

**Impact case study (REF3b)**

<p><b>Institution:</b> University of the West of England (UWE), Bristol</p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 21 – Politics and International Studies</p>
<p><b>Title of case study:</b> Assisting trafficked persons and exploited migrants to access their human rights</p>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>Trafficked persons have benefitted directly from van den Anker’s research at UWE through improved support and legislation. Her policy model on human trafficking prevention assisted changes in the UK, Ireland, Portugal, Czech Republic, Belgium and Sweden and informed local policy development through her training of politicians, civil servants and NGOs in Bristol, Birmingham and Wales. Increased multi-agency working promoted by van den Anker has led to the establishment of new support services like a safe house and the Migrant Rights Centre in Bristol, directly benefiting migrants. International dissemination contributed to agenda changes in international organisations such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.</p> <p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>Van den Anker pioneered the study of contemporary slavery from the perspective of global justice and human rights. She moved to UWE from the University of Birmingham as a Reader in 2005. Building on earlier work (C. van den Anker <i>The Political Economy of New Slavery</i>, Palgrave 2004), her research at UWE developed a multidisciplinary, multi-agency approach to understanding, responding to and preventing contemporary slavery. She innovated the human trafficking debate in three major respects by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) moving the debate on from a focus on women in the sex industry to a wider perspective on migrant labour exploitation.</li> <li>ii) introducing a human rights perspective, which showed that the current policies were concentrating too much on criminal justice and not on victim protection; her research showed that this led to a neglect of the prevention of trafficking as this would require building human rights cultures in countries of origin, transit and destination.</li> </ul> <p>3. combining a multidisciplinary approach to global justice with qualitative research methods to develop case studies, through open-ended interviews, observation and auto-ethnographic research. [R4]</p> <p>By building a European network of people and organisations working on human trafficking, van den Anker’s research found the focus on women and the sex industry unwarranted [R1]. In contrast, van den Anker found evidence for the widespread occurrence of labour exploitation in European union countries, gaps in the provision for victim identification and protection, as well as slow implementation of the European directive on harmonisation with the UN Palermo protocol [R2]. She concluded that transnational social investment was urgently needed, given the overlapping complex and restrictive immigration, labour and welfare regimes in the participating countries which create serious gaps in human rights protection for migrants. She concluded that the response to trafficking and migrant labour exploitation should not criminalise migrants or discourage migration, but ought to provide human rights cultures in countries of origin, safe migration options and protection of migrant rights in countries of destination.</p> <p>Between 2006 and 2010, van den Anker developed this research further as leader of a project on ‘Trafficking for Forced Labour in Europe’. The project was supported by European Science Foundation, with partners from Ireland, Sweden, Poland, the Czech Republic and Belgium [R3]. Through this work, she identified links between the practice of trafficking in persons, smuggling and exploitation of undocumented migrant workers. She concluded that the tightening of legal options for labour migration creates vulnerability to migrant exploitation due to increasing dependence on intermediaries in the migration industry [R4]. Van den Anker also showed a widespread reliance of the European economies on flexible and cheap migrant labour which risked sacrificing the protection of migrant rights [R5]. She concluded that the lack of accessibility of human rights for migrants was a central concern that needed to be addressed more urgently [R6].</p>

**3. References to the research** (indicative maximum of six references)

[R1] C. van den Anker and J.M.J. Doornik (eds) (2006) *Trafficking and Women's Rights*, Palgrave. This edited volume resulted from international workshops in 8 European countries. ISBN: 978-1-4039-4995-0

[R2] C. van den Anker (2006) 'Trafficking and Women's Rights: beyond the sex industry to other industries' in A. Guichon and R. Shah (eds) *Journal of Global Ethics*, Special Issue *Women's Rights in Europe* 3(1): 161-180 ([doi: 10.1080/17449620601042862](https://doi.org/10.1080/17449620601042862)).

This chapter built on the report C. van den Anker *Trafficking for forced labour in Europe*, Anti-Slavery International, 2006 that was an output of the project on *Identification of effective policies at local level for supporting people trafficked into labour exploitation*, funded by the European Commission's AGIS programme. The grant was awarded to Anti-Slavery International and ran from 2004-2006, with a budget of 22,000 Euros. Dr van den Anker was the main research consultant on the project.

[R3] C. van den Anker (2010) 'Cosmopolitanism as hospitality: does transnationalism induce global citizenship?' In *Journal of International Political Theory* 6(1): 73-94 ([doi: 10.3366/E1755088210000467](https://doi.org/10.3366/E1755088210000467)).

This was an output of the European Science Foundation project *Trafficking for forced labour in other industries than the sex industry*, which ran from 2006-10, and had a budget of 1.3 million Euros, for which van den Anker was project leader.

[R4] C. van den Anker and I. van Liempt (eds) (2011) *Human Rights and Migration*, Palgrave. ISBN: 978-0230279131

[R5]. C. van den Anker 'The Role of Governments in Trafficking and Migrant Labour Exploitation: towards making human rights accessible' in Alison Brysk and Austin Choi-Fitzpatrick (eds) (2011) *Human Trafficking and Human Rights: Rethinking Contemporary Slavery*, University of Pennsylvania Press: 157-171. – **Available through UWE.**

[R6] C. van den Anker "Cosmopolitan global justice and labour exploitation' in H. Widdows and N. Smith (eds) *Global Social Justice*, Routledge, 2011: 117-127 ISBN: 9781136725913 – **Available through UWE.**

This chapter shows links between theory and practice, showcasing the Refugee and Migrant Support Hub established with the help of a Pathfinder grant funded by Council for the Assistance of Refugee Academics and by Bristol Legacy Commission, and for which van den Anker was project leader.

**4. Details of the impact**

The impact of van den Anker's research has been deep within the local region but also far-reaching on an international scale. Building on the outcomes of the ESF project [2], van den Anker and colleagues sought to raise awareness of modern forms of slavery, including the trafficking of human beings into the UK and Ireland, across a range of fora, including a public meeting in June 2007 as part of the Abolition 200 programme organised by the University of Bristol's Centre for the Study of Poverty and Social Justice [1].

Van den Anker's research was subsequently disseminated internationally to policy makers and practitioners via the largest European network of migration researchers (International Migration, Integration and Social Cohesion - IMISCOE) in Stockholm 2009 where she spoke at a major public event. Among the outcomes, as a result of discussions with the leader of the undocumented migrants' movement, a local trade union started to welcome potentially trafficked persons.

Similarly, at the largest international conference for policy-makers and NGOs on migration (Metropolis) in Copenhagen 2009, the chair of the Dutch national parliamentary commission responsible for policies on human trafficking indicated that van den Anker's message on the accessibility of migrant rights would be used in future work (and requested copies of her

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publications to inform further developments).

Internationally, van den Anker's research has created direct benefits for trafficked persons in many parts of the world primarily because of changes in legislation that were lobbied for by NGOs who participated in her projects [5]. For example, when the NGO La Strada drafted new Czech anti-trafficking legislation, and when the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland campaigned for a bridging visa for unemployed migrant workers to reduce vulnerability to destitution. Further international impact occurred in Washington, USA (February 2009) when the US civil servant responsible for creating the annual 'Trafficking in Persons' report indicated he would look into trafficking into other industries after a lecture by van den Anker. Following this invited lecture in Washington, she was invited to present in Ghent (November 2009) and Barbados (November 2010), as a consequence of which she has been directly influential in setting up the first Caribbean-wide anti-trafficking NGO. This has improved victim support and raised awareness in a region with a notoriously high prevalence of human trafficking.

Within the REF period, her engagement culminated in June 2013 when van den Anker addressed the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Alliance on Trafficking in Persons (OSCE), where her research findings helped to set the agenda of the meeting as focused on global justice and inequalities.

The benefit to potentially trafficked persons is predictably large as these perspectives fed into policy decisions of member-states. The work van den Anker developed through coalition building between academics, policy makers, civil servants practitioners and NGOs also impacted the OSCE meeting as all of these groups were present. Her multilevel, multi-actor methodology spreading more widely has had a real benefit for trafficked persons in practice [9].

Van den Anker's research has also had highly significant local impact [7, 8] which started when she created a Bristol-based counter-trafficking coalition which developed into an organisation of 56 members. Bristol Fawcett, with Bristol City Council and van den Anker, in partnership with local charities and service providers, formed a network of experts, activists and interested parties to highlight the links between international poverty and trafficking [4]. The coalition had a strong input on the Scrutiny Commission for Safety and Community Cohesion Inquiry day on Human Trafficking in November 2009 where van den Anker gave a lecture and presented the coalition statement asking the City Council to follow up their commitment to the Council of Europe Convention on action against trafficking by providing resources for housing and a Migrant Rights Centre in Bristol. The coalition subsequently launched a Migrant Rights Centre Bristol (MRCB), led by van den Anker, which holds drop-in sessions once a week and runs campaigns on migrant rights [3]. Bristol City Council has since appointed a dedicated anti-trafficking officer and has set up a Roma drop-in centre modelled on the MRCB.

Van den Anker has actively sought to engage wider audiences through awareness raising and training events. For example, a training day at the International Global Ethics Association bi-annual conference at UWE in June 2010 informed 15 local and regional organisations about human trafficking. Van den Anker has also been instrumental in the design and delivery of a training programme for 200 Bristol City Council employees who are cascading out the awareness-raising campaign to 16,000 council workers [6]. At the 2010 meeting of the Scrutiny Commission for Safety and Community Cohesion, a commitment was made to roll out van den Anker's training programme at Bristol City Council to the NHS and the police; and a council-wide strategy and protocol on anti-trafficking measures and migrant rights was recommended.

The Commission also agreed the wide definition of trafficking as developed in van den Anker's research. This means Bristol has been able to support trafficked persons and exploited migrants more effectively. At the January 2011 meeting of Bristol City Council's Scrutiny Commission, a statement by van den Anker was endorsed to commission the development of a protocol and strategy for accessibility of migrant rights including those of trafficked person, undocumented and self-employed;

- to ensure that the trained programme developed for cascading out in the Council is strongly recommended to the other statutory agencies;

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- to protect the dedicated officer's role in developing Bristol City Council's involvement in the Bristol Counter Trafficking Coalition [10]

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

[1]. Ann Singleton reports on the Abolition 200 event she co-organised with Dr van den Anker where Dr van den Anker's research with Antislavery International was disseminated: [Link](#) - **Available through UWE.**

[2]. Gillian Wylie reports on the ESF project led by Dr van den Anker: [Link](#) - **Available through UWE.**

[3]. Bristol Migrant Rights Centre – **Available through UWE.** [Link](#)

[4]. Bristol Fawcett: [Link](#). – **Available through UWE.**

**Testimonials**

[5]. Corroborating Contact: Programme Coordinator, Anti-Slavery International and Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group (impact of van den Anker's work on government and NGO policies). [1 on REF Portal]

[6]. Corroborating Contact: Councillor Peter Hammond, Bristol City Council (impact of van den Anker's work on Council policy and training). [2]

[7]. Founding Director of the Pierian centre (impact of van den Anker's work on migrant support in Bristol). [3] – **Available through UWE.**

[8]. Corroborating Contact: Director of Bristol Refugee Rights (impact of van den Anker's work on migrant support in Bristol). [4]

[9]. Corroborating Contact: former Salvation Army Policy Officer for Human Trafficking (impact of van den Anker's work on UK government and NGO policies). [5]

[10]. Bristol City Council, Community Cohesion and Safety Scrutiny Commission minutes:

24<sup>th</sup> November 2009: [Link](#)

12<sup>th</sup> January 2010: [Link](#) (see p.4)

5<sup>th</sup> January 2011: [Link](#) (see p. 2)

**- All available through UWE.**