

Construction Industry

Headline Trends



Intelligence related overwhelmingly to the London area, with intelligence also concentrated in smaller numbers in the West Midlands, Nottinghamshire, Essex and Bedfordshire. Potential victims are often Romanian, male, and can be of any age.







Recruitment

Proactive recruitment from Poland and Romania. Individuals are organising a regular overseas labour force to meet UK demand. Non-English speakers are targeted.

Workers may be deceived, with work not materialising or being under different conditions to those promised.

Transport to the UK

Workers commonly arrive by minibus, coach or van, with regular services from Romania particularly. Some potential exploiters will travel overseas to collect workers.

Accommodation

Regularly organised in residential properties, often with the potential exploiter and/or other employees. This may be in outbuildings.

Some potential victims live onsite without access to basic facilities.

Health and Safety

Reports have identified individuals working without genuine CSCS certificates, relevant training and/or previous experience. Language barriers lead to miscommunications. Lack of PPE has led to some injuries requiring medical attention.





Payment

Some workers are unsure about when or how much they will be paid and their employment status. Workers may be owed thousands of pounds resulting in significant financial difficulty. Wage deductions may be made for accommodation and work finding fees.

Working Conditions

Long working hours of over 84 hours per week were recorded. Workers may have to work longer than their contracted hours for no extra payment. Some workers have been described as malnourished. Limited information suggests that drugs have been used by workers to cope with working conditions.

Horizon Scanning

Issues with attracting and retaining workers; key factors being an aging workforce and Brexit.

Prolonged skills shortage in the industry.



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Key Questions to Prevent and Identify Labour Exploitation



- How do you ensure workers on site know how much they should be paid?
- Do you have a publicised reporting process for complaints by workers?
- Do you have access to translation services in your organisation?
- Do you have any additional due diligence checks for workers at risk of being exploited?
- Do you know and understand each level of your supply chain, including contractors? Do you conduct background checks?
- Do members of your organisation receive training on spotting the signs of modern slavery and labour exploitation?
- Do you have an internal escalation process if you identify an issue of exploitation? Do you know who to contact?
- Have you considered joining the construction protocol?

What to consider when reporting intelligence

Example: A construction company are hiring workers from Romania and paying them below minimum wage, cash in hand.

What else? Provide more details about the workers involved – do any appear to be minors? Male or female? How many workers are affected? What hours do they work? How are workers arriving, are there vehicle details? How does recruitment occur? Are there any more company details? What is the geographical impact – where are workers living and working? How recent is this information?



Whilst not all factors may be known, any additional details will assist the GLAA in identifying people and locations involved for operational purposes and to improve our intelligence picture.



Information about the Construction Protocol is available at https://www.gla.gov.uk/i-am-a/i-use-workers/construction-protocol/

Other GLAA resources are available at

https://www.gla.gov.uk/publications/resources/ including a useful "Spotting the Signs" leaflet at https://www.gla.gov.uk/media/4285/spot-the-signs-glaa.pdf

Who to Contact

Please report to the GLAA:

- Unlicensed trading in the regulated sector (agriculture, horticulture, shellfish gathering and any associated processing and packaging) across the UK.
- Labour market offences (non-payment of the National Minimum Wage, breach of Employment Agency Standards) in the regulated sector in England and Wales
- Individuals, labour users or labour providers who are suspected of modern slavery and human trafficking in any labour industry (excluding sexual exploitation), or individuals who are potential victims of such activity in England and Wales.

Please report to partners:

- Issues of National Minimum Wage only, in sectors that are not GLAA regulated to the HMRC NMW team (https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenuecustoms/contact/national-minimum-wage-enquiries-and-complaints)
- Health and safety issues only (all sectors) to the Health and Safety Executive (http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/concerns.htm)
- Workplace relations and employment law issues (including contract issues, discrimination and grievances) to the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) (https://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1410)
- When there is an immediate threat to life contact the police emergency number.
- To report labour exploitation, human trafficking or modern slavery outside of the regulated sectors in Northern Ireland or Scotland, contact the local police service

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