

When will it end?

'There are an estimated 12.3 million enslaved people in the world today.'

Slavery has its roots in poverty and discrimination and at the start of the 21st century we seem no closer to solving these social ills than we were in 1807. The estimates of enslaved people in the world today vary significantly. However, it is clear that slavery exists despite the fact that it is banned in most of the countries where it is practised. Women from Eastern Europe are bonded into prostitution, children are trafficked between West African countries and men are forced to work as slaves on Brazilian agricultural estates. Contemporary slavery takes various forms and affects people of all ages, sex and race.

Slavery in Britain Today

Immigrant workers are among the most vulnerable people in our society and open to exploitation.

In 2004 twenty one Chinese people drowned in Morecombe Bay, cockle-picking for gangmasters who paid them little, crowded them into unsanitary accommodation, fed them rotten food and threatened their families.

In Birmingham on 3 October 2005 a police raid on a Birmingham brothel discovered women from 10 different countries forced into prostitution against their will. Nineteen women many from Eastern European countries had been tricked into the sex industry and had their passports stolen. An electric fence at the rear prevented the women from escaping. Firearms and baton provided further evidence of forced sex-trade labour.

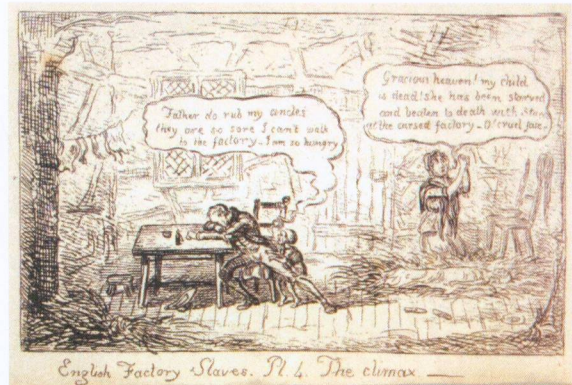
Estimate of the Number of Enslaved People Around the World

Asia Pacific	Nearly 9.5 million
Latin America and Caribbean	1.3 million
Sub-Saharan Africa	660,000
Industrial Countries (incl. UK and North America)	360,000
Middle East and North Africa	260,000
Transition Countries (Baltic states and central and eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States)	210,000

Statistics from HM Government publication to mark the bi-centenary of the slave trade, Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act, 1807-2007 (Dept. of Culture, Media and Sport: <http://www.culture.gov.uk/>)



Condition of the West Indian Slave and the Infant Slave in our English Factories; London (Special Collections)



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Child labour:

Think about what you are buying

The International Labour Organisation estimates that there are 126 million children thought to be working in the worst forms of labour.

In Mali over 15,000 children have been being kidnapped or sold into slavery on the Ivory Coast in order to produce the cocoa which goes towards making almost half of the world's chocolate. Many are imprisoned on farms and beaten if they try to escape. Some are under 11 years old. The *Save the Children Fund* has set up a transit centre in the hope that one day these children will escape from the cocoa, coffee and other farms on which they are working. Unfortunately only a few make it. Mali's *Save the Children Fund* director, Salia Kante, encouraged consumers to think about what they buy:

"People who are drinking cocoa or coffee are drinking their blood," he said. "It is the blood of young children carrying 6kg of cocoa sacks so heavy that they have wounds all over their shoulders. It's really pitiful to see."

(Taken from a report by the BBC, 12 April 2001)

Campaigns—Join the Fight

anti-slavery Anti-Slavery International, founded in 1839, is the world's oldest international human rights organisation and the only charity in the United Kingdom to work exclusively against slavery and related abuses. To find out about the latest news, announcements, publications and how to campaign go to their website: <http://www.antislavery.org/>



THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM
ETHICAL TRADE SOCIETY

Birmingham is the largest Fair Trade city in the world. In 2002 a group of students at the University set up the University of Birmingham's Ethical Trade Society with the aim of becoming a Fairtrade University. In 2003 the University of Birmingham was awarded Fairtrade Status and became the second Fairtrade University in the country thanks to their work.

Since then the Ethical Trade society has continued to work to uphold the University's status. Shops and cafes on campus all stock fair trade products and the society actively promotes Fairtrade to students, staff and the wider community. **For more information email UBET at:** ethicaltrade@guild.bham.ac.uk