

Human trafficking in 2013 and 2014 - A cross-border analysis

176 potential or suspected victims of human trafficking were recorded across both jurisdictions during 2013 and 2014.

In 2013, **41** potential victims of human trafficking were referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) from Northern Ireland and **44** suspected victims of human trafficking were encountered by the An Garda Síochána in the Republic of Ireland.

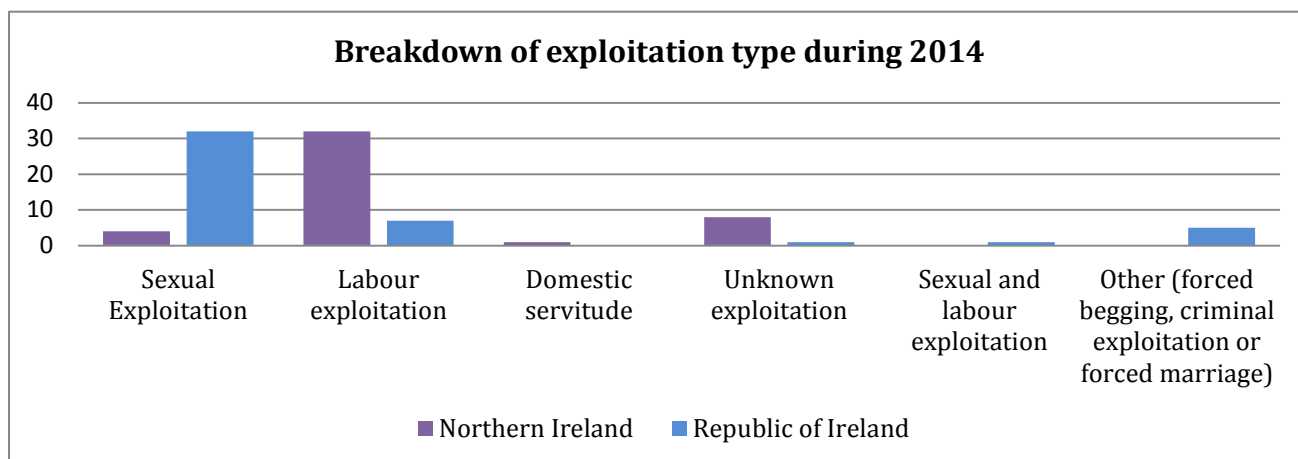
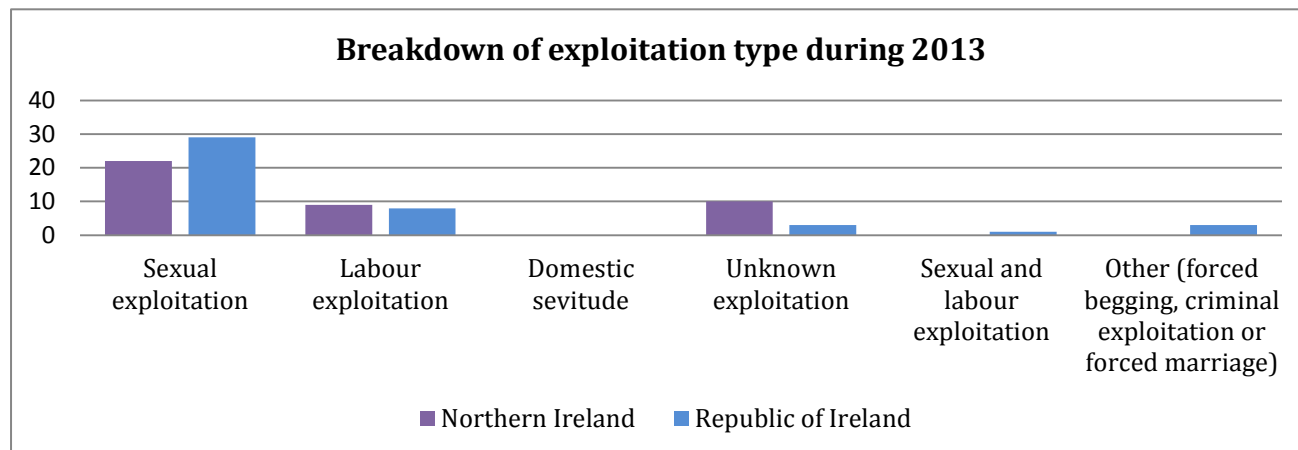
In 2014, **45** potential victims of human trafficking were referred to the NRM from Northern Ireland and **46** suspected victims of human trafficking were encountered by the An Garda Síochána in the Republic of Ireland.

Please note that the 2014 figures quoted for the Republic of Ireland are still provisional and may be subject to change.

The *known* figures quoted here represent only part of the picture. More may be hidden.

Breakdown of exploitation type

The graphs below show that, during 2013, sexual exploitation was the most prevalent exploitation type in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. During 2014, sexual exploitation was the most prevalent exploitation type in the Republic of Ireland but labour exploitation was the most prevalent type in Northern Ireland.



Gender of potential victims

In 2013, 68% of all potential victims recovered across both jurisdictions were female, decreasing to 52% in 2014. The increase in male victims in 2014 is linked to a large scale police operation into forced labour in Northern Ireland.

Age of potential victims

Over both years and in both jurisdictions there were more adult potential victims recovered than minors (67% in Northern Ireland; 68% in the Republic of Ireland).

	Northern Ireland				Republic of Ireland		
	2013	2014	Total		2013	2014	Total
Adults	21	37	58		28	33	61
Minors	20	8	28		16	13	29

Country of origin of potential victims

The top 7 most prevalent countries of origin of victims recovered across both jurisdictions during 2013 and 2014 were:

1. **Romania** – 53 of the 176 potential/suspected victims (30%) were Romanian nationals. *34 were recovered in Northern Ireland and 19 in Republic of Ireland.*
2. **Ireland** – 25 of the 176 potential/suspected victims (14%) were Irish nationals. *5 were recovered in Northern Ireland and 20 were recovered in the Republic of Ireland.*
3. **Nigeria** – 18 of the 176 potential/suspected victims (10%) were Nigerian nationals. *3 were recovered in Northern Ireland and 15 were recovered in the Republic of Ireland.*
4. **China** – 17 of the 176 potential/suspected victims (10%) were Chinese nationals. *15 were recovered in Northern Ireland and 2 were recovered in the Republic of Ireland.*
5. **United Kingdom** – 12 of the 176 potential/suspected victims (7%) were UK nationals. *All 12 were recovered in Northern Ireland.*

*It is worth emphasising that victims do not necessarily come from overseas: **one fifth** of the potential/suspected victims of human trafficking recovered in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland were UK or Irish nationals.*

Other countries of origin of potential/suspected victims of human trafficking recovered in both jurisdictions during 2013/14 include:

- | | | | |
|---------------|------------------|------------|------------------|
| • Albania | • South Africa | • Egypt | • Somalia |
| • Vietnam | • South Korea | • Bulgaria | • Moldavia |
| • Slovakia | • Western Sahara | • Cameroon | • Czech Republic |
| • Portugal | • Poland | • Pakistan | • Hungary |
| • Philippines | • Guinea Bissau | • Zimbabwe | • Congo |
| • Kuwait | | | |

Identification process

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, victims of human trafficking are identified through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). The NRM is the United Kingdom's framework for identifying victims of human trafficking and ensuring they receive the appropriate protection and support. First Responders, such as the police and health authorities, are responsible for referring potential victims to the NRM.

Once a referral has been made, a Competent Authority (the UK Human Trafficking Centre for all EEA cases and UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) in non-EEA cases) assesses the case to determine if the person has been trafficked. A potential victim referred to the NRM is entitled to assistance and support until the Competent Authority makes a conclusive determination about whether or not the person is a victim of trafficking.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) currently funds Migrant Help to provide this support to adult male potential victims of human trafficking and Women's Aid to support adult female potential victims of human trafficking. The support includes: 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. Child potential victims are supported by the Health and Social Care Trusts.

The NRM is currently under review, which is aimed at improving effectiveness and outcomes for victims.

Republic of Ireland

The process for the identification of victims of human trafficking is based on the model developed by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) as set out in the IOM Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of Trafficking. This involves a two-step process with an assessment of the various indicators of trafficking and a detailed interview with the person by An Garda Síochána. All relevant information from the potential victim and from their legal representative and NGO/care-worker assisting the victim is considered in the assessment.

At the moment, there are no formal means for recognising that a person who has an existing lawful permission to remain in Ireland has been identified as a suspected victim of human trafficking. However, it is important to emphasise that access to support services is available to all potential victims of human trafficking - including from the point of their initial contact with An Garda Síochána.

Services include provision of accommodation and support of Health Service Executive Human Trafficking Team which, as required, may involve assistance with: medical, sexual and psychological health; social, spiritual needs, relationship and family needs; education, training and employment; and legal and immigration matters. Free legal advice and support is also available from the Legal Aid Board, including in respect of immigration status and compensation and asylum claims.