

Impact case study (REF3b)

<p>Institution: University of Liverpool</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 21 - Politics and International Studies</p>
<p>Title of case study: Tackling Exploitation in Employment: Shaping the UK Response to Human Trafficking and Forced Labour</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discovery: Research conducted by Dr Balch into the UK government response to human trafficking and forced labour found gaps and weaknesses in the UK's legislation in this area and in its system of regulation and enforcement • Intervention: Findings and recommendations of the research have been taken up by both government and non-government organisations • Impact: The research has led to changed guidelines and practices and contributed to increased awareness and political change. It has helped key agencies to sustain and improve their operations in acting to tackle trafficking for forced labour in the UK
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>This impact relates to two distinct, but linked, research projects carried out by Dr Balch as PI and as part of a team with Dr Sam Scott as PI in 2009, with all research undertaken at the University of Liverpool.</p> <p>The first, which took place in 2009, was an evaluation of the Gangmasters' Licensing Authority (GLA) (undertaken by Dr Balch in conjunction with the PI, Dr Sam Scott, Geography Department, University of Liverpool). This involved a full evaluation of the organisation and its role in regulating the UK labour market. The research provided evidence of which factors facilitate and mitigate against the exploitation of workers, and was able to demonstrate that the GLA is achieving its aim of reducing worker exploitation in those sectors which it has responsibility (covering around 1200 labour providers). The project also created a series of mixed-method research techniques to generate a set of indicators for the GLA in order to aid in the demonstration of effectiveness and value-for-money, among other targets. These have now been adopted to become central to organisational aims and objectives. This original piece of research was published in its full form by the GLA on their website. Selected findings were also published as a chapter in an edited book published by Amsterdam University Press (in 2011), which is a reputable academic publishing house.</p> <p>The second piece of work, carried out between 2010-2012 involved research into the legislative framework and the regulation and enforcement activities to combat forced labour in the UK (PI – Dr Balch, funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation through a competitive tendering process). This work included a mapping analysis and interviews with stakeholders and enforcement bodies to construct a series of recommendations for policymakers in the enforcement sector and government. It also included analysis of major enforcement operations around human trafficking/forced labour such as the Pentameter I and Pentameter II operations - which were police-led, and Operation Ruby - which was a multi-agency attempt to combat forced labour in the agricultural sector. The research found inconsistencies in the legislative framework around human trafficking and forced labour, and also gaps and weaknesses in the system of regulation and enforcement, exacerbated by (among other things) low awareness of the issue in some parts of the police, organisational problems leading to poor implementation, loss of key personnel and expertise due to organisational change, and poor communication between agencies. This research was published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on their website and circulated widely to the policy community around human trafficking and forced labour. The research also led to an invitation to contribute a chapter to a book by Palgrave on the topic of forced labour (editor: Professor Gary Craig, Durham University, chapters to be submitted for review in September 2013).</p>

3. References to the research

Balch, A., Brindley, P., Geddes, A., Scott, S. (2009) Gangmasters Licensing Authority: [Second Annual Review](#). Nottingham: Gangmasters Licensing Authority

Balch, A. and Geddes, A. (2011) Opportunity from Crisis? Organisational Responses to Human Trafficking in the UK' *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 13 (1),pp. 26-41

Balch, A. and Scott, S. (2011) 'Labour market flexibility and worker security in an 'age of migration' in '[Foggy Social Structures](#)' (in M Bommers and G Sciortino, (eds) Amsterdam University Press (2011)

Balch, A. (2012) 'Regulation and Enforcement to Tackle Forced Labour in the UK: A Systematic Response?' [Joseph Rowntree Foundation Programme Paper](#)

FLMG (Forced Labour Monitoring Group) (2013) 'Submission to government consultation (co-authors – Professor Gary Craig, Dr Kendra Strauss of FLMG), responding to the call on 'Recruitment Sector Legislation - Consultation on reforming the regulatory framework for employment agencies and employment businesses' 11 April 2013

4. Details of the impact

Discovery: Research conducted by Dr Balch into the UK government response to human trafficking and forced labour found gaps and weaknesses in the UK's legislation in this area and in its system of regulation and enforcement (Balch 2012). The work has provided evidence of lower awareness among police officers around trafficking for forced labour when compared with trafficking for sexual exploitation (Balch and Geddes 2011, Balch 2012). Evaluation of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority (Balch et al 2009) found evidence of best practice and also developed key indicators in order to provide robust evidence regarding the value of successful regulation and enforcement.

Intervention: Dr Balch's research findings and recommendations have been taken up by both government and non-government organisations to improve both the practice of regulation and enforcement around human trafficking/forced labour, and the analysis and evaluation of this work. This included changes implemented by organisations recognised both nationally and internationally as leading the fight against human trafficking and forced labour: modification of training guidelines by the UK Human Trafficking Centre and the adoption of performance indicators by the Gangmasters Licensing Authority. Dr Balch's work has also contributed to critical analysis of the government's approach to human trafficking and forced labour by a range of actors in the public debate. The work published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (Balch 2012) has been cited by the Council of Europe 'Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings' (GRETA) and the ECCR (Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility). The Joseph Rowntree Foundation cited the work in their submission to both the Northern Ireland Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Further Provisions and Support for Victims) Bill and the United Nations (OHCHR) Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights in the UK (2012). Joseph Rowntree Foundation's submission to the Northern Ireland Bill was mentioned in a subsequent debate at Stormont. The GRETA report cites the report as evidence of the quality of research taking place in the UK on the topic of human trafficking for forced labour and this work contributed to their own evaluation, which constitutes a critical assessment of UK progress on implementation of the (2005) Council of Europe Convention on Action to Tackle Trafficking in Human Beings. The report has been visited 827 times and downloaded 354 times from February 2012 to May 2013.

Impact: Findings relating to problems of low-awareness of police on the subject of trafficking for forced labour have been acted upon by the UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) - the main body responsible for training of UK police forces. The National Referral Mechanism, which records victims of trafficking identified throughout the UK (estimated to reach 1500 in 2013), has recorded a significant increase year-on-year in the numbers of those recorded as victims of trafficking for

Impact case study (REF3b)

forced labour (outnumbering those identified as victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation). The findings of the evaluation of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority has helped that agency to survive several attempts at closure by the government through its ability to prove its effectiveness and value-for-money - it continues to improve conditions for agency workers in the agriculture, shellfish gathering, food and drink processing and packaging sectors.

The government has responded to criticism regarding gaps in legislation and is currently considering a new Bill on 'modern slavery' which explicitly recognises the problem of forced labour within the UK. The accumulation of critical evidence, including that provided by Dr Balch's report for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, has contributed to the decision by central government to consider a new Bill on 'modern slavery' (reported by the Daily Telegraph on 22 August 2013) which could include a consolidated legislative framework and enhanced regulatory and enforcement systems.

Finally, the impact from the work of Dr Balch has excellent potential for sustainability with a number of new projects developing directly from the work outlined here. Since 2012 Dr Balch is one of four academic members of the UK Forced Labour Monitoring Group (FLMG) which launched in 2013 (<http://forcedlabour.org/>) with a programme of events to ensure impact of research in this area (funded by an ESRC follow-on grant awarded to Dr Sam Scott, Exeter). The FLMG made a submission to a government consultation in April 2013 on regulation of employment agencies. Dr Balch has also become team-leader for the UK on an EU project on corporate social responsibility and human trafficking (commenced January 2013) aiming to engage leaders in business sectors where human trafficking and forced labour are present in order to develop new modes of corporate social responsibility.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

1. Head of the Poverty Team, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, can be contacted to provide evidence of the impact of the research on regulation and enforcement around forced labour and how this has contributed to the JRF policy programme on forced labour.
2. The Programme Coordinator, from Anti-Slavery International, can be contacted to provide testimony to the quality of the research undertaken and how and in what ways this has had impact on the policy debate around forced labour and modern-slavery in the UK.
3. Director of Strategy, from the Gangmasters Licensing Authority, has provided a statement confirming the importance of the evaluation/research, and how this has contributed to the reform and sustainability of the organisation. They also indicate the relevance and usefulness of the subsequent research undertaken by Balch for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
4. Evidence of impact on the UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) has been provided in a statement, from Rankin Associates, from an expert on anti-trafficking, who was previously head of legal services for the UKHTC, and member of the European Commission Group of Experts on Trafficking (2007-11). He was the Chair of the UKHTC research group, which was charged with incorporating research into the UKHTC working practices, and was also a member of the Interpol Working Group on Trafficking (2008-10). This testimony explains how research by Balch was used to improve training for UK police forces in the area of human trafficking for forced labour.
5. Corroborating statement from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (Policy Manager, Programme on Forced Labour), provides evidence of impact and lists the ways that the report written for them by Balch has been used in submissions and in reports on UK human trafficking policy by national and international groups.
6. The written evidence submitted to the government consultation on regulation of employment agencies in April 2013 includes the following submissions, available on the

Impact case study (REF3b)

[FLMG website:](#)

- Government consultation on employment agencies April 2013
- MAC consultation on low-skill employment October 2013
- All-Party Parliamentary Group on Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery November 2013
- Evidence to the Modern Slavery Evidence Review (being run by Frank Field/Centre for Social Justice - to be submitted before the end of the year. Dr Balch provided oral evidence at a hearing in Westminster on 28th November 2013.