

CASE STUDY: B's Story

B* was offered a job to work in Europe as a gardener by a wealthy friend. He accepted the job as he believed it would allow him to pay off his debts. He was introduced to a group of men who arranged for him to be smuggled out of Asia. After a long and difficult journey B arrived at a bleak industrial estate in rural Ireland and was taken to a barn.

Inside the barn the heat was stifling. He saw hundreds of plants being fed and watered by hoses under artificial lights. He was told that it would be his job to look after the plants. The men locked him in and threatened him that he would be very sorry if anything happened to them. He only had an old mattress to sleep on and was brought food once a week. B had no idea what country he was in, but he knew that he was trapped in a cannabis factory.

When the police eventually discovered the barn, they found B still locked inside. With the assistance of an interpreter, he told them he had been kept as a slave, forced to tend to the plants, and had been threatened with violence. He told them that he had never received any money.

B was charged with possession of the cannabis plants. He faces a mandatory minimum sentence of ten years in prison.

**The victims' names have been changed to protect the subjects' identity*

More information about the RACE in Europe project can be found at www.anti-slavery.org/RACEinEurope



RESPONSE AGAINST TRAFFICKING FOR FORCED CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION

European Initiative to Improve Response Against Trafficking for Forced Criminal Exploitation



“With the financial support of the Prevention of and Fight against Crime Programme European Commission - Directorate-General Home Affairs”

'RACE in Europe' Project

European Initiative to Improve Response Against Trafficking for Forced Criminal Exploitation

What is the issue?

Children and adults are trafficked across Europe for forced criminal activities and forced begging. Traffickers force them to beg in towns and cities and they are forced to commit crimes such as pickpocketing, ATM theft, metal theft and cannabis cultivation. Trafficking for forced criminal activities and forced begging are increasingly significant phenomena, but have only recently been formally recognised in the EC Directive 2011/36.

Although both national and international legislation provides for the non-punishment and non-prosecution of victims, those trafficked are often **treated as criminals**. Many end up being prosecuted, convicted and imprisoned for crimes they have been forced to commit, while their traffickers enjoy impunity.

What is the 'RACE in Europe' project?

The 'RACE in Europe' project, funded by the European Commission is a two-year initiative by Anti-Slavery International and its partners to improve knowledge about the nature and scale of trafficking of children and adults for forced criminal exploitation and forced begging. Practitioners from across Europe will be trained to help them identify and protect the rights of the victims of this crime.

Our aims are to:

- **Enhance knowledge and awareness** amongst law enforcement, policy makers, service providers, legislators, the media and civil society of human trafficking for forced criminal activities and forced begging in Europe
- **Train practitioners** in three European sub-regions on intervention in cases of forced criminal activities and begging
- **Build cross-EU links** and strengthen partnerships amongst relevant stakeholders

CASE STUDY: Maria's story

Maria*, a 13 year old girl from Romania, was trafficked into the UK in 2008. Her Father paid €200 to an organised criminal network to arrange her travel into the country. Once in the UK, Maria was placed with a family in Slough who were part of this criminal network. She was forced to become the domestic slave for the family, having to do the household chores and care for the children. She was made to sleep on the floor and was fed only scraps.

Every day Maria was driven to Surrey and forced to beg, steal and to sell the 'Big Issue' magazine illegally. After working for 12 hours each day she would be collected, searched and beaten by her traffickers. She was never allowed to keep any of her earnings. Although forced to work on the streets throughout the winter months she was never provided with a coat to wear or anything to eat or drink.

Following an in-depth police investigation as part of Operation Golf in 2008, the house where Maria was living was raided. Five adults, including Maria's father were arrested and charged with trafficking. Maria was repatriated to Romania and passed into the care of Romanian Social Services.

The 'RACE in Europe' project partners include:

Anti-Slavery International	http://www.antislavery.org
ECPAT UK	http://www.ecpat.org.uk
Migrant Rights Centre Ireland	http://www.mrci.ie/
Specialist Policing Consultancy Ltd.	http://www.specialist-policing.co.uk/
La Strada Czech Republic	http://www.strada.cz/en/
Multicultural Centre Prague	http://www.mkc.cz/en/home.html/
Police Academy of the Netherlands	http://www.politieacademie.nl/
Vietnamese Mental Health Services	http://www.vmhs.org.uk/

More information about the project can be found at:

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