

## UN SUBMISSION

To the Special Rapporteur on Prostitution

Not Buying It

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1. Provide examples of the hidden forms of prostitution, and explain to what extent they are recognized and dealt with as such?

- 'Sugaring - sex is almost always part of the exchange' Home Office <sup>1</sup>
- 'Most lap dancers then enter prostitution' Home Office <sup>2</sup> Error! Bookmark not defined.
- Strip clubs: 'Meaningless Regulation' <sup>2</sup>, survivor testimonies <sup>3</sup>
- Strip industry myths: 'no touching' <sup>4</sup>, 'easy money' <sup>5</sup>, 'going underground' <sup>6</sup>, 'flexible/independent work', 'putting women out of work' <sup>7</sup>
- Net financial loss to women in sex trade <sup>8</sup>
- 50% of women in prostitution in debt <sup>9</sup>

No form of prostitution is hidden from buyers, pimps, the prostituted (or indeed support servicers) nor can it be <sup>10</sup>. **Claims it can be 'driven underground' are a false narrative pushed by the sex trade lobby.** Prostitution only appears to be 'hidden' from decision makers and enforcement.

**Its reality, however, is widely and very deliberately hidden** via meaningless 'regulation'; false distinctions between the different forms of the industry and false narratives of the dire consequences of ending the industry. Alongside this sits incessant misrepresentation, normalisation and glamourisation of the entire industry as 'harmless', 'fun', 'easy money' full of 'empowered sexual entrepreneurs' <sup>11</sup>. This in turn builds on the constant objectification/sexualisation girls are exposed and subjected to from birth. At the same time, the truth is ignored, censored and elicits high levels of abuse – it is made unpalatable. In effect, we have whole society grooming.

2. Describe the profile of women and girls affected by prostitution in your country, and provide disaggregated data, where possible.

**3. Describe the profile of those who solicit women in prostitution and whether such relations are regulated, and provide supporting data, where possible.**

Sex buyers show high levels of callousness, entitlement and misogyny<sup>12,13</sup> with many aware the women they buy are coerced /unhappy/unwilling. At the same time, many display guilt, meaning this behaviour can be fundamentally changed at the psychological level. Furthermore, up to 90% can be easily deterred by fines. **All this makes a nonsense of the argument 'prostitution is inevitable' and demand cannot be curtailed.**

The profile of buyers is best illustrated by their own words, those of strip club punters and be found here<sup>14</sup> and include:

*'It's like buying a piece of meat'*<sup>15</sup>

*'Men need somewhere they can act like they want'*<sup>16</sup>

**4. What forms of violence are prostituted women and girls subjected to (physical, psychological, sexual, economic, administrative, or other)?**

All forms of the industry are associated with exceptionally high levels of violence, exploitation, abuse, operating via debt bondage with 'pimps'<sup>17</sup> exercising total control eg for stripping:

- Significant mental and physical health issues<sup>18</sup>, substance abuse<sup>19</sup>, abuse by staff<sup>20</sup> and punters<sup>21</sup>
- Denial, cognitive dissonance, trauma bonding<sup>22</sup>
- Strippers instrumental in the fraud<sup>23</sup> rampant in clubs
- 70% lap dancers have lost money by working<sup>24</sup>
- 'Clubs have total control' Cassy<sup>25</sup>

**5. Who is responsible for the perpetration of violence against women and girls in prostitution?**

Not Stigma!

Sometimes this is between women (eg the viciously competitive, drug-fuelled environment deliberately cultivated in strip clubs can lead to verbal and physical assaults between women).

It is important to recognise that high levels of verbal, physical and emotional abuse continue against women who have exited - and their allies (orchestrated in part by those still in the industry, with the media frequently 'fanning the flames' <sup>26</sup>).

**6. Describe the linkages, if any, between prostitution and the violation of the human rights of women and girls.**

**Sex Buyers:**

- Show increased criminal/violent tendencies against women <sup>27</sup>
- Major indicator of rape <sup>28</sup>

**Pornography:**

- Even by 2010, 88% porn showed aggression towards women <sup>29</sup>
- 10% of 12-13 year olds fear a porn addiction <sup>30</sup>
- 25% primary school children exposed to porn <sup>32</sup>
- Porn drives harmful sexual behaviours <sup>31</sup>
- Frequent consumption linked to sexual violence <sup>32</sup>
- Porn practices: anal sex <sup>33</sup>, strangulation <sup>34</sup> now 'normal' despite harms

**Strip clubs:**

- Reinforce wider misogyny <sup>35,36</sup> and male dominance <sup>37</sup>

**Wider Impact**

- Acceptance of prostitution correlates to acceptance of sexual harassment <sup>38</sup>
- Sex venues/areas create 'no go zones' <sup>39</sup> – a possible breach of women's right to free movement <sup>40</sup>

**Objectification**

- A form of trauma <sup>41</sup>
- Linked to eating disorders <sup>42</sup>

- Significant impact on underage girls <sup>43</sup>
- Linked to male violence and abusive attitudes towards women <sup>44,45, 46</sup>
- Sexual entitlement highly linked to male violence/rape <sup>47,48</sup>

7. What links are there between pornography and/or other forms of sexual exploitation and prostitution?

8. How is the issue of consent dealt with? Is it possible to speak about meaningful consent for prostituted women and girls?

No.

- 1) 50% + enter the industry underage, where consent cannot possibly be given <sup>49</sup>
- 2) Most who enter are vulnerable and/or have already experienced abuse <sup>49</sup>
- 3) There is **never** informed consent – no one fully know/understands the harms/risks
- 4) ‘Consent’ is a meaningless red herring ‘argument’. Consent does not prevent harm and trauma
- 5) Desire cannot be bought yet all forms of the sex industry occur without desire (and by supressing *actual* feelings - fear/disgust/pain etc) – this is intrinsically deeply damaging.

9. How effective have legislative frameworks and policies been in preventing and responding to violence against women and girls in prostitution?

10. What measures are in place to collect and analyse data at the national level with a view to better understanding the impact that prostitution has on the rights of women and girls?

Frequently, highly biased, poor-quality information from pro prostitution academics and others relied upon (sometimes indirectly funded via Government <sup>50</sup>).

By contrast, when under funded NGOs who oppose the industries collates evidence (eg of strip clubs <sup>51,52,53</sup>) this is comprehensively ignored by authorities, media and others. Evidence makes no impact on those with a pre-determined mind. Often neither do successive law suits.

Even when more balanced evidence is collated, it is frequently not acted upon (eg the UK Government has acknowledged the extreme harms of the sex trade for years but has done nothing to end demand or provide exit support)

11. What measures are in place to assist and support women and girls who wish to leave prostitution?

12. What are the obstacles faced by organizations and frontline service providers in their mission to support victims and survivors of prostitution?

13. What are some of the lessons learned about what works and what does not when it comes to stemming any negative human rights consequences from the prostitution of women and girls?

The UK sex trade is, in effect decriminalised, *just without meaningful exit support*: Councils refuse to close even the worst strip clubs <sup>51</sup>; 'saunas' and 'massage parlours' are widely licensed; a blind eye is turned to brothels (to the extent that some even have their own TV shows <sup>54, 55</sup>).

For 6 years, street prostitution (kerb crawling/soliciting with high levels of pimping) was decriminalised in Leeds, despite this running counter to UK law <sup>56, 57, 58</sup>:

- Substantial human cost to those prostituted (including criminalisation) and the wider community (including rapes, abductions of local women; sex tourism; trafficking)
- Costing of at least £200,000 PA (double according to locals)
- No proper reporting of impact or cost
- Poor quality research used in support
- On ending, no exiting support provided for the many extra victims now drawn into prostitution
- Scheme avidly promoted by pro sex industry academics, councillors and 'sex work' groups

By contrast when the Nordic Model was introduced in Ipswich for street prostitution <sup>59</sup>:

- 150 women taken off streets within 1.5 years, costing approx £7,000 per woman/year.
- No displacement to other areas
- Women able to keep care of their children etc

- Nordic Model is highly cost effective with at least a 2:1 ROI (this not taking into account additional costs such as the organised crime it feeds) <sup>60</sup>

**14. Are frontline organizations and survivors' organisations sufficiently included in policymaking at the national and international level?**

No. This is dominated by the pro pimp lobby at every level and by the 10% *still in* the industry who claim it is work (but are typically desperate, in denial, dissociated, forced, trauma bonded).

When survivor/whistle blower evidence is introduced it is dismissed and scorned,

This is not only causing untold harm but leading to *unlawful* decisions (very few are ever challenged, due to prohibitive costs):

- Sheffield City Council twice concedes breaching equality law in its pro strip trade stance with a third High Court challenge also granted <sup>61</sup>
- BCP Council loses High Court case showing breach of equality law in its pro strip trade stance <sup>62</sup>
- Authorities invariably breach SEV legislation <sup>63</sup>
- Strip clubs are incompatible with equality law <sup>64</sup>
- National Police Chiefs Council (create guidance for policing across England and Wales) forced to withdraw 'sex work' guidance after legal intervention <sup>65</sup>
- Government takes unprecedented step to appeal court ruling that forced care workers to procure prostitution for disabled clients <sup>66,67</sup>
- Government intervenes to urge Universities *not* to adopt dangerous 'sex work' guidance orchestrated by pro-sex trade academics and funded by a Government-funded body <sup>68</sup>

**15. What recommendations do you have to prevent and end violence associated with the prostitution for women and girls?**

**Prostitution**

- Formal Recognition that the industry is *not* inevitable since demand can easily and rapidly be near obliterated
- Recognition that exiting is readily and swiftly achievable with appropriate support

- Recognition that the sex industries are inherently harmful and carry high levels of abuse – which can never be reduced, let alone prevented via enabling the industry
- Recognition that the porn/sex industries deeply damage wider social attitudes
- Erase the ‘reasonable defence’ argument for sex buying of a minor
- Ban *all* profiteering from the prostitution of another (currently only illegal if exploitation involved, although invariably it is, this loophole allows rampant advertising with the police even guided to work in partnership with online pimping sites <sup>65</sup>)
- Rigorous prosecution of men who advertise/orchestrate ‘rooms for sex’ and other ‘survival sex’
- Long term, readily accessible, high quality exit support for all who seek to escape
- Wipe criminal/medical and other formal records that disclose prostitution involvement
- Urgently introduce the Nordic Model, this to include:
  - Ensure well resourced financial, practical, mental health exiting support, part funded by assets seized from pimps
  - End all advertising of prostitution, including online
  - Ban ‘Sugaring’, ‘Only Fans’ and similar businesses and/or their UK advertising
  - End the strip industry <sup>69</sup>
  - Close all brothels/massage parlours/saunas

## **Pornography**

- Ensure Age Verification rigorously upheld
- Lobby other nations to adopt this
- Increase age of ‘consent’ for being used in pornography to 21
- Urgently act to criminalise/prevent access to all actual or ‘feigned’ abuse (physical, sexual, mental) and all misogyny in pornography
- Ultimately ban pornography <sup>70</sup>

## **Change Cultural Norms:**

- Widespread, properly resourced education of services
- Widespread, ongoing awareness raising for the general public
- Education of young people at school and university level
- This to be led with the voices of survivors
- End incessant media/social media/popular culture misrepresentation and glamourising of the porn/sex industries

- End the pervasive objectification and sexualisation of girls/women
- Action to ensure balanced, truthful media reporting
- Fund anti-porn/prostitution/objectification NGOs

### Decision making principles:

- 0% of decision-making to be based on information/views of Pimps
- **90% at least** based on information/evidence provided by, and for, the **90%** who seek to escape the industry (represented by survivors and their allies).
- **10%, at most**, based on information supplied by those still selling sex, this qualified by the fact that:
  - The information is typically unreliable due to denial, cognitive dissonance, dissociation, desperation, coercion, Stockholm Syndrome
  - One person's 'good time' does not 'balance out' another's trauma (or possible death)
- Recognition of poor quality, patently biased research/information from sex trade sympathisers; this cannot be seen as reliable; using it is frequently unlawful; can only be used with extreme caution
- Recognition of the false narrative of 'work', 'going under ground', 'choice', 'empowerment', 'regulation'
- Formal recognition that many 'sex work' groups are dominated by pimps, including jailed sex traffickers, who have lobbied the UN, unions, political parties, funders, services and others, for years <sup>71</sup>
- Recognition that such groups do not represent the 90% in the industry as they provide no exiting support – even for prostituted children, frequently dubbed 'sex workers' <sup>72</sup>
- Recognition that the combined porn/sex trade is a \$ multi-trillion industry with a hugely vested interest - and ability - to corrupt decision making/media/influencers/policies, like the fossil fuel lobby <sup>71</sup>
- Recognition of the huge cost to the state of all forms of the sex trade (£2 + billion/year in UK) <sup>60</sup> and sexual slavery (£1.7 + billion per annum) <sup>73</sup> including extensive links to organised crime, drugs, racketeering, money laundering, county lines

<sup>1</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/842920/Prostitution\\_and\\_Sex\\_Work\\_Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/842920/Prostitution_and_Sex_Work_Report.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Still-Stripping-the-Illusion.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#survivors>

<sup>4</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#sexualcontact>

<sup>5</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#easymoney>

<sup>6</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#goingunderground>

<sup>7</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#puttingwomenoutofwork>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.appg-cse.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/How-to-implement-the-Sex-Buyer-Law-in-the-UK-2016.pdf>



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- <sup>9</sup> <http://i4.cmsfiles.com/eaves/2012/11/Breaking-down-the-barriers-a37d80.pdf>
- <sup>10</sup> <https://www.appg-cse.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Bust-the-Business-Model.pdf>
- <sup>11</sup> Pornogander: <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/sex-trade-publications/#pornogander>
- <sup>12</sup> <http://i1.cmsfiles.com/eaves/2012/04/MenWhoBuySex-89396b.pdf>
- <sup>13</sup> <http://www.prostitutionresearch.com/ChallengingDemandScotland.pdf>
- <sup>14</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#gentlemen>
- <sup>15</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12806532>
- <sup>16</sup> [https://www.academia.edu/325484/Exploring\\_the\\_Motivations\\_and\\_Fantasies\\_of\\_Strip\\_Club\\_Customers\\_In\\_Relation\\_to\\_Legal\\_Regulations](https://www.academia.edu/325484/Exploring_the_Motivations_and_Fantasies_of_Strip_Club_Customers_In_Relation_to_Legal_Regulations)
- <sup>17</sup> Pimps is taken to mean ‘anyone who profiteers from the prostitution of another’ regardless of coercion/exploitation (although, invariable there is)
- <sup>18</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#mentalhealth>
- <sup>19</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#substanceabuse>
- <sup>20</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#abusebymanagement>
- <sup>21</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#abuse>
- <sup>22</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#supporters>
- <sup>23</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#fraud>
- <sup>24</sup> <http://www.notbuyingit.org.uk/sites/default/files/Sanders%20Initial%20Findings.pdf>
- <sup>25</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#flexiblework>
- <sup>26</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y\\_gQrQkFXM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_gQrQkFXM)
- <sup>27</sup> <https://prostitutionresearch.com/comparing-sex-buyers-and-non-sex-buyers/>
- <sup>28</sup> <https://www.svri.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2016-07-19/RBAP-Gender-2013-P4P-VAW-Report-Summary.pdf>
- <sup>29</sup> <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20980228/>
- <sup>30</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-32115162>
- <sup>31</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/976731/The\\_Relationship\\_between\\_Pornography\\_use\\_and\\_Harmful\\_Sexual\\_Behaviours\\_v1.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/976731/The_Relationship_between_Pornography_use_and_Harmful_Sexual_Behaviours_v1.pdf)
- <sup>32</sup> <https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2023/02/cc-a-lot-of-it-is-actually-just-abuse-young-people-and-pornography-updated.pdf>
- <sup>33</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/aug/11/rise-in-popularity-of-anal-sex-has-led-to-health-problems-for-women>
- <sup>34</sup> <https://threadreaderapp.com/thread/1572746081028689924.html>
- <sup>35</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#widerimpact>
- <sup>36</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240553536\\_Keeping\\_Women\\_Down\\_and\\_Out\\_The\\_Strip\\_Club\\_Boom\\_and\\_the\\_Reinforcement\\_of\\_Male\\_Dominance](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240553536_Keeping_Women_Down_and_Out_The_Strip_Club_Boom_and_the_Reinforcement_of_Male_Dominance) ;
- <sup>37</sup> [https://www.ayaoutreach.com/uploads/6/1/9/7/61971497/strip\\_club\\_study.pdf](https://www.ayaoutreach.com/uploads/6/1/9/7/61971497/strip_club_study.pdf)
- <sup>38</sup> [https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmwomeq/701/70112.htm#\\_idTextAnchor124](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmwomeq/701/70112.htm#_idTextAnchor124)
- <sup>39</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/TownPlanning.pdf>
- <sup>40</sup> ‘It is arguably discrimination if a strip club means a woman fears to use area’: p 87 in ‘Sex Licensing’, Philip Kolvin, KC, leading legal expert on SEV legislation
- <sup>41</sup> <https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684314561018>
- <sup>42</sup> <https://aps.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cp.12010>
- <sup>43</sup> <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/research-and-campaigns/girls-attitudes-survey-2018.pdf>
- <sup>44</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#widerimpact>
- <sup>45</sup> <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2012-14886-003>
- <sup>46</sup> <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10508-015-0644-8>
- <sup>47</sup> <http://www.partners4prevention.org/sites/default/files/resources/p4p-report-summary.pdf>
- <sup>48</sup> [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(13\)70069-X/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(13)70069-X/fulltext)
- <sup>49</sup> <https://equation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/A-Coordinated-Prostitution-Strategy-and-a-summary-of-responses-to-paying-the-price.pdf>
- <sup>50</sup> For instance, Prof Teela Sanders has at least twice been funded by the Government-sponsored ESRC (Economic Social Research Council) on projects which misrepresent and expressly lobby for a) the strip industry: <https://www.notbuyingit.org.uk/sites/default/files/Teela%20Sanders%20Gold%20Standards.pdf> and b) prostitution via University ‘sex worker toolkits’: <https://nordicmodelnow.org/tag/student-toolkit/>, since condemned by the UK Government: <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/DeptEduUnis.pdf>
- <sup>51</sup> Incidences in strip clubs UK-wide: <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/#uk>
- <sup>52</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/new-faq-myths/>
- <sup>53</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/stillstrippingtheillusion>
- <sup>54</sup> <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/tv-and-radio-reviews/11781503/A-Very-British-Brothel-review.html>
- <sup>55</sup> <https://www.lincolnshireworld.com/news/people/sheffields-infamous-city-sauna-brothel-moves-to-new-premises-after-tv-show-1335909>
- <sup>56</sup> <https://unherd.com/2020/07/how-authorities-in-leeds-enable-paid-rape/>

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- <sup>57</sup> <https://www.leeds-live.co.uk/news/leeds-news/life-leeds-sex-workers-told-18674299>
- <sup>58</sup> <https://nordicmodelnow.org/2019/08/17/the-holbeck-red-light-zone-condoms-sex-offenders-and-cars-full-of-jeering-men/>
- <sup>59</sup> [https://ueaeprints.uea.ac.uk/id/eprint/55750/1/EVISSTA\\_paper.pdf](https://ueaeprints.uea.ac.uk/id/eprint/55750/1/EVISSTA_paper.pdf)
- <sup>60</sup> <https://www.appg-cse.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/How-to-implement-the-Sex-Buyer-Law-in-the-UK-2016.pdf>
- <sup>61</sup> 2016 Sheffield legal action: <https://www.ibtimes.co.uk/britains-lap-dancing-clubs-must-be-shut-down-once-all-1620883> ; 2018 Sheffield legal action: <https://localgovernmentlawyer.co.uk/licensing/399-licensing-news/38697-council-concedes-in-strip-club-policy-legal-challenge-over-equality-duty-failure>
- <sup>62</sup> BCP council 2023: <https://dpglaw.co.uk/strip-club-licensing-curbed-after-court-rules-wider-harm-to-women-and-girls-could-not-be-ignored/>
- <sup>63</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Strip-Legal.pdf>
- <sup>64</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/EIA.pdf>
- <sup>65</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/NPCCUpdate>
- <sup>66</sup> <https://nordicmodelnow.org/2021/05/03/statement-on-the-court-of-protection-ruling-that-its-legal-for-carers-to-help-clients-pay-for-sex/>
- <sup>67</sup> The appealed decision was heavily endorsed and guided by brain injury charity, Headways, despite 60% of prostituted women/transwomen incurring traumatic brain injury as direct result of prostitution: PAST ACTIONS at <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/take-action-prostitution-2/>
- <sup>68</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/DeptEduUnis.pdf>
- <sup>69</sup> As already instigated in Iceland: <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2010/mar/25/iceland-most-feminist-country> and Israel: <https://www.ynetnews.com/magazine/article/BydlQ1nK8>
- <sup>70</sup> Due to links to violence against women porn has been banned in Nepal: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6231521/Nepal-bans-porn-websites-seeing-300-cent-increase-rapes-ten-years.html> and in Thailand: <https://thethaiger.com/news/national/digital-minister-defends-decision-to-ban-pornhub>
- <sup>71</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/sex-trade-publications/#sexworkeradvocates>
- <sup>72</sup> <https://notbuyingit.org.uk/sex-trade-publications#sexworkeradvocates>
- <sup>73</sup> <https://www.antislaverycommissioner.co.uk/media/1258/the-economic-and-social-costs-of-modern-slavery.pdf>