should be more closely involved in identification and reception of trafficked persons. More bed spaces should be provided and there should be better funded support for victims. Outside of London support remains virtually non-existent (except from few charities throughout England), changing that will require the Government committing to a far greater level of resourcing than at present. There also needs to be far more effective training in victim identification for front line staff in housing, social services, advice centres and other statutory and voluntary agencies.

The Government should provide long-term support and protection packages for trafficked persons. Most of the efforts to help victims of trafficking focus mostly on prevention campaigns and victim assistance – which includes help returning to home countries, emergency rescue hotlines, leaflets, recovery and reintegration assistance, health care,

guidance, among others. Yet, while this is essential for the recovery of the person, programmes should also address the stigmatisation and marginalisation women are exposed to and which all to often continues to leave them in a vulnerable situation.

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**Annex A.**

**Differences between human trafficking, arms trafficking and drug trafficking 2010. Source: UNODC. The Globalization of Crime, a Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment.**

| TOC PROBLEM | | ESTIMATED EXTENT | ESTIMATED ANNUAL VALUE (US$) | ESTIMATED TREND | POTENTIAL EFFECTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS | TO EUROPE FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION | 70,000 victims (annual) 140,000 victims (stock) | 3 billion (stock) | Stable | Human rights violations |
| SMUGGLING OF MIGRANTS | FROM LATIN AMERICA TO NORTH AMERICA | 3 million entries (annual) | 6.6 billion (income for smugglers) | Declining | Irregular migration, vulnerability of migrants |
| | FROM AFRICA TO EUROPE | 55,000 migrants (annual) | 150 million (income for smugglers) | Declining | Irregular migration, death of migrants |
| COCAINE | FROM THE ANDEAN REGION TO NORTH AMERICA | 309 tons (depart) 196 tons (at destination) | 38 billion (at destination) | Declining | Addiction; drug related crime, corruption and violence in the Andean region; links with illegal armed groups in the Andean region; destabilization and corruption in neighbour-ing states, Central America and Mexico |
| | FROM THE ANDEAN REGION TO EUROPE | 212 tons (depart) 124 tons (at destination) | 34 billion (at destination) | Stable | Addiction, drug related crime and violence, destabilization and corruption in Andean countries, the Caribbean and West Africa |
| HEROIN | FROM AFGHANISTAN TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION | 95 tons (depart) 70 tons (at destination) | 13 billion (at destination) | Increasing | Addiction, spread of HIV/AIDS; increase in organized crime, funding for criminals and insurgents, corruption |
| | FROM AFGHANISTAN TO EUROPE (EXCL. RUSSIA) | 140 tons (depart) 87 tons (at destination) | 20 billion (at destination) | Stable | Addiction, increase in organized crime; funding for criminals and insurgents, corruption |
| TRAFFICKING OF FIREARMS | FROM THE UNITED STATES TO MEXICO | 20,000 weapons, mostly handguns | 20 million | Stable | Rising deaths in Mexico's drug cartel wars |
| | FROM EASTERN EUROPE TO THE WORLD | At least 40,000 Kalashnikovs in 2007/2008 | At least 33 million (in 2007/2008 at destination) | Declining | Death and instability |

**Annex B.**

<div align="center">

**TOPIC GUIDE**

**Research Project Investigating Trafficked Women's Experiences, Struggles and Identities in the UK**

</div>

**Interview guide: Semi structured interviews with women**

Introduction:

- Aims of the project
- Explain the purpose of the interviews
- Information sheet and consent form
- Questions to put participants at ease:
    o What is your first name?
    o Where are you from?
    o How old are you?
    o What did you do in your home country?

Experiences upon arrival in the UK:

- When did you first arrive in the UK?
- Can you tell me why you came to this country?
- Do you feel comfortable telling the way in which this was arranged?

- What were / are your thoughts and feelings about your journey?

- What happened when you first arrived in the country? How did that make you feel?
- Did you feel you were in control of the situation, that you could take your own decisions?

Perception over situation:

- How do you feel about your current situation?
- In your situation, what have you done to make things better for yourself?
- Is there anything else you could have done to make things better for yourself?
- Are there any ways that you are planning to improve your current circumstances?

Support:

- How long were you in the UK before you made contact with the Salvation Army or they made contact with you?
- How did you come into contact with them?
- In what way they have assisted you?
- Are there any ways that you would have liked them to have helped you more?

- What are some of the difficulties you have faced while being in the UK?

- Have you been able to overcome them? If so, how?

- What are you doing now? (Working, studying...)
- How has your experience been before and after your time with the Salvation Army?

Perception over their future:

- How do you perceive yourself now? Has this changed from how you perceived yourself before coming to the country?
- How do you think people perceive you now?
- How do you feel about that?
- What are your plans / hopes for the future?
- Would you like to add/say something else about how you feel and about your circumstances?
- Is there anything else you think it would be useful for me to know for my research?

Closure:

Thank you for your time and your support of this research.

**Interview guide: Semi structured interviews with the organisation staff**

Introduction:

- Aims of the project
- Explain the purpose of the interviews
- Short questions:
  o What's your position in the organization?
  o Can you briefly describe me your role here?
  o How long have you been working here?
  o How would you describe the work of Salvation Army to a member of the public?

Women and services provided:

- How do you interface with the clients?
- How many women has the organization worked with in the past and how many are they working with currently?
- What has been your experience in this work?
- What is the situation women that have been trafficked into the UK are currently facing?
- How do the women arrive at the organization?
- How is it working with the women?
- What do you consider are their greatest needs?
- What principles guide you and the organisation's work with victims?
- From your experience of working alongside trafficked persons, what actions, steps and strategies can they as individuals take to improve their situation?
- Is there anything that they can do collectively to improve their situation?
- Is there anything by way of protection, support or assistance that could be added either by the Salvation Army or other agencies to that which is currently on offer?

- From your experience of working with trafficked women, can you impart how you feel it impacts upon their individual identities?
- Is there anything that your organization provides specifically to enhance / facilitate their sense of personal identity?
- Is there anything more that you could provide in this respect / that other agencies ought to be providing in this respect?
- Is there something else that you wish to add that would be useful for my research?

Closure:

Thank you for your time and your support of this research.

**Annex C.**

<div align="center">

**CONSENT FORM**

</div>

**A Research Project Investigating Trafficked Women's Experiences, Struggles, and Indentities in the UK**

*Participation Consent Form*

1. I have read and understood the Research Study information page and I willingly give my consent to take part in a semi structured interview on the issue of **Trafficked Women's Experiences**.

It has been agreed that if at any time during the interview process I no longer wish to take part in answering of questions, I am able to withdraw. I also have the right to withdraw any contribution I have made in the study to that point.

Participant's Signature: ………………………………. Date: ………………………..