

The Legal Definition:

The definition of human trafficking commonly accepted by governments, law enforcement bodies and agencies including the UKHTC derives from the *UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children, supplementing the UN Convention Against Transnational Organisational Crime*. This is also commonly referred to as 'the Palermo Protocol'.

According to the Article 3, "Trafficking in Persons" means:

'The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power, or a position of vulnerability, or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs'.

Children cannot give consent to being moved, therefore the coercion or deception elements do not have to be present.

Source, transit and destination countries throughout Europe translate and interpret the Palermo Protocol in different ways so the definition of what constitutes human trafficking can differ between nations.

A Working Definition:

In the simplest terms, human trafficking is the movement of a person from one place to another into conditions of exploitation, using deception, coercion, the abuse of power or the abuse of someone's vulnerability. It is entirely possible to have been a victim of trafficking even if your consent has been given to being moved.

There are therefore three constituent elements:

The movement – recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons.

The control – threat, use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or vulnerability, or the giving of payments or benefits to a person in control of the victim.

The purpose – exploitation of a person, which includes prostitution and other sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery or similar practices, and the removal of organs.

Although human trafficking often involves an international cross-border element, it is also possible to be a victim of human trafficking within your own country.