

[Fortunately there's really not that much slavery in the UK](#) [1]

Written by [Tim Worstall](#) [2] | Sunday 27 October 2013



Having even one person in slavery here in the UK would be one person too many of course. Having anyone anywhere in slavery would be entirely terrible but we are rich enough and liberal enough that we should have none at all. Fortunately, there's a new report out that shows us that while the problem is real [it's small](#) [3].

United Kingdom Estimated number enslaved 4,200 ? 4,600

That puts us as rank 160: no, the higher the number the better the rank and we scrape into the top 10 of the nations they've studied here.

But this of course creates a problem. For who can forget Dennis MacShane telling the House of Commons that there are 25,000 slaves just in the sex industry? Or Harperson alleging much the same thing? Julie Bindel and her friends at the Poppy Project insisting that there are vast tribes of women held as sex slaves, there only to be repeatedly raped for the benefit of others?

Well, the solution to this problem is that this report is actually defining slavery properly:

1 Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons. 2 By means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person (these means are not required in the case of children). 3 With the intent of exploiting that person through: Prostitution of others; Sexual exploitation; Forced labour; Slavery (or similar practices); Servitude; and Removal of organs. (UN Trafficking Protocol, 2000).

Note that trafficking requires all three. For example, transportation, with their consent, of people into the sex industry does not count as trafficking nor as slavery. And odd as it may sound there are indeed people entirely willing to offer up a short term rental of their bodies for the sexual gratification of others. And, unsurprisingly, they'd rather like to do this in a high wage country like the UK than in the perhaps low wage countries of their origin. Thus they migrate for the work.

There is indeed a small problem with slavery in the modern UK. One that we should indeed be doing out best to combat. But the larger numbers bandied about are the result of either hysteria or political manipulation. As Operation Pentameter showed us there's no perceivable instances of sex slavery going

on: why on earth would there be given the willingness of some to do the work anyway?

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