



unseen

Tackling worker exploitation
in the care sector

February 2024

Justine Carter, Director, Unseen j.carter@unseenuk.org

introduction

Unseen is a UK-wide anti-slavery charity working with a wide range of national, regional and local stakeholders, partners and businesses to move closer to our ambition of a world without slavery.



**supporting
survivors**



**educating and
informing
stakeholders**



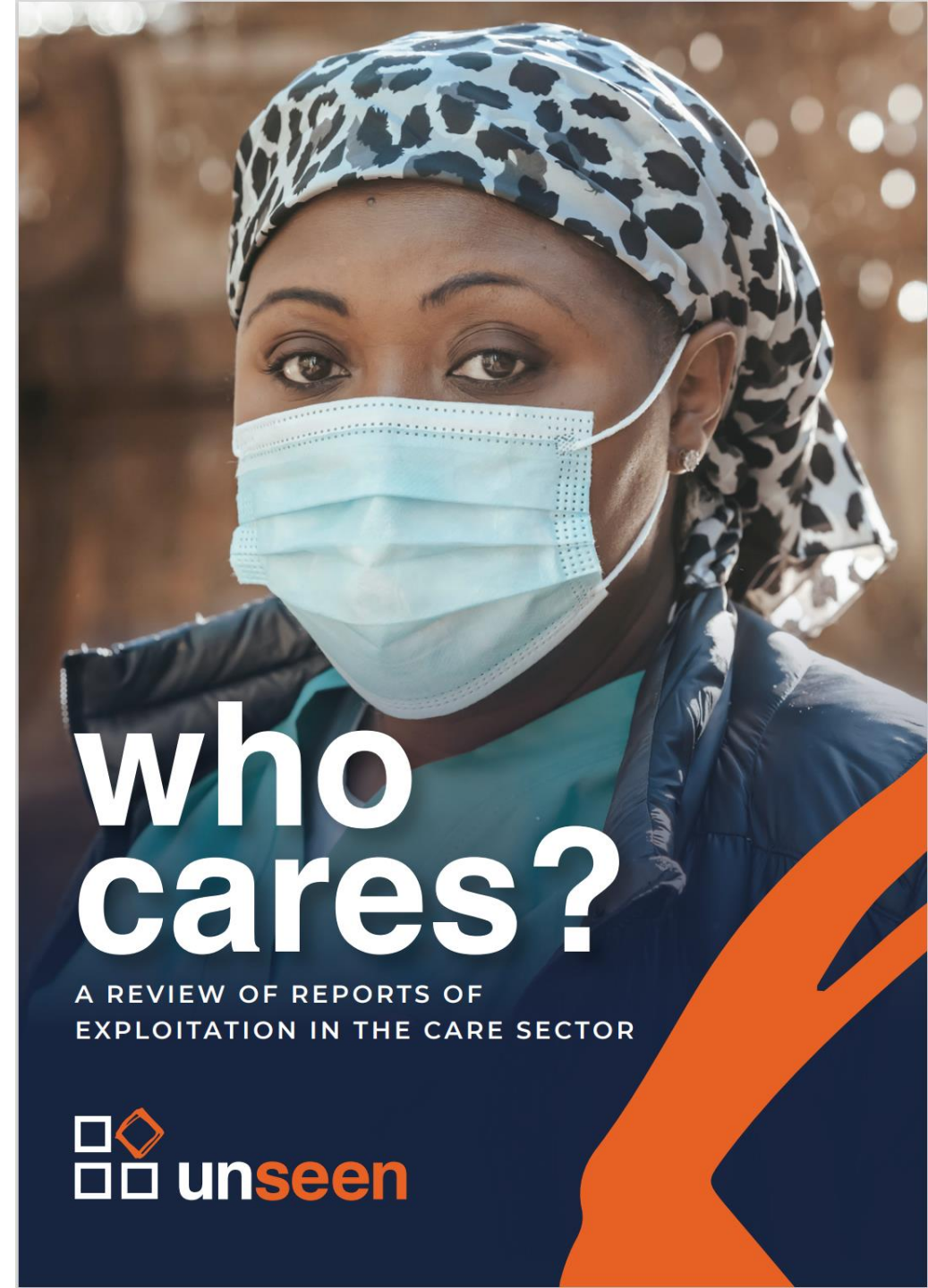
**influencing
systemic change.**



**helping businesses
to continuously
improve**

modern slavery & exploitation helpline

- UK wide service
- Confidential and independent
- 24/7, 365 days a year
- Fully trained specialist staff
- Interpreters
- Person-centred and trauma-informed
- Calls from potential victims, businesses, the public and statutory agencies, including the police for information, advice and support
- Collaborative



who cares?

A REVIEW OF REPORTS OF EXPLOITATION IN THE CARE SECTOR

What is modern slavery?

Why the care sector?

A large, abstract orange graphic on the right side of the slide, resembling a stylized letter 'L' or a thick brushstroke, set against a dark blue background.

THE ISSUE IN NUMBERS

606%

increase in the number of modern slavery care sector cases from 2021 to 2022

106

cases of modern slavery were indicated in the care sector in 2022

712

Potential victims of modern slavery were indicated in the care sector in 2022

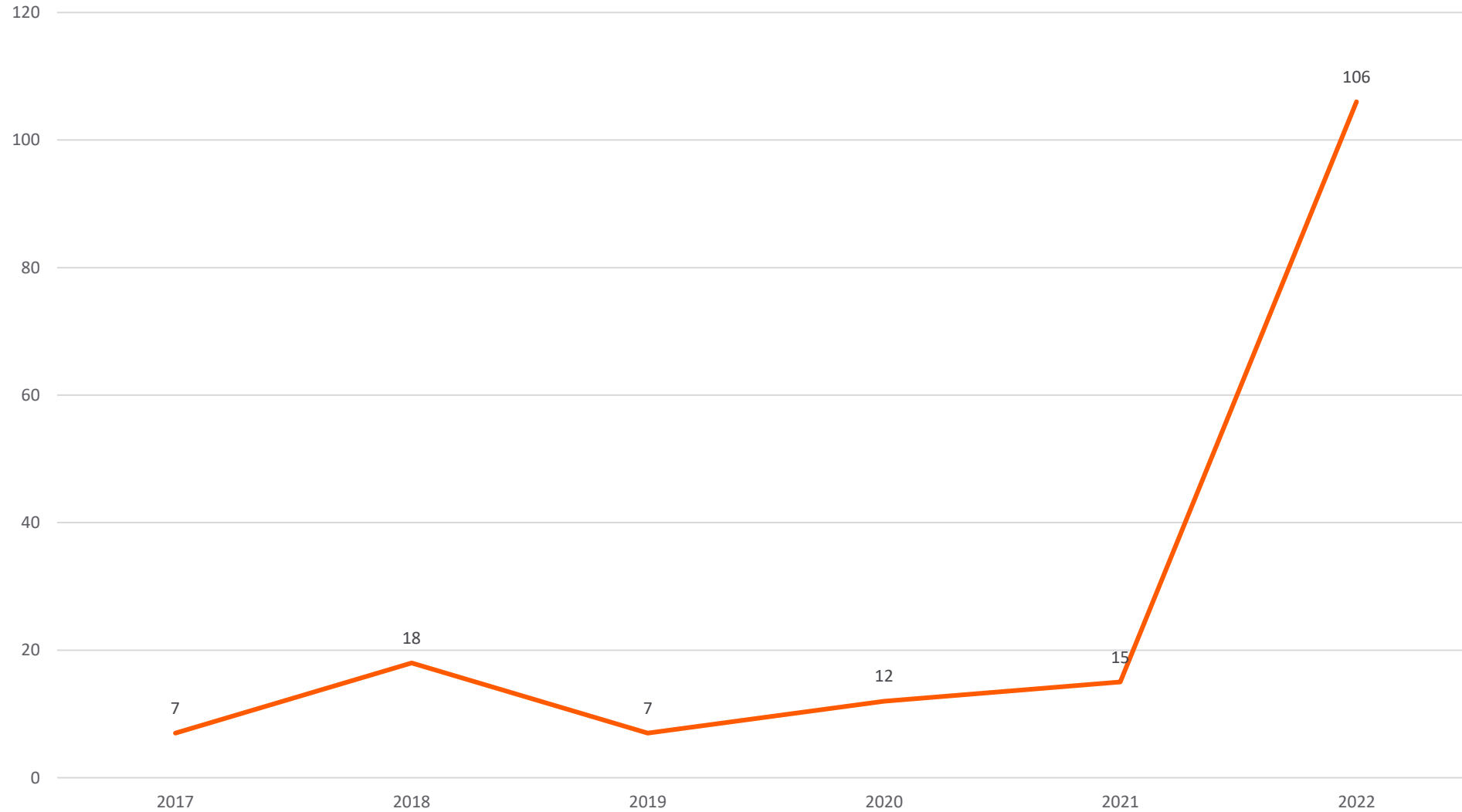
25

different nationalities of potential victims indicated in modern slavery cases in the care sector between Jan 2022-June 2023

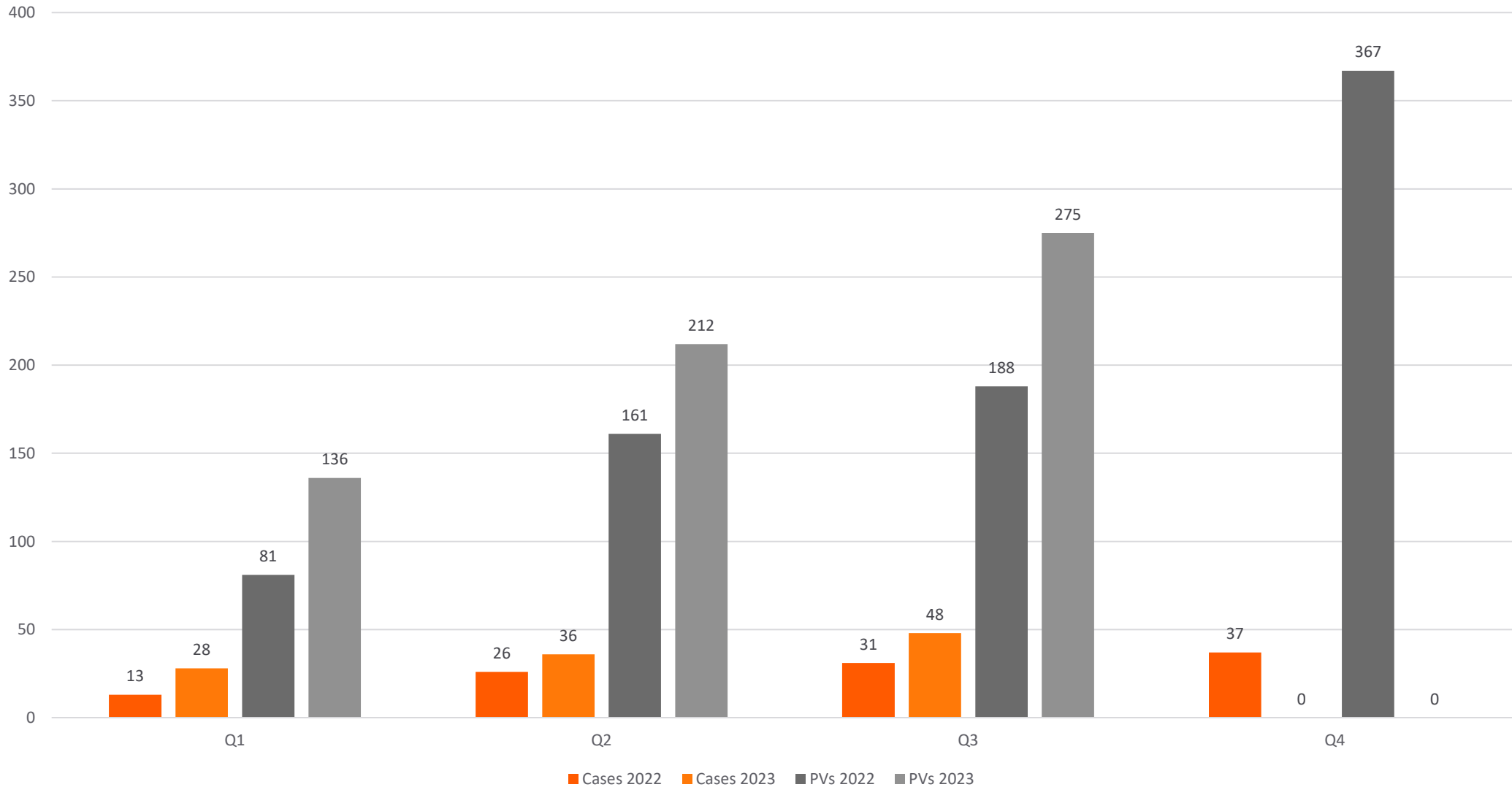
£11,800

Is the average amount of care worker debt indicated to the Helpline, to pay for recruitment, visa and travel costs between Jan-June 2023

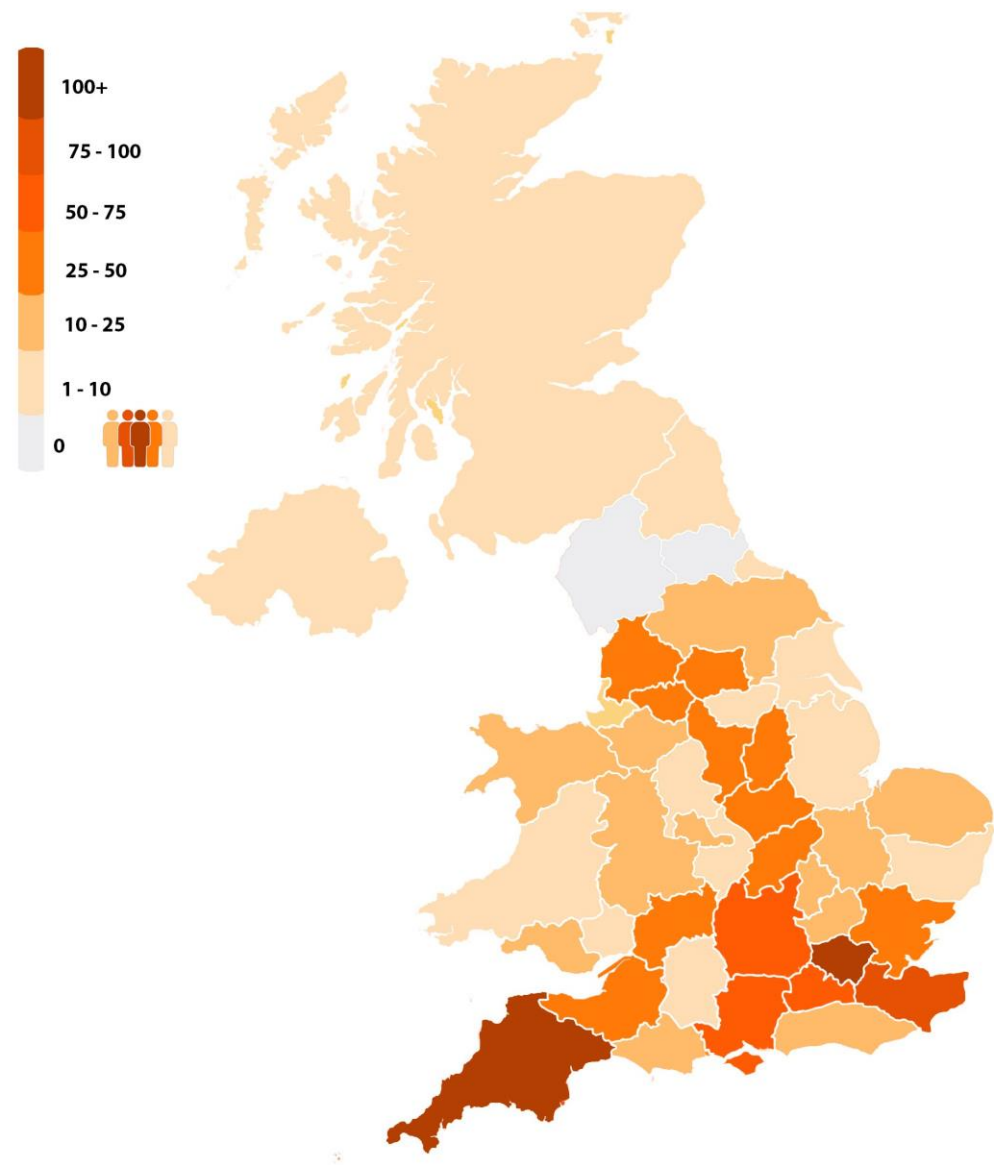
Total number of modern slavery care sector cases by year 2017-2022



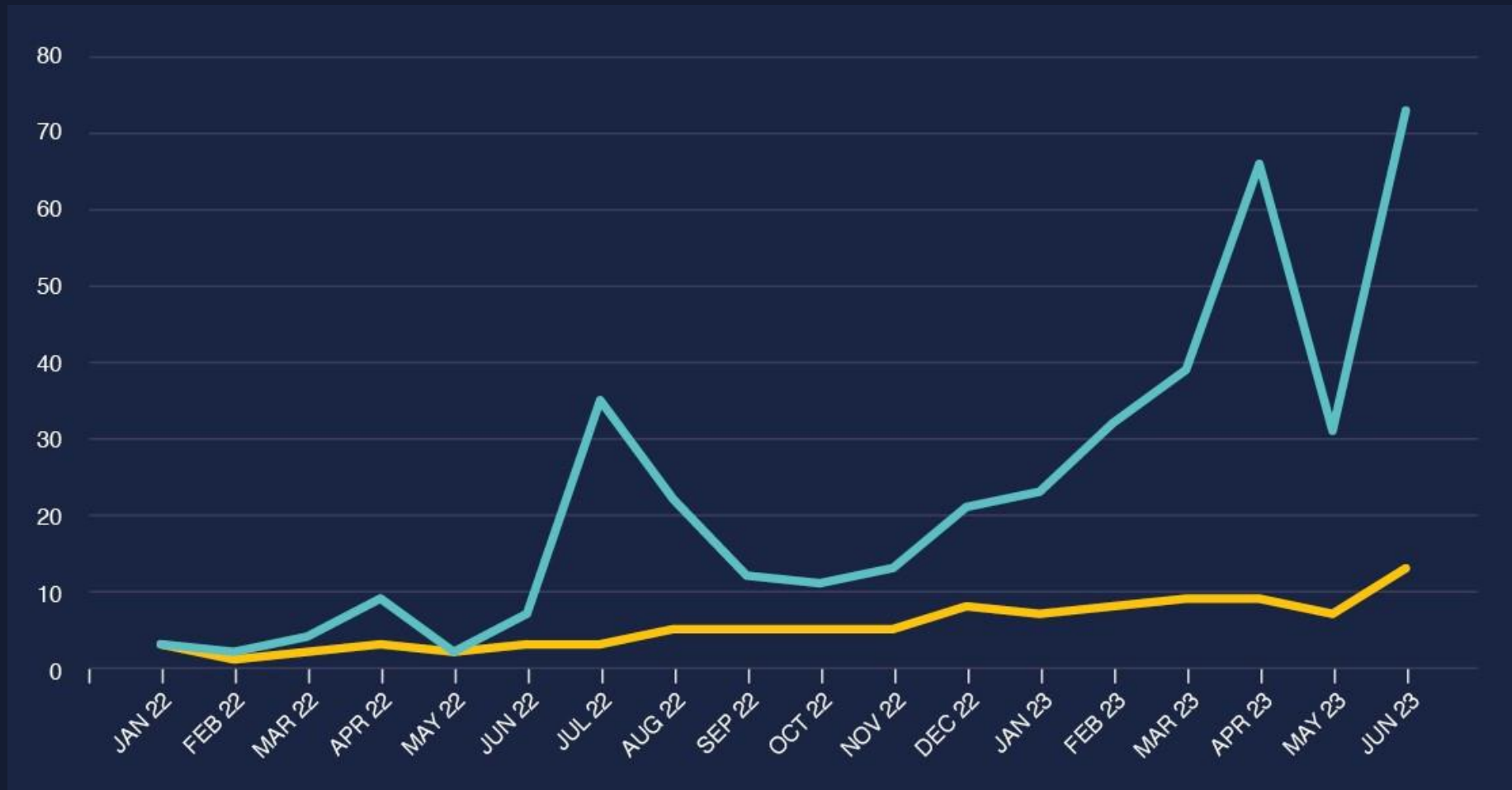
Care sector cases and potential victims by quarter Q1 2022 - Q3 2023



Breakdown of modern slavery potential victims in the care sector indicated to the Helpline, by police force region (Jan 2022 - June 2023)

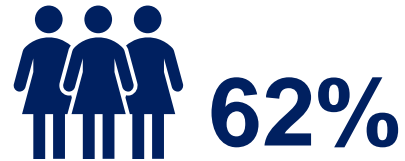


Labour abuse cases and potential victims in the care sector indicated to the Helpline (Jan 2022 - June 2023)





victim demographics



of potential victims were female,
where gender was known



potential victims indicated as
minors

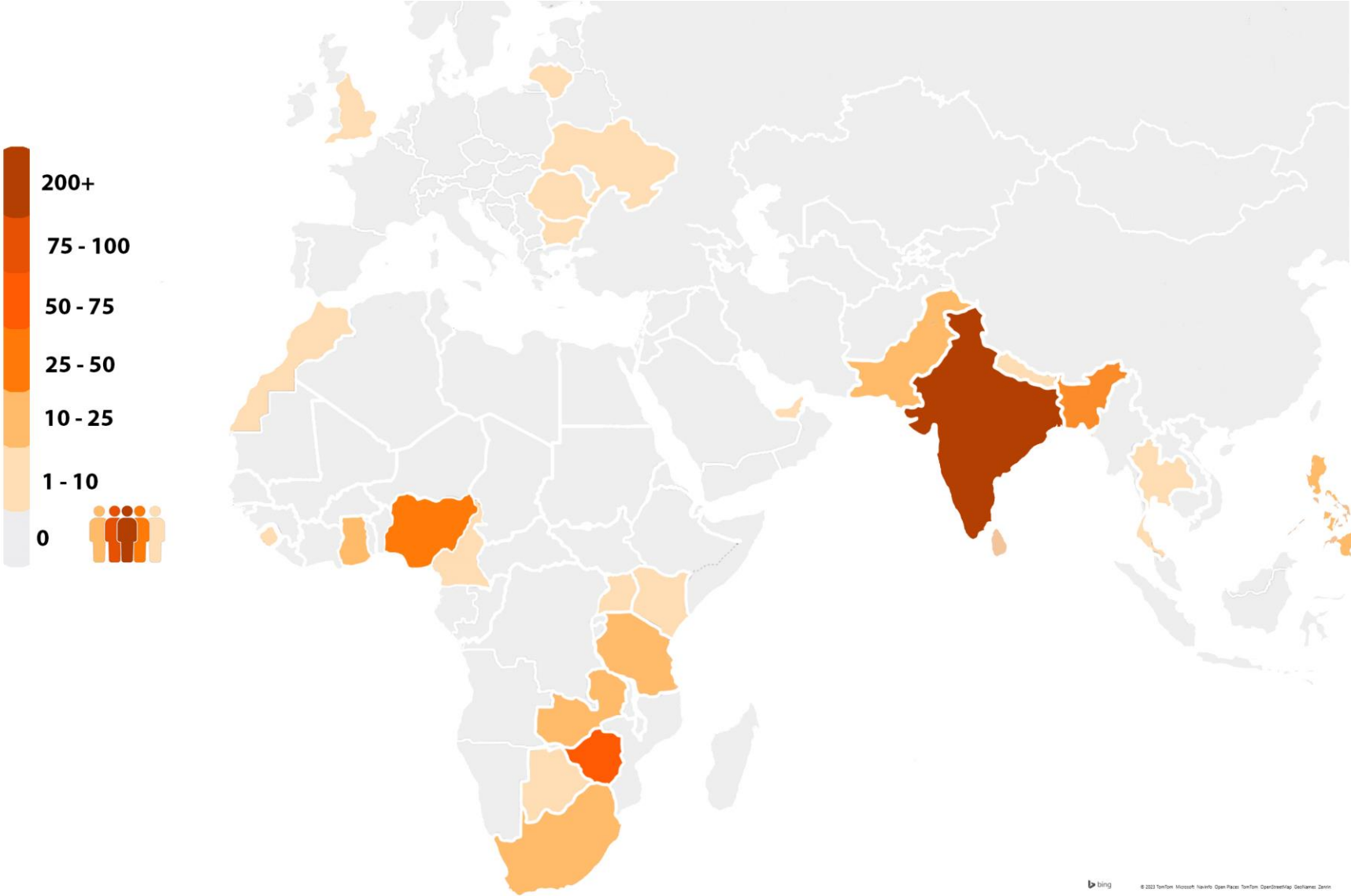


of potential victims were indicated as
being from Asian or African countries,
where nationality was known



of potential victims were indicated as
Indian, where nationality was known

Potential victim nationalities (Jan 2022 - June 2023)





Recruitment methods and locations



of potential victims recruited were recruited through job offers or advertisements



of potential victims experienced false promises or statements



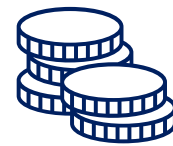
potential victims were commonly reported as being recruited at recruitment agencies or offices



or recruited online



methods of control



73%

of potential victims experienced financial control



60%

of potential victims experienced tied accommodation



43%

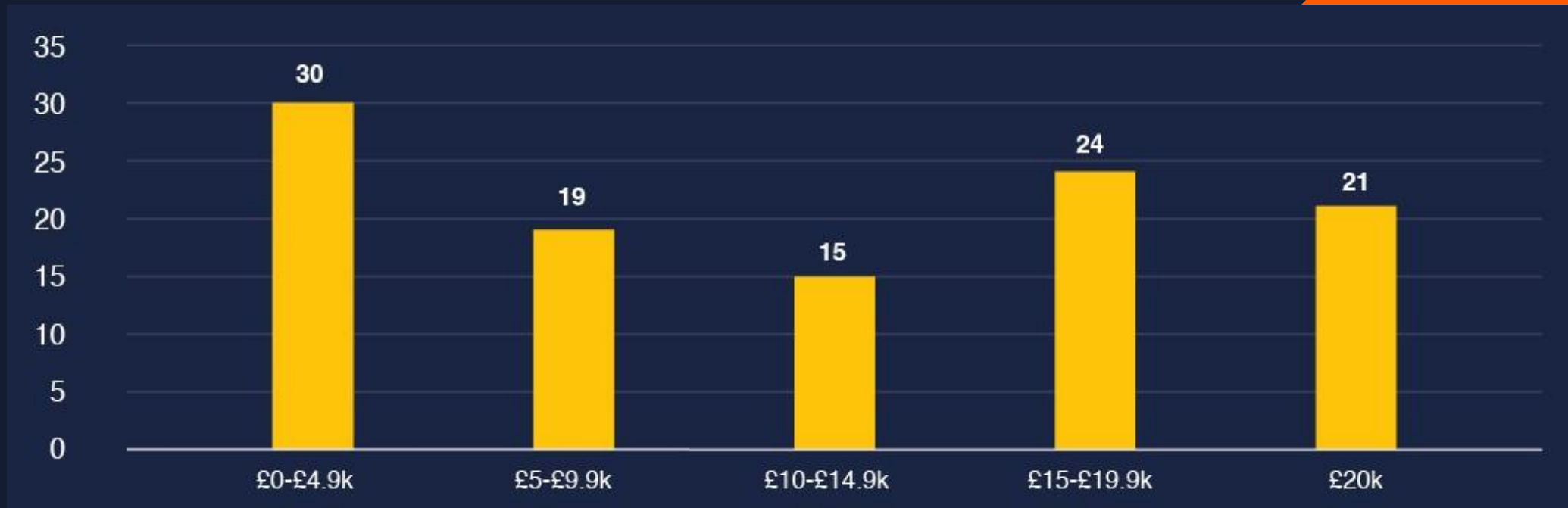
of potential victims experienced confinement or restricted movement



34%

of potential victims experienced threats to report/deport/other

Levels of care worker debt indicated to the Helpline (Jan - June 2023)



recommendations

- Ensure sufficient information about workers' rights and transfer of sponsorship is provided to people intending to travel to the UK to work in the care sector using a health and social care visa.
- Introduce additional checks at visa issuing centres in countries of origin to ensure visa applicants have not paid recruitment fees to a third party.
- Establish a clear channel for reporting to the Home Office and Department of Health employers who charge workers for certificates of sponsorship.
- Implement stricter guidelines around repayment clauses and exit fees. Guidance around exit fees needing to be "proportionate" are too vague, and are easy for unscrupulous employers to abuse.
- Increase salaries of care sector staff as recommended by the Migration Advisory Committee.
- Require mandatory modern slavery training to be completed by all Care Quality Commission inspectors and local authority staff.
- Provide Government support to migrant workers when their sponsor's license has been revoked.



 modern slavery &
exploitation helpline
 **08000 121 700**

