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# Parliamentary Inquiry into Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation

Conducted by Rt Hon Maria Miller MP, Rt Hon Frank Field MP  
and Baroness Butler-Sloss

2019

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## Terms of Reference

### Background

In 2018 the number of potential victims of modern slavery rose by a third to almost 7,000 people, with up to a quarter trafficked for sexual exploitation. The problem is growing and must be urgently addressed if Britain is to remain a world leader in this fight.

In 2018 the Government commissioned Rt Hon Frank Field MP, Rt Hon Maria Miller MP and Baroness Elizabeth Butler-Sloss to hold an independent review of the Modern Slavery Act, to strengthen and enhance the legislation as this crime is uncovered and better understood. The findings of the review were published in May 2019<sup>1</sup>.

In the final report of the independent review of the Modern Slavery Act, Rt Hon Frank Field MP announced that he, Rt Hon Maria Miller MP and Baroness Butler-Sloss would be “undertaking a scoping review into laws surrounding prostitution in England and Wales and the extent to which they help or hinder police action against trafficking for sexual exploitation.”<sup>2</sup>

### Aim of the inquiry

The aim of the Inquiry into Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation, a follow-up to the Government’s commissioned review of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, is to determine whether the legal framework of Great Britain (excluding Northern Ireland) makes it a more attractive destination for those involved in trafficking adults for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

“The next task in reinforcing Britain as a world leader in the fight against modern slavery is to see whether the law in this country encourages traffickers to bring people to Britain for the purposes of sexual exploitation, as against nearby countries which have a different legislative framework. This will be the basis for our inquiry. Sexual exploitation of victims of trafficking and modern slavery is a growing crime, and the incoming Prime Minister must do everything possible to ensure that the UK is a hostile place for this horrific activity.” - **Rt Hon Frank Field MP**

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<sup>1</sup> Independent review of the Modern Slavery Act: final report, Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Command of Her Majesty, May 2019. Accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-the-modern-slavery-act-final-report>

<sup>2</sup> Independent review of the Modern Slavery Act: final report, Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Command of Her Majesty, May 2019, p.8. Accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-the-modern-slavery-act-final-report>

“Nobody should ever feel forced or coerced into sexual activity, nor should a person’s vulnerability be exploited for someone else’s gain. This inquiry will investigate whether the current laws on prostitution in England and Wales act to encourage the trafficking for sexual exploitation of men and women into this country and what legal or other reforms are needed to put a stop to it. The sexual exploitation of modern-day slaves is an appalling crime and we must ensure our laws are as robust as possible to stop this abuse from being perpetrated.” - **Rt Hon Maria Miller MP**

“Trafficking for sexual exploitation is an abhorrent crime, and this country should do everything in its power to prevent and end this form of modern slavery. Whilst previous legislation has made a start, there is much more to be done to ensure that the UK does not inadvertently become a safe haven for criminals who wish to perpetrate this abuse of human rights.” - **Baroness Elizabeth Butler-Sloss**

### **Evidence gathering and timetable**

The Inquiry into Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation will hear evidence over the summer and publish its findings and recommendations in autumn 2019. Evidence will be gathered from relevant stakeholders, including police, prosecutors, non-governmental organisations and victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. The evidence gathering process will include an open call for written evidence from stakeholders.

Stakeholders wishing to submit written evidence to the inquiry should address the following questions in their submission:

1. Name and organisation (if relevant)
2. What impact do current laws relating to prostitution and modern slavery have on the scale and nature of trafficking for sexual exploitation into and around England and Wales?
3. How could the Government improve the laws to reduce trafficking for sexual exploitation?

Responses should be emailed to [modernslaveryactreview@gmail.com](mailto:modernslaveryactreview@gmail.com). The word limit for submissions is 1500 words. The deadline for written submissions to the inquiry is Friday 30 August 2019.