



OUTCOME REPORT

HUMAN TRAFFICKING SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE



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CONTENTS

| Foreword | Page 1 |
|--|---------|
| Background | Page 2 |
| Human Trafficking in Northern Ireland | Page 3 |
| Human Trafficking DOJ Engagement Group | Page 3 |
| Why Did Soroptimists Become Involved? | Page 4 |
| Methodology for Carrying out the Survey | Page 5 |
| Survey Findings | Page 9 |
| | |
| APPENDICES | |
| Appendix A – Legislation | Page 17 |
| Appendix B – Questionnaire | Page 18 |
| Appendix C – Guidance for Interviewers | Page 22 |
| Appendix D – Results for Individual Cities and Towns | Page 23 |
| Appendix E – Minister for Justice – letter | Page 44 |

Acknowledgement

This project was as a result of a huge amount of work and dedication from a great many people without whose help, I would have been unable to produce this document. Therefore I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all of them.

First of all, I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Julie Wilson, Head of Organised Crime Branch and Emma Crozier at the Department of Justice Northern Ireland for their advice and support and for providing necessary guidance to me concerning the project's implementation. In particular, my thanks to Emma who analysed the questionnaire returns and provided the graphical information contained therein.

I would like to express my appreciation of Regional President Mary McKinney BEM (2016-2017) and Immediate Past President Alice Chapman, OBE (Regional President 2015-2016) for their encouragement and support in moving forward with this project.

This project could not have taken place without the involvement of the many N. Ireland Soroptimist members (including the members of the proposed club in Portadown) who gave of their time in order to take action within the cities and towns throughout the province. I would like to express my gratitude and heartfelt thanks to them.

Thank you

Maureen

Maureen Maguire
SINI Representative – DOJ Human Trafficking Engagement Group.

Foreword

Soroptimists in N.I., in partnership with other organisations, lobby to achieve positive quality outcomes for girls and women in health, education, employment and safety. We are a diverse group of women, voluntarily coming together across communities with capacity to represent varied interests.

Soroptimists support action to prevent violence and slavery against women and girls and are committed to support the Department of Justice's Strategy in this area and welcome opportunities to assist in its implementation. We are mindful of the emotional and physical traumatic impact of human trafficking leading to sexual abuse and slavery for both female and male victims.

Recently Soroptimists from N. Ireland carried out a survey on human trafficking. The rationale behind the survey was to gauge the public perception of this horrific matter and to highlight these issues with the population. We were amazed by the number people approached who were unaware that trafficking was a problem here in NI. As the survey was conducted throughout N. Ireland it is hoped the public awareness will be enhanced.

We welcome the positive comments from the Minister for Justice who recognised our unique contribution to raising awareness on the subject of the survey and look forward to working in partnership with other like-minded organisations to raise awareness of the draconian impact of modern day slavery and human trafficking.

Mary McKinney BEM - N I Regional President 2016 - 2017

Alice Chapman OBE – NI Regional President 2015 - 2016

Introduction

Modern slavery is the over-arching term that covers and includes slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking. Victims are unable to leave their situation of exploitation, controlled by threats, punishment, violence, coercion and deception. Slavery violates human rights, denying people of their right to life, freedom and security.

It is widely known that the UK is primarily a country of destination, with thousands of victims arriving from as many as 102 different countries only to be exploited by criminals. Slavery takes many different forms and affects every one of all ages - men, women and children. Those who are enslaved are exploited for the financial gain of their captors. The vulnerable are made to work in cruel conditions for long hours without pay. Examples include women and girls forced into prostitution for profit, young boys made to commit criminal acts against their will and men kept in slave-like conditions in factories.

In 2015, there was a total of 3266 recorded victims of modern slavery in the UK, a 40% increase on the year before. The most common types of exploitation for adults and children in the UK, where known, were labour exploitation and sexual exploitation. Individuals in the UK are exploited for labour in various places of work, from hotels to farms, boats to building sites and nail bars to cannabis factories. Labour exploitation spans the agricultural, hospitality, fishing and construction sectors. In addition, people are exploited for sexual purposes, including forced prostitution, escort work and pornography.

The NRM continues to be the United Kingdom's framework for identifying victims of human trafficking and ensuring they receive the appropriate protection and support. First Responders are responsible for referring potential victims to the NRM (adults need to give their consent to a referral being made on their behalf). Once referred into the NRM cases are assessed by one of the United Kingdom's Competent Authorities, whilst individuals are able to access a range of support services, including safe accommodation; one-to-one support; help with living / travel costs; help to access healthcare; sign-posting to immigration advice; sign-posting to independent legal advice and advice on compensation; help to access counselling or other therapeutic services; and interpreter / translation services.

Although modern slavery can involve the movement of people across an international border, it is also possible to be a victim within one's own country. In 2015, the UK was in the top 5 countries of origin for victims in the UK, and in years previous has featured in the top 3.

Human Trafficking In Northern Ireland

Whilst many people recognise these crimes as global issues, unfortunately Northern Ireland is not immune from them and we cannot say that they do not happen here. In the last financial year the Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) carried out over 252 assessments of individuals in Northern Ireland who were believed to be victims of modern slavery. Numerous pieces of legislation have been introduced that make reference to, and directly tackle, modern slavery (Appendix A).

In 2012, the then Minister for Justice, David Ford instigated the establishment of a Human Trafficking Engagement Group. The purpose of the Group is to formalise and improve the engagement between the Department of Justice, Police, Health and Social Services, and relevant statutory bodies, and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) on the issue of human trafficking, including child trafficking and internal trafficking, and to inform the development of human trafficking policy and programmes.

Human Trafficking DOJ Engagement Group

The Engagement Group operates under the umbrella of the Organised Crime Task Force (OCTF) and its role is to:

- identify the role of statutory and non-statutory groups;
- provide an arena for exchange of information and ideas;
- identify best practice and lessons learned from experience, including from other jurisdictions;
- identify core information needs;
- identify any gaps in information and provision of services;
- identify areas where more research is required;
- facilitate a partnership approach and joint working amongst Government
 Departments, statutory bodies, voluntary and community organisations and
 other agencies to help avoid duplication of effort and to encourage the sharing
 of resources and expertise;

- assist Government and law enforcement agencies etc. in their work in tackling human trafficking;
- inform development of human trafficking policy and programmes;
 and
- seek to identify the groups involved in the issue of human trafficking in Northern Ireland.

The Soroptimist International Northern Ireland Representative on the Human Trafficking Engagement Group in reviewing the *Department of Justice's Strategic Plan Strategic Priority 3 – Prevent* noted that there was an area "Raise awareness, to increase reporting and to reduce demand" that the Soroptimists may be able to help. She offered to assist the Department of Justice to seek to identify a baseline on the awareness of the general public with regard to Human Trafficking.

Why Did Soroptimists Become Involved?

There are many areas to be taken into consideration as to why the Soroptimists should become involved in raising awareness. These include:

Soroptimist Vision -

We are committed to a world where women and girls together achieve their individual and collective potential, realise aspirations and have an equal voice in creating strong, peaceful communities worldwide.

Soroptimist Mission

Soroptimists inspire action and create opportunities to transform the lives of women and girls through a global network of members and international partnerships.

Soroptimist Values

- Human Rights for all
- Global peace and international goodwill
- Advancing women's potential
- Integrity and democratic decision making
- volunteering, diversity and friendship

Soroptimist Goals

1. Soroptimist International will improve the lives and status of women and girls through education, empowerment or enabling opportunities.

2. Soroptimist International will be a global voice for increasing access to education and leadership for women and girls.

Soroptimist International Where We stand – Position Station on Women and Human Trafficking.

Soroptimist International is committed to the protection of human rights and the preservation of human dignity. Soroptimist International will:

- raise awareness by continuing to gather and disseminate evidence-based information related to trafficking and slavery;
- advocate for a greater national action by governments to eliminate human trafficking and slavery:
 and
- act by preventing human trafficking of women and girls through on the ground projects which empower vulnerable women and girls with skills, opportunities and stability; and by supporting women and girls who have been trafficked by providing support services.

Methodology for Carrying out the Survey

As members of a Voluntary Sector Organisation, the representative was very aware of the various area that need to be considered when planning and deciding to carry out a survey.

Approval to Proceed.

The approval to proceed with carrying out a survey questionnaire was given at the Annual General Meeting – SINI in May 2016. During this the advantages and disadvantages were presented:

Advantages

- It can be cost effective way of reaching a large audience.
- It is a way of collecting a lot of information in a short space of time.
- It allows anonymity.
- It can be carried out by post, telephone or online.
- It allows statistical analysis.
- It allows respondents to answer at their convenience, at a time and location where they are comfortable.

Disadvantages

- There is no opportunity to probe for more detail on open-ended questions.
- It sometimes limits the exploration of attitudes and views.
- It may not be appropriate for certain groups
- It may get low response rate.

Following the release of the approval to proceed, discussions between the SINI and DOJ began. It was made known that the DOJ had been given space for 2 questions in the Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey omnibus survey which was to be carried out during 2016. This survey is a sample survey which contains questions about a wide range of issues, and is carried out on a regular basis in order to provide a snapshot of the lifestyle and views of the people of Northern Ireland.

Therefore, it was felt that a more clear and focused questionnaire, simply relating to awareness would be sufficient to gain baseline information and after discussion between SINI and the DOJ, it was decided to produce a simple survey questionnaire that would be easy to complete by any member of the public. (Questionnaire attached at Appendix B).

Identifying the objectives

An agreement was reached that SINI would conduct a short survey during Anti-Slavery Week commencing on Saturday 15th October 2016 and finishing on Saturday 22nd October 2016. The objectives of this survey were to:

- to gauge public awareness of the presence of modern slavery in Northern Ireland
 and
- their understanding of common signs and indicators that a person may be a victim.

I believe this will not only provide us with valuable information that will help to shape (and evaluate) future awareness raising campaigns, but it will also, of itself, help to raise public awareness.

Designing the Survey

The key areas considered were

- To keep it as short as possible, it should take no longer than 5 min to complete.
- To use plain, simple language and avoid jargon.
- To use a mixture of open and closed questions.

- To use clear headings and numbers to structure your survey.
- To make sure to use an easy to read font such as Arial and at least font size 12.

All of these key areas were evident in the questionnaire that has been produced. (Guidance Document for Interviewers attached at Appendix C)

Carrying out survey

The following methodology was used when carrying out the survey

- Face to face questioning/completing the questionnaire was agreed to be the simplest and least costly. (Various options were considered - such should it be a postal, electronic or telephone or face to face questioning)
- A total of 1200 questionnaires were circulated amongst the clubs, this enable a
 calculation of the overall response rate post conclusion. 100 questionnaires
 were given to each club who had been asked to cover two towns/cities close to
 one another. That way, the response was to cover as much as possible across
 the geographical area of Northern Ireland.
- The survey was to be carried out by at least 2 members of the Soroptimist Club, each member were to wear their Soroptimist badge.
- Agreement that the completion of the survey was to cover both genders –
 male and female we were not being prescriptive in allocating a percentage
 basis for these.
- There were four age bandings and if possible all of these should have been covered equally or as close as possible.
- It was noted that it was important that the interviewer should reassure the interviewee that the survey would be completely anonymous.
- It was important that the sampling technique was consistent and open; not just picking those who interviewers would prefer to include or only including people who they thought would be more likely to respond.
- The survey questionnaire could be completed by the Soroptimist on behalf of the interviewee or by the interviewee themselves.

- On completion of the survey, completed questionnaire were given to each Club Programme Action Officer, who put them into a sealed envelope and wrote the name of the location where the survey took place on the front of the envelope.
- Club Programme Action Officer then made contact with the SINI Representative to arrange for collection.

Analysing findings

Once all surveys have been returned to the Representative, a coding reference number was added to each survey questionnaires, this reference number was used solely to identify the area in Northern Ireland so that trends could be identified. All completed surveys were given to the DOJ who carried out the analysis. Conclusions and recommendations have been drawn up from the data provided and this is presented below.

Presenting results

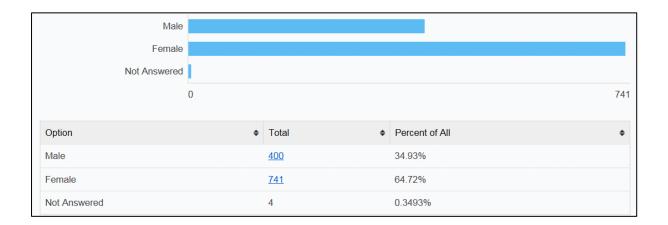
Once the survey has been completed and the results have been analysed, this report seeks to present and publicise the findings. Results for Individual cities and towns throughout Northern Ireland are attached at Appendix D.

Letter of thanks from Justice Minister

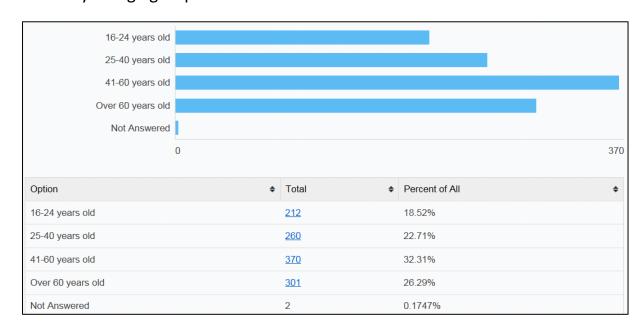
A letter of thanks from Justice Minister Claire Sugden is attached at Appendix E.

Survey Findings

The findings from the analysis are presented below. Survey questionnaires were carried out in a total of 21 towns and cities across Northern Ireland. Ten Soroptimist clubs participated plus members from the new proposed club in Portadown. These members completed 1145 surveys of which 65 % respondents were female and 35% were male.



All clubs covered all age groups with the greatest number of respondents being in the 41-60 year age group.



Question 1 -

To what extent do you think human trafficking and modern slavery are present in Northern Ireland?

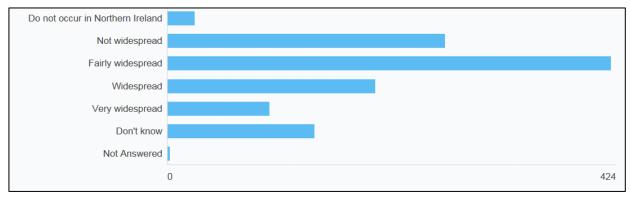
Respondents were provided with seven categories and asked to choose one which best reflected their views on the extent of human trafficking and modern slavery in Northern Ireland. The most popular category chosen was "fairly widespread" (424).

54% of respondents thought that human trafficking and modern slavery was either very widespread, widespread or fairly widespread compared to 21% who felt that it did not occur or was not widespread. The remaining respondents either stated that they did not know how widespread the issue was or choose not to answer the question.

Annex B provides a breakdown of the answers received to this question by town and city. In Portadown, the most popular category chosen was "widespread". The most popular category chosen in 15 of the 20 towns were the survey was carried out was "fairly widespread". However, in Banbridge, an equal number of people felt that human trafficking and slavery were "not widespread" and, in Cookstown, an equal number of people stated that they did not know how widespread it was.

In Enniskillen and Hillsborough, the most common category was "not widespread".

Human trafficking and slavery is by its nature a hidden crime, so we don't know the full extent of its scale in Northern Ireland. However, in 2015/16, PSNI screened 252 people as suspected victims of modern slavery. Of these, 59 agreed to be formally identified and referred for support.



Question 2 – Where have you heard about human trafficking and slavery?

| Option | Total |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Do not occur in Northern Ireland | 19 |
| Not widespread | 265 |
| Fairly widespread | 424 |
| Widespread | 198 |
| Very widespread | 97 |
| Don't know | 140 |
| Not answered | 2 |

Respondents were asked to specify where they had heard about human trafficking and slavery. A range of answers were given but the four most popular responses were "newspaper," "TV/films/media," "news," and "online."

| Option | Total |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Newspaper | 475 |
| TV/films/media | 376 |
| News | 346 |
| Online | 273 |
| Social media | 41 |
| Poster | 44 |
| Radio | 40 |
| Community meeting | 33 |
| NGO/community group | 44 |
| Leaflet | 30 |
| Work | 27 |
| Church | 31 |
| School | 25 |
| Documentaries | 23 |
| Word of mouth | 16 |
| Friends/family | 21 |
| Public talks | 7 |
| Anti-trafficking campaigns | 6 |
| Court reports | 5 |
| University | 5 |
| In country outside NI | 5 |
| Youth group | 3 |
| Billboard | 2 |
| Policing meetings | 2 |
| Religious groups | 2 |
| Charities | 3 |

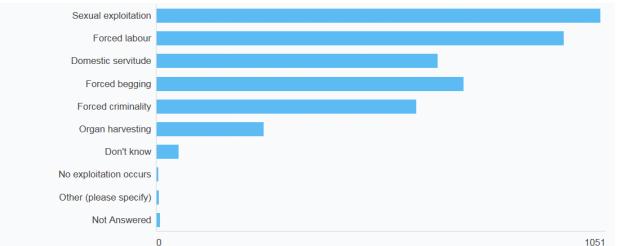
| Demonstration/awareness raising play | 2 |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Books | 2 |
| Gangmaster | 1 |

Question 3 -

What type of exploitation do you believe victims of human trafficking and slavery are subjected to? (Please tick all that apply)

Respondents were asked to identify the types of exploitation that victims of human trafficking and slavery are subjected to. Respondents were provided with a list of categories and asked to tick all that they felt applied. 78% of respondents (1051) thought that victims could be subjected to sexual exploitation and 72% (963) identified forced labour as an exploitation type.

In 2015, 58% of potential victims referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) were for labour exploitation, compared to 23% for sexual exploitation.



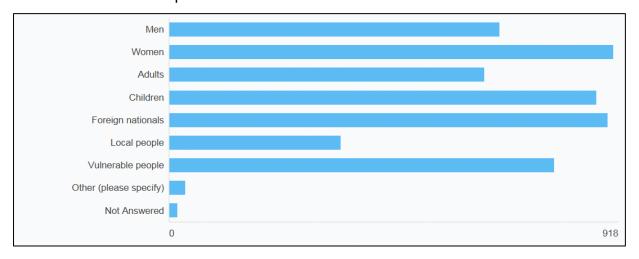
| Option | Total | |
|------------------------|-------|--|
| Sexual exploitation | 1051 | |
| Forced labour | 963 | |
| Domestic servitude | 665 | |
| Forced begging | 726 | |
| Forced criminality | 615 | |
| Organ harvesting | 252 | |
| Don't know | 51 | |
| No exploitation occurs | 1 | |
| Other ¹ | 5 | |
| Not answered | 7 | |

¹ Other exploitation types specified included drug trafficking.

Question 4 – Who do you think could become a victim of human trafficking/slavery? (Please tick all that apply)

Respondents were asked to identify who could become a victim of human trafficking or slavery. Respondents felt that women (918), foreign nationals (905) and children (882) were more likely to become victims of human trafficking or slavery. Only 26% (354) felt that local people could become victims. 59% (795) felt that vulnerable people could become victims.

Human trafficking and slavery can affect both males and females; children and adults; migrant communities and local people. In addition, exploiters often prey on vulnerabilities inherent in the victim's personal circumstances.



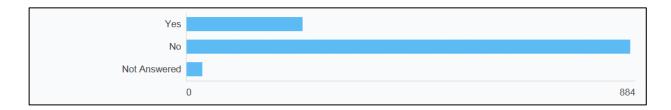
| Option | Total |
|--------------------|-------|
| Men | 682 |
| Women | 918 |
| Adults | 650 |
| Children | 882 |
| Foreign nationals | 905 |
| Local people | 354 |
| Vulnerable people | 795 |
| Other ² | 31 |
| Not answered | 15 |

² Thirteen people said that anyone could become a victim of human trafficking/slavery. Other answers given included: people in the care system; drug addicts and; refugees.

Question 5 -

Would you recognise the signs that someone is potentially a victim of human trafficking and modern slavery?

Respondents were asked if they would be able to recognise the signs that someone had been trafficked and 77% (884) felt that they would not be able to.



| Option | Total | Percent |
|--------------|-------|---------|
| Yes | 231 | 20.17% |
| No | 884 | 77.21% |
| Not answered | 30 | 2.62% |

Question 5a – If yes, please specify what you think the signs are

Respondent were also asked to specify the signs and a range of answers were given.

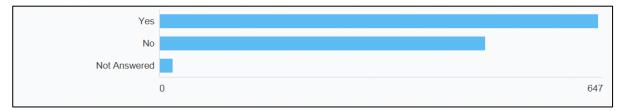
A detailed list of signs can be found at: https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/human-trafficking

| Option | Total |
|---|-------|
| Frightened/wary/scared | 33 |
| Being accompanied by someone at all times/dependent on someone else | 28 |
| Unusual behaviour/demeanour | 24 |
| Nervous/withdrawn/quiet | 23 |
| Begging on the street | 24 |
| Sad/depressed | 18 |
| Being controlled by someone | 14 |
| No communication or eye contact | 14 |
| Houses of multiple occupancy/multiple housing moves/suspicious activity in premises | 13 |
| Thin/malnourished | 12 |
| Dress | 13 |
| Limited freedom of movement/isolated | 12 |
| Injured/ill health/discomfort | 10 |
| Limited access to money/control on how or where money is spent | 9 |

| No English /away from home | 10 |
|--|----|
| Signs of physical or psychological trauma | 7 |
| Long working hours | 9 |
| Poor hygiene | 7 |
| Body language | 7 |
| Poor living conditions/accommodation | 7 |
| Signs of substance misuse | 5 |
| Passport identity documents held be someone else | 4 |
| Disclosure | 3 |
| Tone/volume of voice | 3 |
| Works in sex industry | 2 |
| Pay transferred to other accounts | 2 |

Question 6 – Would you know how to report suspicions of human trafficking/modern slavery?

Respondents were asked if they knew how to report suspicions of human trafficking/modern slavery and 56% felt that they did.



| Option | Total |
|--------------|-------|
| Yes | 647 |
| No | 480 |
| Not answered | 18 |

Question 6a – If yes, how would you report suspicions?

When asked how they would report suspicions, 568 respondents answered that they would inform the police.

If someone has suspicions of human trafficking/modern slavery, they should inform the police on 999 in case of an emergency or 101 about a general situation. Suspicions can also be reported anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or via the Modern Slavery Helpline on 0800 0121 700.

| Option | Total |
|----------------------------|-------|
| PSNI | 568 |
| Social services | 33 |
| Councillors/MP | 10 |
| Crimestoppers | 7 |
| NSPCC | 4 |
| Church | 3 |
| Citizen's Advice Bureau | 3 |
| Immigration Services | 3 |
| Trafficking specialists | 3 |
| Childline | 2 |
| APP | 1 |
| Equality Commission | 1 |
| GP | 1 |
| NI Human Rights Commission | 1 |
| Private groups | 1 |
| Salvation Army | 1 |
| Social Security Agency | 1 |
| Anyone nearby | 1 |

Appendix A

| Title | Year | Legislation Type |
|---|------|---|
| Convention Concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour (No.29) | 1930 | International Labour Organisation Convention |
| The Palermo Protocols [Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC)] | 2000 | United Nations Convention |
| Sexual Offences Act | 2003 | Act of UK Parliament |
| Gangmasters (Licensing) Act | 2004 | Act of UK Parliament |
| Coroners & Justice Act | 2009 | Act of UK Parliament |
| European Convention on Human Rights | 2010 | Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom |
| Modern Slavery Act | 2015 | Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom |
| Human Trafficking and Exploitation Act | 2015 | Act of the Scottish Parliament |
| Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act | 2015 | An Act of the Northern Irish Assembly |
| Immigration and Asylum Act | 2016 | Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom |

Appendix B – Questionnaire

Survey on human trafficking and modern slavery

Soroptimist International is carrying out this anonymised survey, with the support of the Department of Justice (DOJ), to determine the public's perceptions of human trafficking and modern slavery in Northern Ireland.

We are grateful that you have agreed to give us a few minutes of your time to share your views with us.

Results of this survey will help the DOJ and its partners to shape future awareness raising campaigns relating to human trafficking and slavery.

| Gender | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Male | |
| Female | |
| We would be grateful if yo | u could indicate which age group you fall into: |
| 16 - 24 years old | |
| 25 - 40 years old | |
| 41 – 60 years old | |
| Over 60 years old | |

| 1. | | what extent do you th Northern Ireland? | nink human traf | afficking and modern slavery are present |
|----|-------------|--|--------------------|--|
| | k c | Do not occur in lot occur in lo | d | nd |
| 2. | nev | • | | rafficking and slavery? E.g. nmunity Group. Please specify any details |
| 3. | a) b) c) d) | Sexual exploitation Forced labour Domestic servitude Forced criminality | f (please tick all | feve victims of human trafficking and all that apply) f) Organ harvesting g) Don't know h) No exploitation occurs i) Other (Please specify) |

| a) Me | en | | | f) | Local people | |
|--------|---------------------------|----------|--------------------------------|------|----------------------|-----------|
| o) Wo | omen | | | g) | Vulnerable peop | ole |
| c) Ad | ults | | | h) | Other (Please sp | pecify) |
| d) Chi | ildren | | | | | |
| e) For | reign nati | onals | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | - | _ | e signs that s nodern slave | | e is potentially a v | victim of |
| | - | ng and m | odern slave | ery? | e is potentially a v | |
| numar | n trafficki | ng and m | odern slave | ery? | | |
| a) | r trafficki Yes | ng and m | odern slave | ery? | | |
| a) | r trafficki Yes | ng and m | odern slave | ery? | | |

|). | | would you know how to report suspicions of numan trafficking/modern slavery? | | | |
|-----------|----|--|------------------------|--|--|
| | a) | Yes | (Please specify below) | | |
| | b) | No | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Guidance for Interviewers - Appendix C

Human trafficking and modern slavery in Northern Ireland

In 2015-16 there were **61** referrals of potential victims of human trafficking to the National Referral Mechanism³ from Northern Ireland

Victims of human trafficking and slavery can be subjected to:

Sexual exploitation

Forced labour

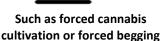
Criminal exploitation Dor

Domestic servitude











Organ harvesting is another exploitation type, however, there is no evidence that this has occurred in Northern Ireland.

Of the 61 referrals made to the NRM in 2015/16, **37** were for labour exploitation, **14** were for sexual exploitation, **three** were for domestic servitude and in **seven** cases the nature of the exploitation involved is unknown.

Human trafficking and modern slavery affects males and females; children and adults. Victims **do not** all come from migrant communities. There have been cases of local

Signs/indicators

A potential victim of human trafficking or modern slavery might:

- Allow others to speak for them when directly addressed
- Have their movement controlled and show fear or anxiety
- Be subjected to violence/threats of violence
- Be unfamiliar with the local language
- Not be in possession of their passport or other identity documents, as those are being held by someone else
- They are in a situation of dependence.

Reporting suspicions

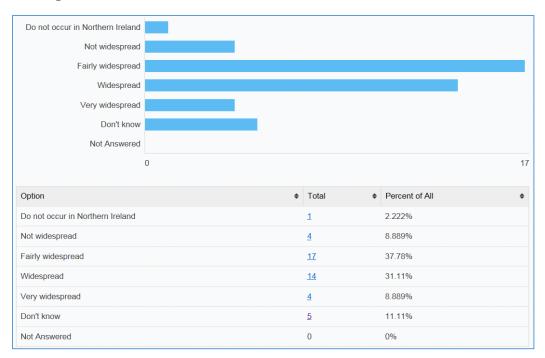
If someone believes that a person might be a victim of human trafficking, they should:

- Ring 999 (if they think that the person is in imminent danger) or;
- 2. Ring 101 to report suspicions to the police (or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111).

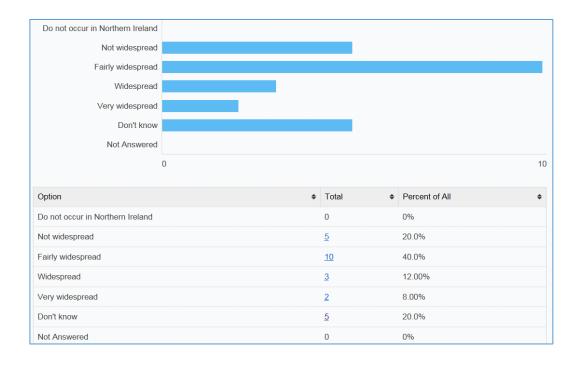
Appendix D

Results for Individual Cities and Towns throughout Northern Ireland

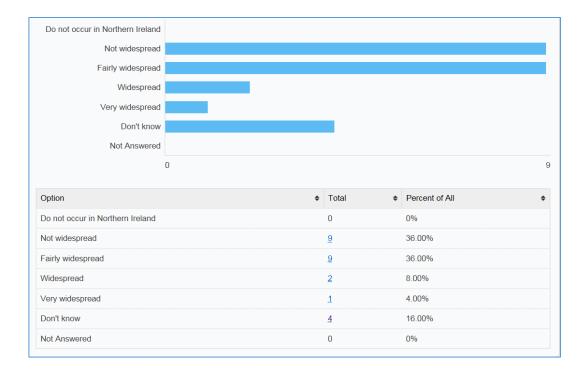
Armagh



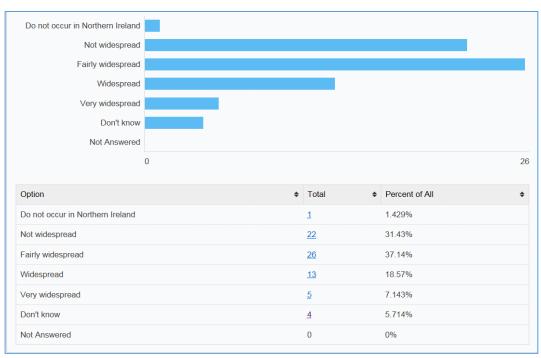
Ballynahinch



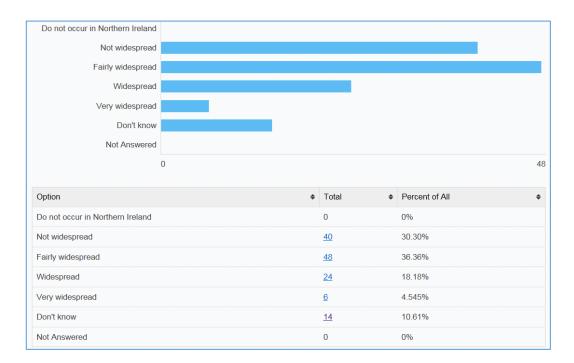
Banbridge



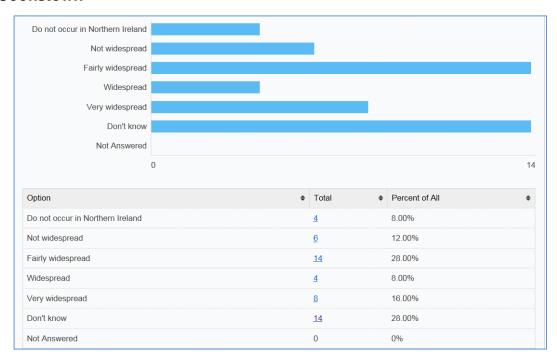
Bangor



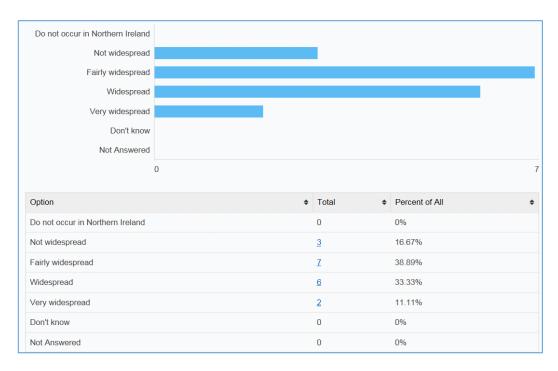
Belfast



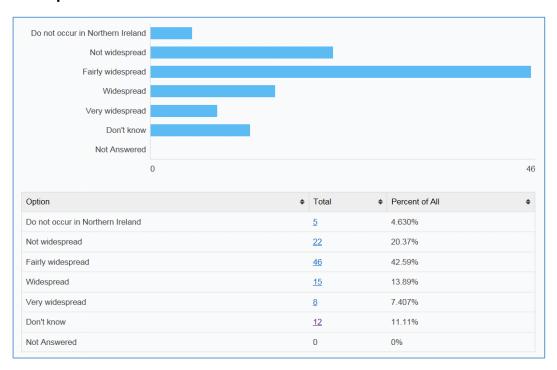
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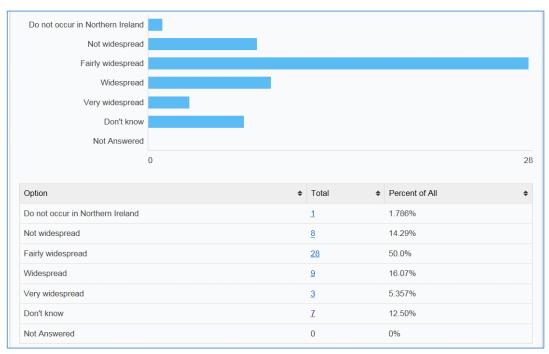
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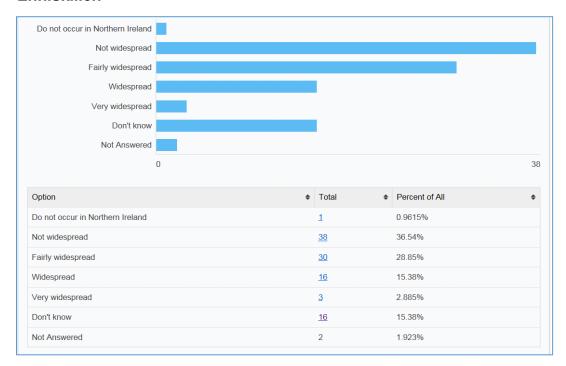
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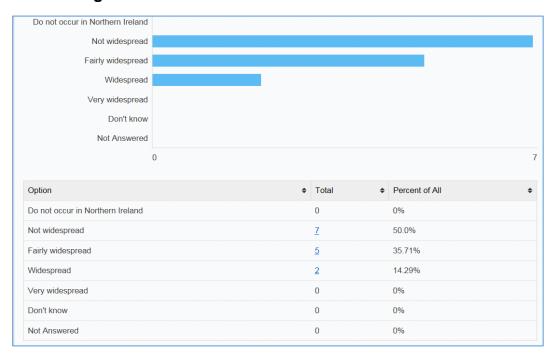
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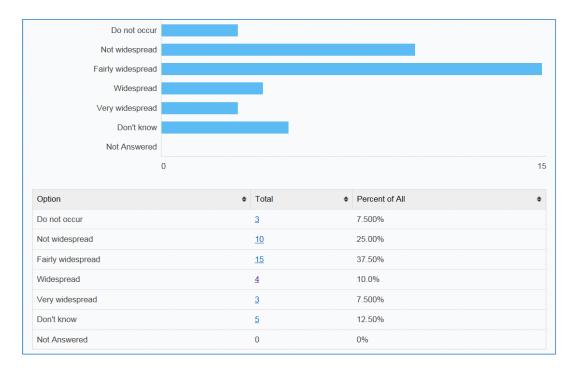
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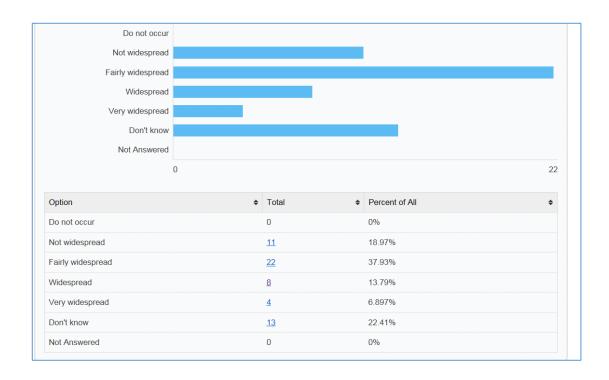
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Lisburn



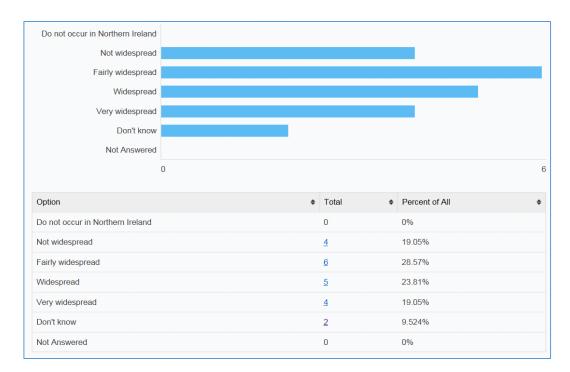
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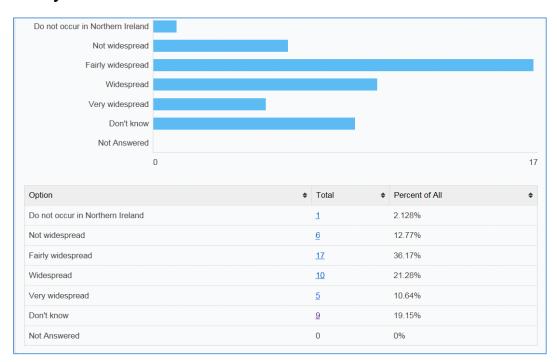
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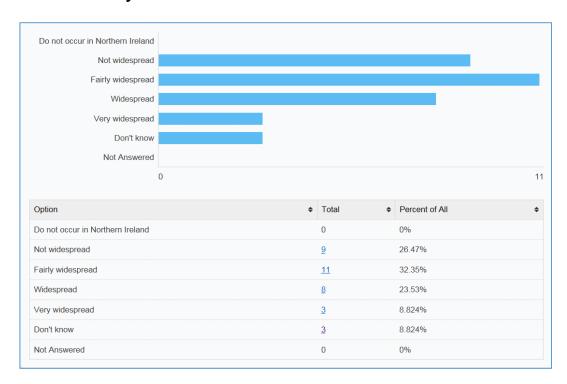
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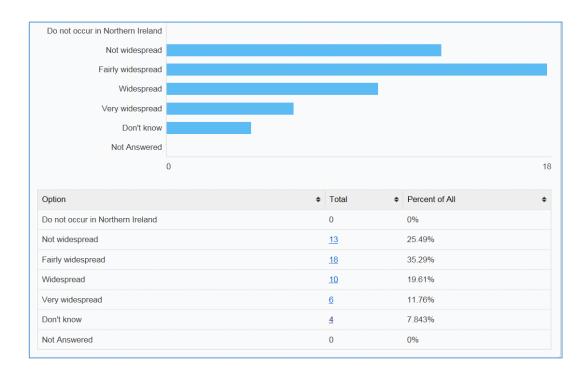
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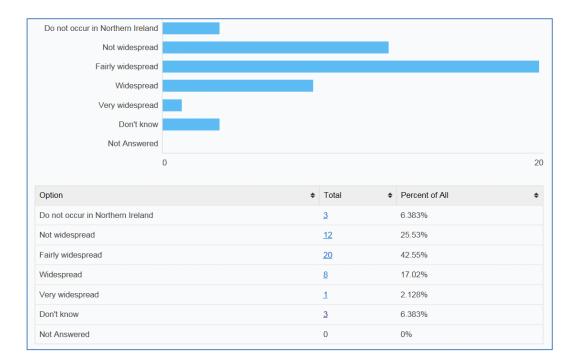
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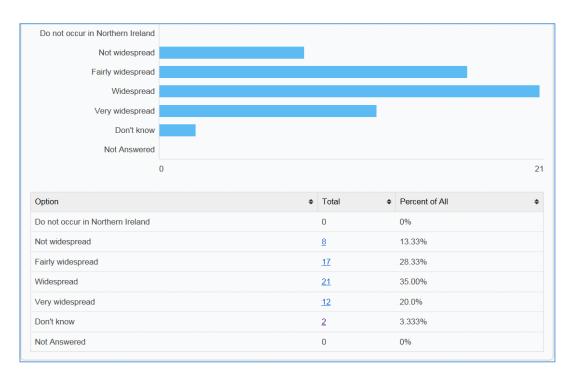
Newtownards



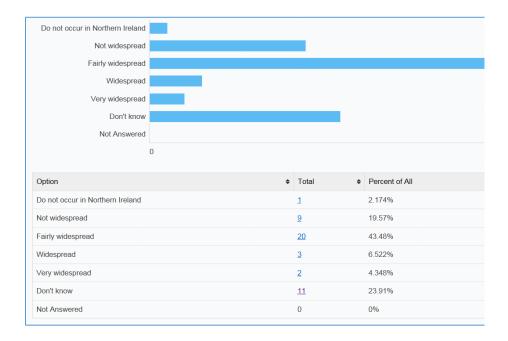
Omagh



Portadown



Strabane



30 November 2016

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL SURVEY OF MODERN SLAVERY AWARENESS

I am writing to express my sincere thanks to Soroptimist International Northern Ireland for your work to survey public awareness of the issue of human trafficking and modern slavery in Northern Ireland as part of Anti-Slavery Day last month. I am aware too of the cross-border element to the survey in collaboration with Soroptimist International branches in Ireland which I believe provides and additional valuable dimension to this piece of work.

Modern slavery is a horrendous abuse of human rights that rips apart the lives of victims. Public awareness — equipping both key sectors and the wider public to recognise and report modern slavery where they see it — is vital if we are going to be effective in our response. When I visited with those of your members conducting the survey outside Belfast City Hall I was particularly struck by their commitment and dedication to raising awareness of these issues. Their work through this survey not only provides a vital insight into the current level of public awareness but also is helping to identify where there are current gaps in public knowledge and as such inform and enhance our future campaigns.

In fact, through your very visible presence and direct engagement with communities across Northern Ireland I believe Soroptimist International (NI)'s work on this survey has already served to heighten public awareness of human trafficking and modern slavery.

Thank you again for your ongoing commitment to tackling modern slavery and for the efforts of all your branches and members who have made this survey such a success. I value my Department's continued partnership with Soroptimist International (NI) in tackling modern slavery and human trafficking.

CLAIRE SUGDEN MLA

Minister of Justice