

Over 40 million modern slavery victims are trapped in the global workforce

Why events? In the UK, the events industry is worth **£42.3 billion** to the economy, with over **25,000 businesses**, sustaining an estimate of **570,000** full-time equivalent jobs (Events Industry Board, 2018).

How are victims exploited? Workers are subject to long hours (90 hours per week in some cases), and offered **low-pay** for **short-term work** (GLAA, 2019; Draper, 2018). Many are employed on **'zero hour' contracts** and **not paid the National Minimum Wage** (ILO, 2014).

Where is it taking place? In the UK, cases of **labour exploitation** have been reported in circuses, racecourses, Christmas markets, fairgrounds, golf courses and water sports venues (GLAA, 2019).

Why are partnerships important? To address and eliminate modern slavery and human trafficking, the United Nations advocated a three-level approach of: **prevention, protection & prosecution**, to which in 2009 they added a **partnership** element (UN, 2009).

Partnerships allow key players to **share information** about the nature and scale of the problem, **exchange good-practice** & **access knowledge or skills** that might not otherwise exist (IASC, 2017).

Research aim

To advance understanding of **how & why stakeholders develop partnerships** to prevent modern slavery in the UK event sector, & to develop a **good-practice partnership framework** to prevent modern slavery, which may be transferable to other industries.

Modern Slavery in Events

An investigation of Partnership development

A narrative approach

Stage one: Analyse **Modern Slavery Statements** from British event companies. **42 statements from 21 events companies** were analysed to: (1) evaluate approaches to prevent modern slavery and (2) map stakeholders likely to be engaged in preventing modern slavery in the sector.

Stage two: Conduct **semi-structured interviews** with key stakeholders to: (1) examine the type of partnerships they are involved in or seek to develop, (2) their reasons to organise in such partnerships, and (3) the processes they follow.

Preliminary findings

- **Modern slavery is defined and perceived differently** in the reviewed statements.
- Most statements **do not identify specific risks** leading to **untargeted responses** & **vague representation of preventative measures**.
- While the reviewed companies share similarities (where and how they operate, workforce and suppliers), there is a **significant difference in how risks are perceived**: some companies do not consider that they operate in a high risk sector, while others take the risks of modern slavery very seriously.
- **Companies have contrasting attitudes to reporting**: some refer to the requirement to report due to their **annual turnover**, while others **take pride in reporting** and aim to inspire others in the industry to do so.
- Mapping stakeholders' responsibility: **supply chain management & HR directors** (at group and regional level) are responsible for setting the appropriate policies; **recruitment & HR managers** have the duty to perform checks; **employees** and all other people working for the company are responsible for identifying signs and notifying appropriate management.

Contribution to knowledge

1. Enhance knowledge of **how & why stakeholders organise collaborative partnerships** to prevent modern slavery in the event sector and the **implications of partnership development**.
2. Provide **critical insight into stakeholder collaboration and partnership development** against modern slavery in the event sector.
3. Develop a **good-practice partnership framework** against modern slavery for the events sector (which may be transferable to other industries).