



Tackling Labour Exploitation Together

As a business leader, you're in a unique position to do something about the slavery and exploitation of workers happening within your industry right now.

But, unless you know the full scale of the problem – who is being exploited, how, and by whom - you won't be armed with the information you need to make a difference.

That's why the **Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA)** has created a single [report](#) outlining the reality of labour exploitation in the UK today, drawing on many months of research, victim statements, operational activity and daily workplace inspections.

We've broken down some key points here to ensure you're as informed as possible.

KEY FINDINGS



There's a higher risk of modern slavery and worker exploitation in sectors where there's a **high turnover of staff** and where jobs are **low skill** and **low wage**, giving exploiters ample opportunity to thrive unnoticed, including the following industries:

Food/hotels	Food packaging	Warehouse and distribution	Transport
Manufacturing	Nail bars	Fishing	Agriculture
Domestic work	Care homes	Recycling/waste disposal	Social care
Car washes	Food processing	Shellfish gathering	Construction
Retail	Cleaning		



The UK is one of the main destinations of trafficked workers in Europe, with labour exploitation being the most common form of exploitation for both adults and children.

It's estimated there are **40 million** people living in slavery globally, with tens of thousands of those in the UK. **Forced labour** accounts for around 30% of all exploitation. The majority of victims are male EU nationals from **Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Poland, Romania and Slovakia**.



Exploiters and their victims usually have the same nationality - sharing the same language and culture can help with **recruitment and control**. Sometimes foreign workers can't speak English, so they're particularly susceptible to exploitation. We've seen cases where victims' movements are controlled and medical treatment has been refused, while other victims have been prevented from using the telephone or the internet, leaving them isolated and unable to seek help.



Victims of labour exploitation are most commonly **Vietnamese, Albanian and British**.

We've seen **debt bondage** used as a tactic by exploiters, where a victim is forced to work to pay off debts they have no control over. Their wages and bank accounts are controlled and cash is withdrawn without their permission. Globally, **over 70% of adults** forced to work in agriculture, domestic

work or manufacturing are involved in debt bondage. Victims are often kept in the dark about how much they owe and other deductions, like travel, rent and food, may be taken. This gains interest and may be impossible to repay, **increasing the power and control over victims**.

Some criminals get workers to register themselves as **self-employed**, which sees them give up their rights, including holiday and sick pay.



Social media, particularly Facebook, is being used to recruit workers who go on to be exploited. There's often no screening process or face-to-face meeting and some workers arrive in the UK to find the employment they have been promised doesn't exist.



Some workers are charged a daily rate for transport to and from work, with costs sometimes taken directly from workers' wages. Victims of exploitation generally tend to **live in poor, overcrowded conditions lacking basic facilities** like electricity, heating and water. And they have little choice; they may be threatened with losing their job if they find somewhere else to live.

Exploiters often control their victims by taking their identity documents or by taking control of their wages and bank accounts. They take cash to cover any 'debts' accrued. These 'debts' build interest and may never feasibly be repaid.

You have an important role to play in putting an end to slavery for good. **Be informed. Be alert. Be proactive.** Report your concerns to us by calling our helpline on **0800 432 0804** or email our intelligence team at **intelligence@glaa.gsi.gov.uk**.

Thank you, **GLAA**