| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-1504  Responded to: xx July 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**Part 1 – Sex Trafficking and exploitation**

1. **Please could you provide me with the number of investigations into sex trafficking recorded by your force, broken down annually from 2018 until 2022 (inclusive).**

Numerous investigations are worked on over the course of any given year and any attempt to refine this to those which may potentially include information relating to your request will almost certainly be cost exempt.

As an alternative, the table below provides the number of recorded crimes which typically relate to cases of sex trafficking and exploitation in the period requested;

Table 1 – Specific Recorded Crimes – by calendar years 2018 to 2022 incl.

| **Crime/Offence** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Breach of Trafficking & Exploitation Order | 2 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 |
| Cruel and unnatural treatment of an adult | 6 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 3 |
| Human Organ Offences | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Immoral traffic | 22 | 17 | 19 | 31 | 7 |
| Slavery or Forced Labour | 97 | 199 | 83 | 110 | 68 |
| **Total** | **128** | **222** | **104** | **149** | **83** |

1. **Please could you provide me with the number of victims of sex trafficking identified in your force area, broken down annually from 2018 until 2022 (inclusive). Of these please could you break them down by their nationality (if unknown please state).**

The requested information is provided within the tables below:

Table 1 - Total number of identified victims of sex trafficking, by year and nationality:

| **Nationality** | **2022** | **2021** | **2020** | **2019** | **2018** | **Total** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Albanian | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Brazilian | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| British | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Bulgarian | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 1 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 10 |
| Czech | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Egyptian | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Iranian | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Iraqi | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Kenyan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Latvian | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Malaysian | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Namibian | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Nigerian | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Pakistani | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Polish | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Romanian | 1 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 14 |
| Scottish | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Sierra Leonean | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Slovakian | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Somalian | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Tanzanian | 1 | 0 |  | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Thai | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Vietnamese | 4 | 4 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 22 |
| **Total** | **11** | **16** | **21** | **13** | **10** | **71** |

**Of these please could you break them down by adult/child victims (if unknown please state)**

Table 2 - Total number of identified victims of sex trafficking, by age bracket:

| **Age** | **2022** | **2021** | **2020** | **2019** | **2018** | **Total** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Adult | 8 | 16 | 16 | 0 | 6 | 46 |
| Child | 3 | 0 | 5 | 13 | 4 | 25 |
| Total | 11 | 16 | 21 | 13 | 10 | 71 |

1. **Please could you provide me with the number of sex trafficking suspects identified in your force area, broken down annually from 2018 until 2022 (inclusive).**

I have considered your request under the Act, and I regret to inform you that I estimate that it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process your request. I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 12(1) of the Act - Excessive Cost of Compliance.

By way of explanation, as opposed to victim details, the information requested is not held on a single recording system and we have no means of searching crime reports to establish whether a suspect or suspects were identified. The only way to accurately research your request would be to individually assess all 686 crime reports captured at question 1 above.

1. **Please could you provide me with the number of charges in relation to sex trafficking in your force area, broken down annually from 2018 until 2022 (inclusive). Of these please could you confirm the number charged under the modern day slavery act. If any were charged under the "alternate offences rule" please could you give me the number and offence charged.**

I must first advise you that in terms of Q4 and Q5 (below) the information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act applies.

To clarify, the Modern Day Slavery Act is not used in Scotland – this only applies in England and Wales. In Scotland the following legislation applies:

[Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015 (legislation.gov.uk)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/12/section/13/enacted?view=plain).

In terms of ‘charges’ recorded under this legislation I estimate that it would cost in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process your request. I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 12(1) of the Act - Excessive Cost of Compliance.

To explain, each crime report would have to be individually assessed to extract and note the level of detail required.

1. **Please could you provide me with the number of convictions for sex trafficking in your force area, broken down annually from 2018 until 2022 (inclusive). Of these please could you confirm the number convicted under the modern day slavery act. If any were charged under the "alternate offences rule" please could you give me the number and offence convicted**

In addition to the response at Q4, I can advise you that information relating to convictions for offences relating to this request would be held by the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service. You may wish to make this request directly to the FOI Officer, Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service Headquarters, 1A Parliament Square, Edinburgh, EH1 1RF.

Therefore under Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 I must inform you that we do not hold the information you have requested.

You may be aware that the Home Office Competent Authorities administer the United Kingdom’s National Referral Mechanism (NRM) which is used to notify Chief Constables of a Potential Victim of Trafficking (PVoT) in their area.  Quarterly statistics are published through the Office of National Statistics. These can be found at

[National Referral Mechanism statistics - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-referral-mechanism-statistics)

Police Scotland maintain a record of NRM which have been allocated to them by the Home Office for management purposes and recorded figures may vary from ONS published data. ONS Data should be consulted in the first instance.

1. **Please could you provide me with the number of staff solely investigating sex trafficking, broken down annually from 2018 until 2022 (inclusive).**

In terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held.

By way of explanation, there are no officers who solely deal with sex trafficking investigations. Officers involved in a particular investigation, or multiple investigations, are deployed as required, dependant on their skillsets.

**Part 2 – County Lines**

1. **Please could you provide me with the number of investigations into county lines related modern day slavery recorded by your force, broken down annually from 2018 until 2022 (inclusive).**
2. **Please could you provide me with the number of victims of county lines related modern day slavery identified in your force area, broken down annually from 2018 until 2022 (inclusive).** **Of these please could you break them down by their nationality (if unknown please state). Of these please could you break them down by adult/child victims (if unknown please state)**
3. **Please could you provide me with the number of county lines related modern day slavery suspects identified in your force area, broken down annually from 2018 until 2022 (inclusive).**
4. **Please could you provide me with the number of charges in relation to county lines related modern day slavery in your force area, broken down annually from 2018 until 2022 (inclusive). Of these please could you confirm the number charged under the modern day slavery act. If any were charged under the "alternate offences rule" please could you give me the number and offence charged.**
5. **Please could you provide me with the number of convictions for county lines related modern day slavery in your force area, broken down annually from 2018 until 2022 (inclusive). Of these please could you confirm the number convicted under the modern day slavery act. If any were charged under the "alternate offences rule" please could you give me the number and offence convicted.**

Unfortunately I estimate that it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to provide you with the information requested at Q7 - Q11.

I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 12(1) of the Act - Excessive Cost of Compliance.

To explain, to obtain this information we would need to reach out to each of the individual local policing units for them to go back through their records to identify any links between Human Trafficking & Exploitation and county lines in their area.

Operation Marron, the national response to County Lines in Scotland cannot provide definitive figures for the information requested in this Freedom of information request.

As explained above, in Scotland, the legislation for this crime type is the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015, as opposed to Modern Slavery legislation used in England and Wales.

Police Scotland will frequently assist colleagues in England and Wales with Modern Slavery investigations, particularly in relation to children who are coerced and trafficked to Scotland to supply controlled drugs in the areas impacted by County Lines groups, as the perpetrators are often located outwith Scotland, where the offence is being committed.

Whilst the Human Trafficking Unit hold information relative to perpetrators charged with Human Trafficking offences, this information is not searchable for Human Trafficking offences, linked to County Lines. Operation Marron have previously requested this information and the Human Trafficking Unit do not have the resources to review all these crime reports.

Research of the Vulnerable Persons Database for persons with a Human Trafficking marker, will provide outcomes for Human Trafficking, but again not specifically for County Lines.

The data held by Operation Marron, for all high harm threats associated to County Lines commenced in November 2018.

1. **Please could you provide me with the number of staff solely investigating county lines related modern day slavery, broken down annually from 2018 until 2022 (inclusive).**

In respect of Q12, I must advise you that in terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held.

There are no officers who solely deal with County Lines investigations. Officers involved in a particular investigation, or multiple investigations, are deployed as required, dependant on their skillsets.

If you require any further assistance please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by [email](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info) or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.