

23 May 2025

REFERENCE: FOI25141

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your request for information dated 11 April 2025 and detailed below.

1. Total funding allocated by the Department to support services for victims of human trafficking in each of the last 10 financial years. Please provide a breakdown of funding allocated to specific organisations, if possible.
2. Number of referrals received by victim support services funded by the Department of Justice for potential victims of human trafficking in each of the last 10 years. Please provide a breakdown by gender, age, and type of exploitation, if available.
3. Number of individuals who received support services as confirmed victims of human trafficking through these funded organisations in each of the last 10 years.
4. Any data collected by the Department on the needs and experiences of victims of human trafficking in Northern Ireland over the last 10 years.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives you two rights of access when you write to us asking for information. You have the right to know whether we hold recorded information falling in scope of your request, and you have the right to receive this recorded information subject to cost limit or exemption.

Some of the information you have requested is covered by the following section of the Freedom of Information Act:

Section 43 (2): Commercial Interests

Qualified Exemption

The exemption provisions of section 43 (2) confers a qualified exemption to our duty under section 1 (1)(b) of the Act – to release the information requested. Information covered by qualified exemptions can only be withheld where the public interest falls in favour of applying the exemptions. Details of our Public Interest Test considerations in respect of section 43 are set out in Annex A to this letter. The DoJ has decided that, on balance, the public interest in withholding the information for some documents outweighs those considerations favouring the release of that information.

The information you have requested is provided below with an exemption being applied to the section in bold at Question 1:

1. Total funding allocated by the Department to support services for victims of human trafficking in each of the last 10 financial years. **Please provide a breakdown of funding allocated to specific organisations, if possible.**

Total Funding Allocated	Yr 25/26	Yr 24/25	Yr 23/24
	£2,220,000	£2,220,000	£1,746,000
	Yr 22/23	Yr 21/22	Yr 20/21
	£839,000	£650,000	£636,000
	Yr 19/20	Yr 18/19	Yr 17/18
	£240,000	£135,000	£135,000
	Yr 16/17		
	£135,000		

The tables below include information relevant to the following questions:

2. Number of referrals received by victim support services funded by the Department of Justice for potential victims of human trafficking in each of the last 10 years. Please provide a breakdown by gender, age, and type of exploitation, if available.
3. Number of individuals who received support services as confirmed victims of human trafficking through these funded organisations in each of the last 10 years.

The information below were the only years available due to the organisations' data retention policies:

Year	New NRM Referrals	Male New Referrals	Female New Referrals	Confirmed Victims/Positive Conclusive Grounds Decisions
2019	44	25	19	18
2020	102	56	46	42
2021	263	182	81	102
2022	486	321	165	176
2023	287	257	30	48
2024	492	340	152	109
2025	251	54	197	39
Total	1,925	1,235	690	534

Until 31/03/2025

Age Range per Year	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56+	DOB Unknown	Total
2019	13	10	4	8	3	6	44
2020	51	34	6	1	0	10	102
2021	104	125	11	2	0	11	253
2022	177	178	38	8	1	84	486
2023	87	150	38	9	3	1	288
2024	183	249	51	6	3	0	492
2025	163	63	15	7	3	0	251

Until 31/03/2025

Type of Exploitation	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	TOTAL
Labour	21	40	176	305	232	305	51	1130
Sexual	5	39	22	12	2	57	24	161
Domestic	6	12	18	3	6	6	5	56
Forced Marriage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Criminal	10	11	20	5	4	3	1	54
Labour & Sexual	0	19	24	154	13	108	169	487
Organ Harvesting	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Others	2	0	0	3	11	22	3	41
Not specified	0	0	3	4	0	0	0	7
TOTAL	44	121	263	486	268	502	253	1,937

Until 31/03/25

4. Any data collected by the Department on the needs and experiences of victims of human trafficking in Northern Ireland over the last 10 years.

The Department does not collect data on the needs and experiences of victims of human trafficking in Northern Ireland.

If you are unhappy with the result of your request for information you may request an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request an internal review please do so in writing stating the reasons to the address above.

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask the Commissioner to investigate whether the DOJ has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out.

Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Records & Information Manager

Section 43 – Commercial Interests Public Interest Test

Considerations in favour of our disclosing information

There is general public interest in the disclosure of information. There is also public interest in ensuring proper management of public funds.

Considerations against our disclosing information

Release of the information would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the contractor. Specifically, release of a figure could give an advantage to competitors by giving an indication of the contractor's pricing for this type of activity. Release of the figure could also cause reputational damage, given that it is presented without context, which context could not be provided without disclosure of further commercially sensitive information. There is a clear public interest in ensuring the Department does not prejudice the interests of its contractors and in turn ensuring the Department can maintain a good working relationship with its contractors and deal effectively with contractors in future.

Release of the information would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the Department by disclosing the approximate pricing of a current contractor. This may put the Department at a disadvantage in future contract negotiation. There is a clear public interest in ensuring the proper and efficient use of public funds.

Conclusion

On balance the public interest is weighed in favour of non-disclosure. There is no significant public interest in disclosure of the figure, over and above the general public interest in the release of information. There is, however, a clear public interest in avoiding likely prejudice to the commercial interests of the contractor and the Department as outlined above.