

CHAPTER I
GLOBAL OVERVIEW

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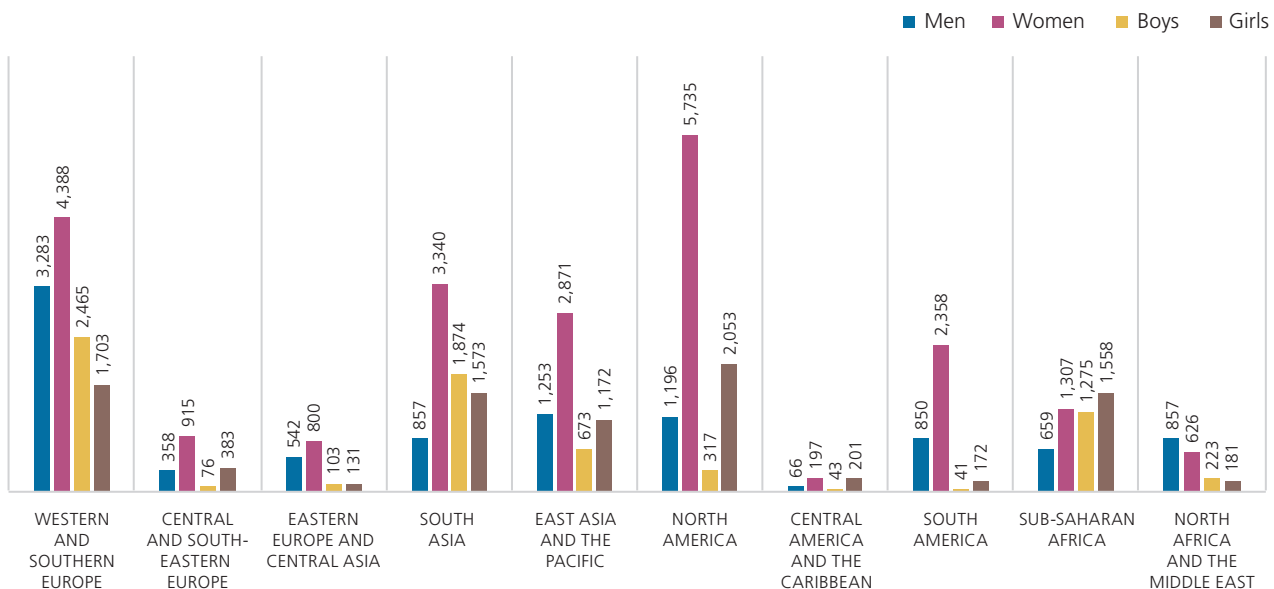
GLOBAL OVERVIEW

The following chapter presents the age and sex profile of victims, based on trafficking cases officially reported by national authorities. In addition, it reports on the profile of the traffickers, their organization, business activity and modus operandi. Furthermore, the global overview assesses the principal detected transregional and regional trafficking flows, as well as the main patterns characterizing domestic trafficking.

to other parts of the world. Europe, North America, as well as countries in Asia recorded more adult women among the victims detected. At the same time, countries in North Africa and the Middle East detected more adult men than other victims.

The absolute number of victims detected reflects geographical differences in the capacity to detect, record and report on trafficking in persons.

FIG. 1 Number of detected victims of trafficking in persons, by age group and sex, by region of detection, 2018 (or most recent)



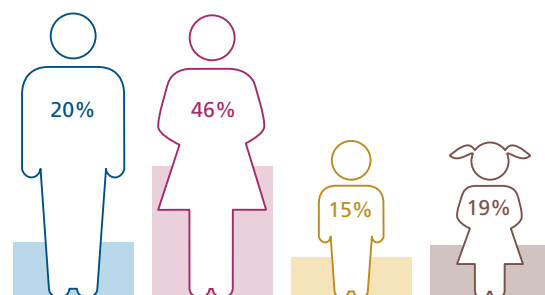
Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

Profile of the victims¹³

Female victims continue to be particularly affected by trafficking in persons. In 2018, for every 10 victims detected globally, about five were adult women and two were girls. About one third of the overall detected victims were children, both girls and boys, while 20 per cent were adult men.

The profile of the victims, however, changes widely in different parts of the world. Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa detected more children than adults. Conversely, in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the shares of adults among total victims were much greater in comparison

FIG. 2 Shares of detected victims of trafficking in persons, by age group and sex,* 2018 (or most recent)

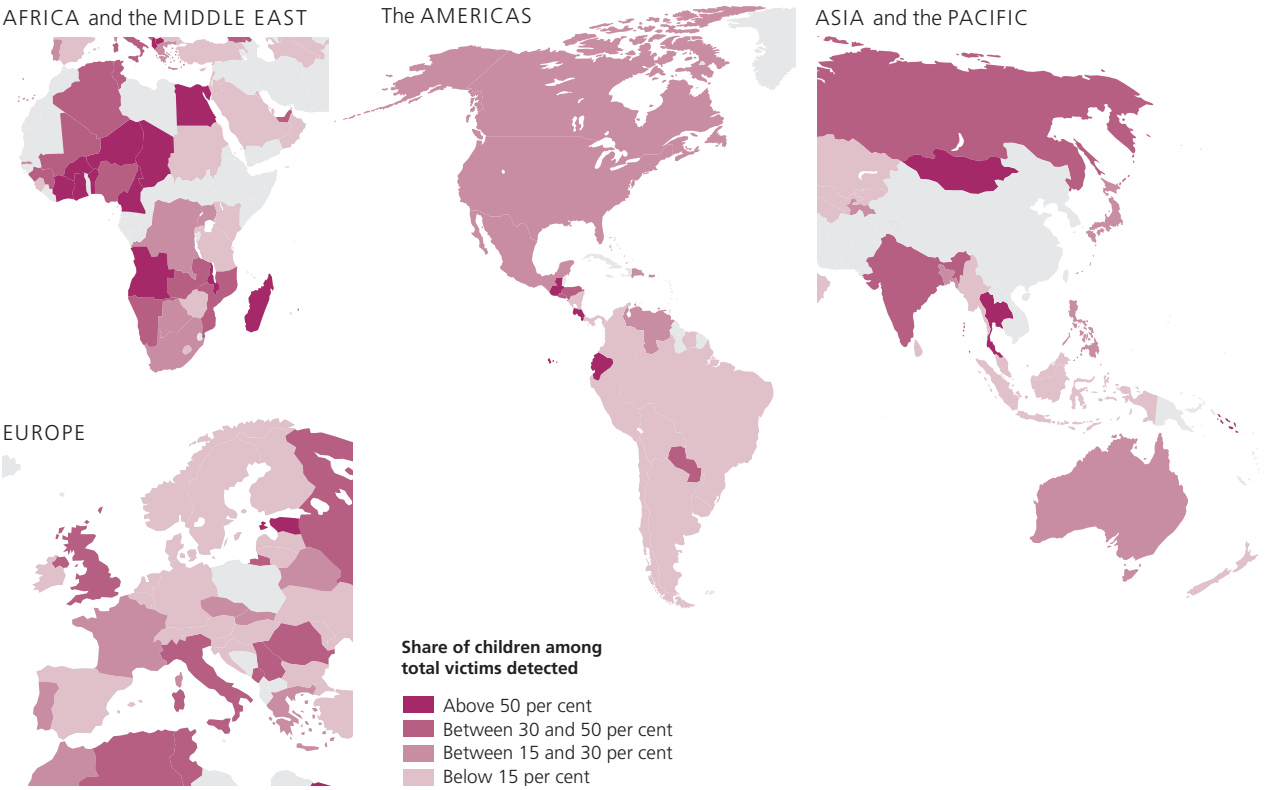


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

*Estimates are based on information referring to age and sex of 48,478 victims detected in 135 countries in 2018 or, if data not available for that year, in 2019, 2017 and 2016.

¹³ According to the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the 2000 UN Trafficking Protocol, a child is any person younger than 18 years of age. In the following text, the terms 'girls' and 'boys' refer to, accordingly, female and male children.

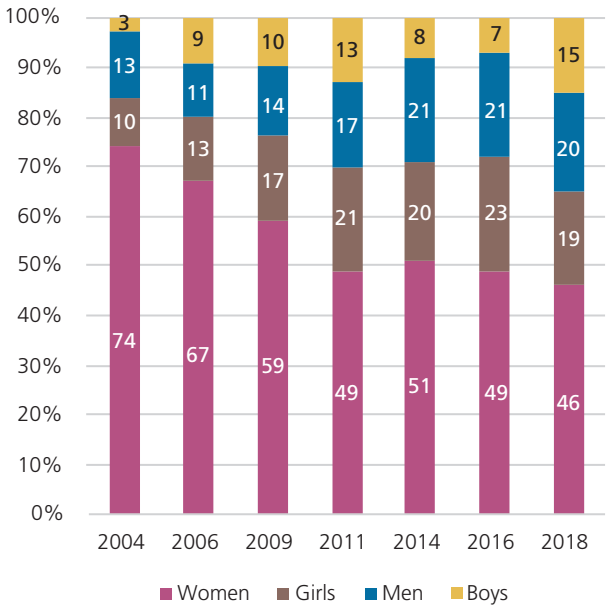
MAP. 4 Shares of children among the total number of detected victims in the different regions, by country, 2018 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

FIG. 3 Trends in age and sex profiles of detected trafficking victims, selected years



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

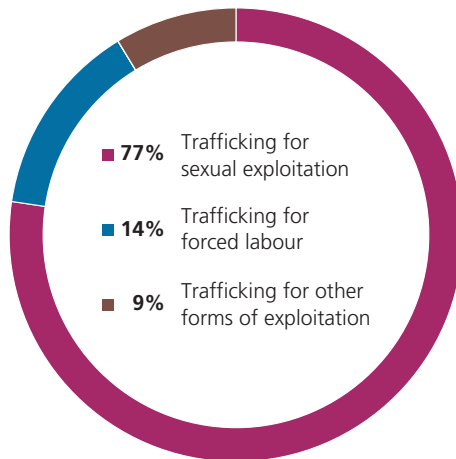
The 2018 findings confirm the 15-year trend of changing age and sex composition of detected victims. Adult women are becoming, in proportion, less commonly detected, and the share of children has increased to over 30 per cent of detected victims. The share of boys detected has risen significantly when compared to girls.

Over the last five years, the share of men among total detected victims remained broadly stable around 20 per cent. However, some regions, including Central and South-Eastern Europe, Central America and the Caribbean and South America, have detected increased shares of this profile compared to 2016.

Different victim profiles are trafficked for different purposes. In 2018, most women detected were trafficked for sexual exploitation, whereas the men detected were mainly trafficked for forced labour. However, a significant share of detected men were trafficked for sexual exploitation or for other forms of exploitation. Similarly, approximately 14 per cent of women were trafficked for forced labour.

FIG. 4 Shares of forms of exploitation among detected women victims of trafficking in persons, 2018 (or most recent)

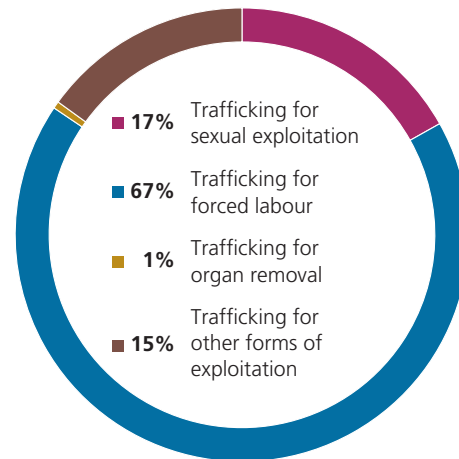
106 countries (n=12,162 victims whose age, sex and form of exploitation was reported)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

FIG. 5 Shares of forms of exploitation among detected men victims of trafficking in persons, 2018 (or most recent)

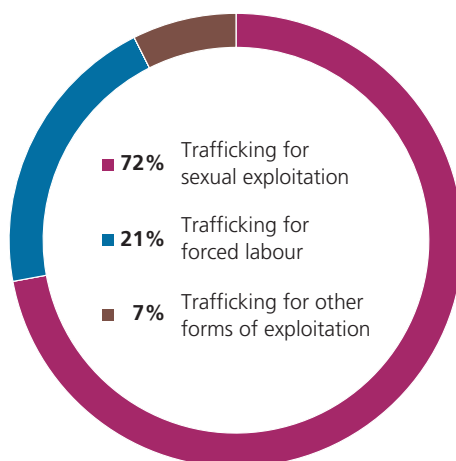
106 countries (n=3,762 victims whose age, sex and form of exploitation was reported)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

FIG. 6 Shares of forms of exploitation among detected girl victims of trafficking in persons, 2018 (or most recent)

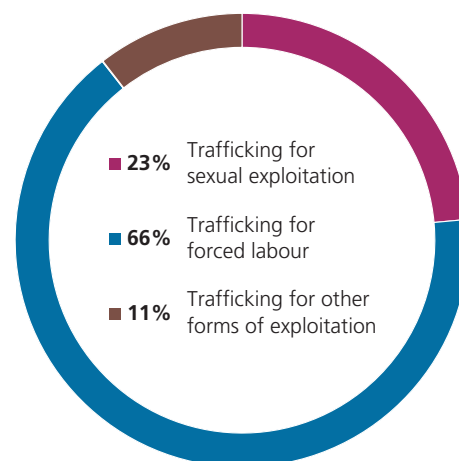
106 countries (n=4,863 victims whose age, sex and form of exploitation was reported)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

FIG. 7 Shares of forms of exploitation among detected boy victims of trafficking in persons, 2018 (or most recent)

106 countries (n=2,065 victims whose age, sex and form of exploitation was reported)



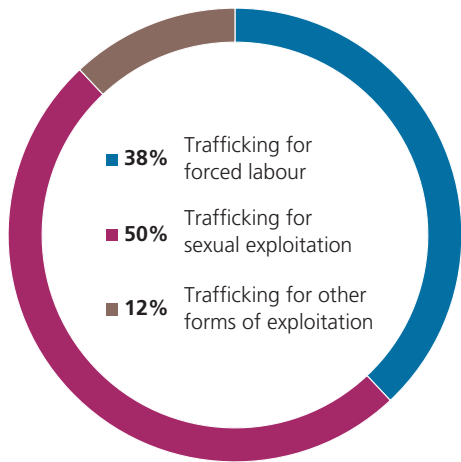
Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

For detected child victims, similar differences exist in terms of exploitation and sex. While boys are detected as mainly being trafficked for forced labour, detected girls are largely trafficked for sexual exploitation (see *Chapter 3 – Children; easy to target*).

Forms of exploitation

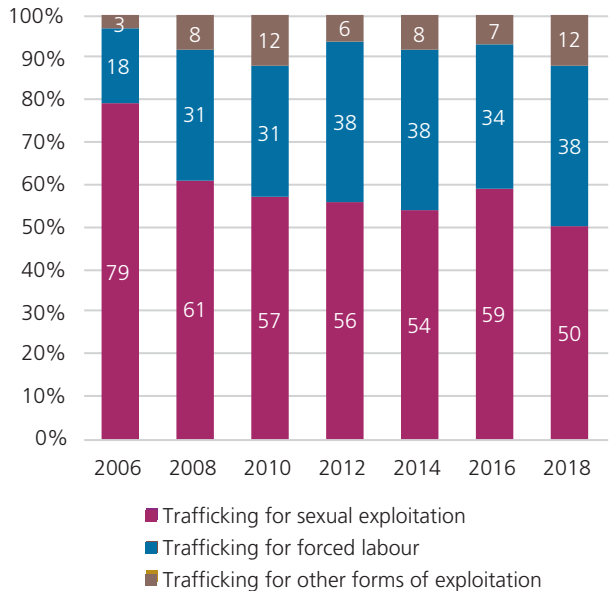
Globally, most victims are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. In 2018, 50 per cent of the victims detected were trafficked for sexual exploitation and 38 per cent were trafficked for forced labour. Detected

FIG. 8 Shares of forms of exploitation among detected trafficking victims*, 2018 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.
*Estimates are based on data provided by 115 countries reporting 39,213 detected victims.

FIG. 10 Trends in the shares of forms of exploitation among detected trafficking victims, 2006–2018



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

FIG. 9 Detailed forms of exploitation among detected trafficking victims, 2018 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

victims were also trafficked for other purposes¹⁴, albeit in smaller numbers.

The increasing share of detected victims trafficked for the purpose of forced labour has been steadily reported for more than a decade. Similarly, trafficking for ‘other’

forms of exploitation has registered a minor, yet consistent, increase over the last ten years.

Outside of trafficking for forced labour or sexual exploitation, trafficking for forced criminal activity is the most detected form of trafficking. About 6 per cent of total victims detected globally are exploited for the commission of crime, ranging from pickpocketing to drug cultivation or drug trafficking. In the year 2018 alone, this form of trafficking was reported by 13 countries in Europe, South Asia, Africa and the Americas (see the box

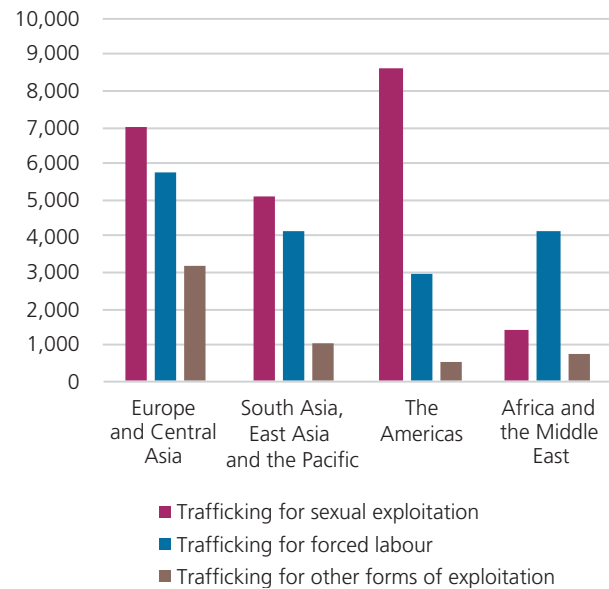
¹⁴ Beyond trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced labour, detected victims of trafficking in persons were reported to be trafficked for the purposes of criminal activity, exploitative begging, forced marriage, baby selling and illegal adoption, organ removal and for mixed forms of exploitation.

– *Trafficking for exploitation in criminal activities – a double victimization*).

A less commonly reported form of trafficking is that for the purpose of exploitative begging. Nineteen countries across all regions of the world reported cases of this form of trafficking, accounting for more than one per cent of total detected victims in 2018. Countries in North Africa and the Middle East report the most significant numbers of this form of trafficking, where it accounts for about 30 per cent of victims detected in the subregion.

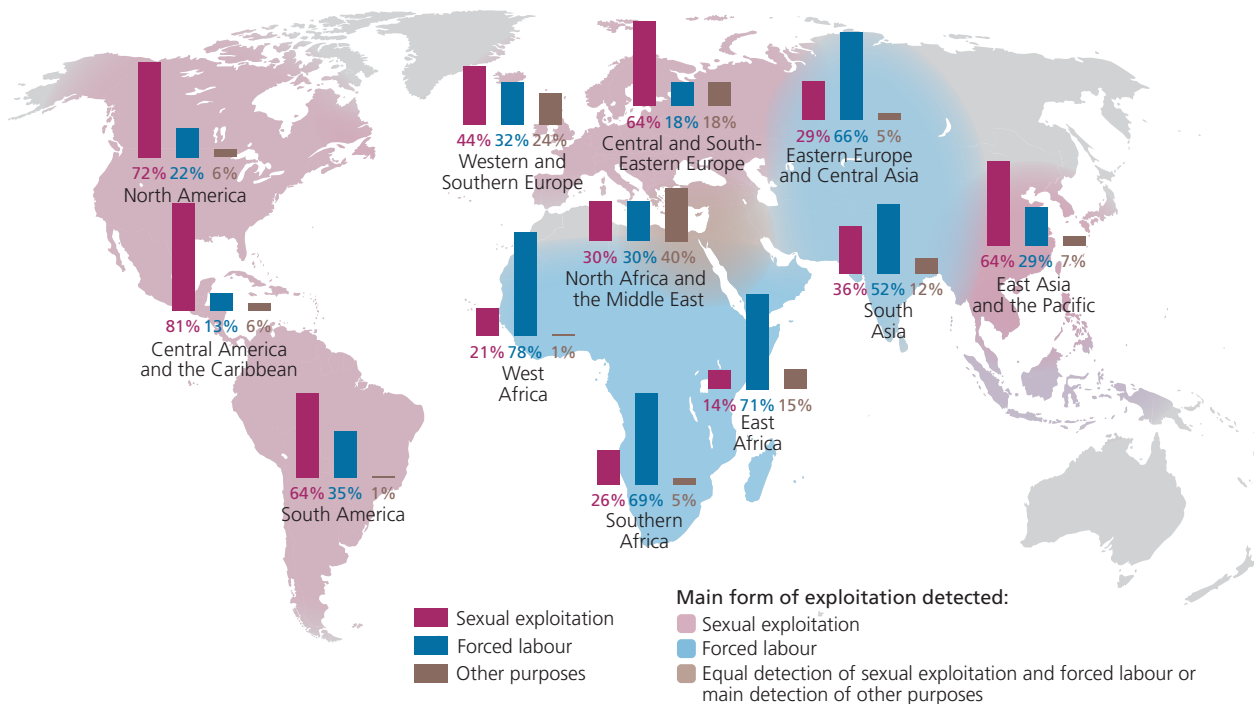
Victims of trafficking for the purpose of forced marriage are less frequently detected, with nine countries across different regions reporting cases, amounting to about 1 per cent of the global total. Similarly, mixed forms of exploitation, where trafficking victims are exploited both for forced labour and sexual exploitation, also accounts for about 1 per cent of the total victims detected. In addition, a few cases of trafficking of pregnant women and/or trafficking of infants, both for the purpose of illegal adoption, are also reported in multiple countries.

FIG. 11 Number of detected trafficking victims, by form of exploitation and region of detection, 2018 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

MAP. 5 Shares of detected trafficking victims, by form of exploitation, by subregion of detection, 2018 (or most recent)

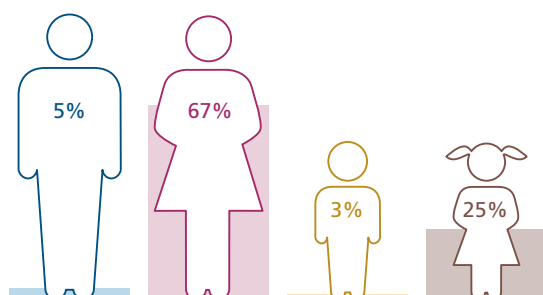


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

FIG. 12 Shares of detected victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, by age group and sex, 2018 (or most recent)

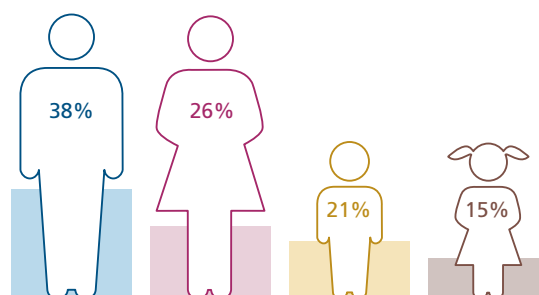
106 countries (n=14,022 victims whose form of exploitation by sex and age was reported)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

FIG. 13 Shares of detected victims of trafficking for forced labour, by age group and sex, 2018 (or most recent)

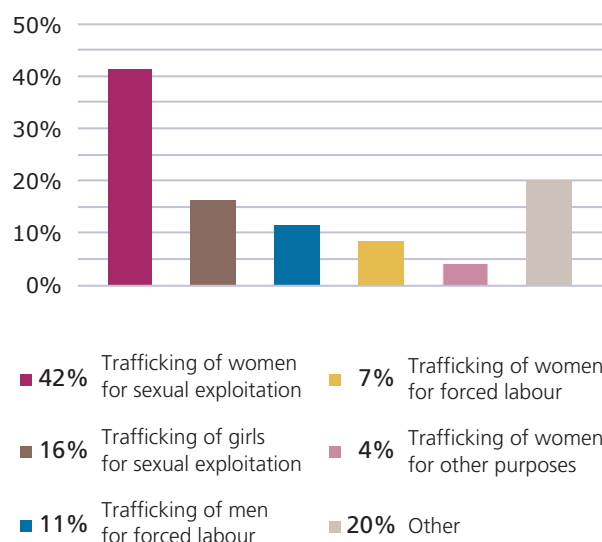
106 countries (n=6,530 victims whose form of exploitation by sex and age was reported)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

FIG. 14 Shares of detected victims of trafficking, by age group, sex and forms of exploitation, 2018 (or most recent)

106 countries (n=22,743 victims)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

While still detected in small numbers, trafficking for the purpose of organ removal was reported in North Africa, South and South-East Asia, Central America and Europe during the reporting period. In 2017, about 25 victims were reported, and in 2018, this number had risen to more than 40.

The detected forms of exploitation and the victims involved vary widely across the different subregions. In 2018, trafficking for forced labour was the most detected form of trafficking in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, where it mostly involved adults, while in South Asia, both adults and children were detected. Meanwhile, in

Sub-Saharan Africa, where it was by far the most commonly identified type of trafficking, the victims were mostly children.

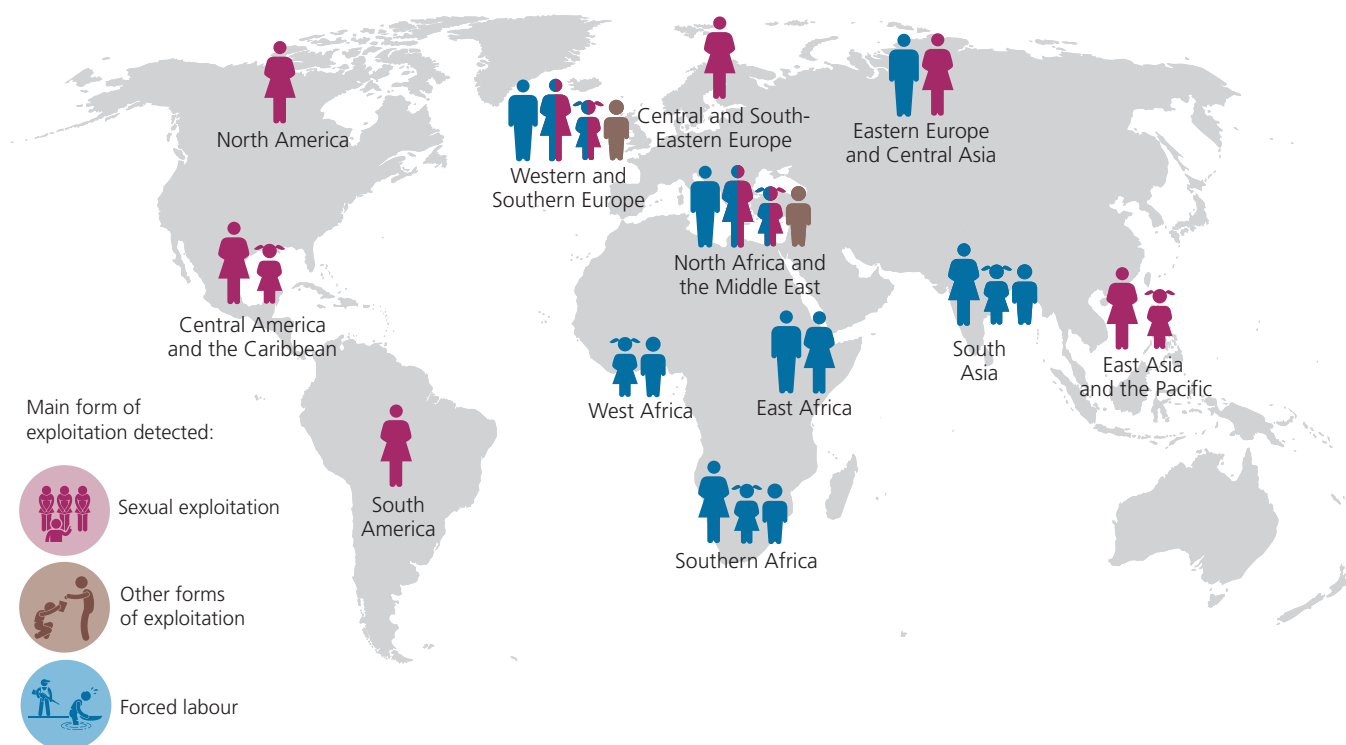
Trafficking for sexual exploitation was the most common form of trafficking detected in Western and Southern Europe, Central and South-Eastern Europe, as well as in East Asia and the Pacific and all regions of the Americas.

Most of the detected victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation are females, while the sex and age profiles of detected victims who are trafficked for forced labour are more diverse (see *Chapter 4 Trafficking for forced labour; the economy of coercion*).

Compared to trafficking for sexual exploitation and forced labour, far fewer victims of trafficking for 'other' purposes are detected. These forms are diverse and vary in terms of victim profile. For example, victims trafficked for the purpose of forced marriages are mainly adult women and girls, while boys are more commonly targeted for trafficking for forced criminal activity. Trafficking for exploitative begging targets both girls and boys, although some adults have also been reported.

The age and sex profiles of the detected victims, along with the corresponding form(s) of exploitation among each group, were reported by 106 countries globally. The information from these countries confirms the patterns found in the general analysis: the majority of victims detected are adult women (about 42 per cent) who are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

MAP. 6 Main forms of exploitation and profiles of detected victims, by subregions, 2018 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Profile of the offenders

Most persons investigated or arrested, prosecuted, and/or convicted of trafficking in persons continue to be male, comprising over 60 per cent of the totals in these three categories. Similar to previous years, in 2018, 36 per cent of those prosecuted for trafficking were female. The share of females is slightly higher for those convicted and slightly lower for those coming into first contact with the police (investigated or arrested for trafficking) when compared to males.

In addition, while most offenders are adults, a very small percentage are under the age of 18, both boys and girls. About 1 per cent of total persons convicted for trafficking are boys, with the same share was recorded for girls. Regional differences also generally correspond with previous reporting periods. The subregion of Eastern Europe and Central Asia continues to convict far more females than males (80 per cent), while in Central America and in East Asia, males and females were convicted in near-equal shares in 2018. Comparatively, countries in Western

and Southern Europe, North America and North Africa and the Middle East reported lower shares of convicted females.

As discussed in the previous editions of the *Global Report*, the differences in the sex profile of individuals convicted may reflect different factors, including the operational activities of the trafficking networks. Accordingly, studies show that women traffickers may be particularly active in the recruitment phase of human trafficking.¹⁵ This could explain the significant differences in the sex profiles of perpetrators in origin and destination countries reflected at all stages of criminal proceedings.¹⁶

¹⁵ See page 30 of the UNODC *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2012* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.13.V.6). See pages 27-29 of the UNODC *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2014* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.14.V.10). See page 36-39 of the UNODC *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2016* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.IV.6).

¹⁶ See page 35 of the UNODC *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.19.IV.2).

LGBTQI+: Unreported victims

Administrative records reported by most governments are not often helpful in understanding how LGBTQI+ individuals – persons who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or have other sexual orientations or gender identities – are vulnerable to trafficking in persons. However, a growing body of research shows that LGBTQI+ individuals are at higher risk of becoming victims of trafficking.^a

Recent studies show that LGBTQI+ children and young adults can be especially vulnerable to trafficking in persons for forced labour and sexual exploitation. First, their high vulnerability arises from their young age, as they are assumed to be easily manipulated and unable to protect themselves.^a Second, their LGBTQI+ identity increases their vulnerability, as they are often marginalized in society and ostracised by friends and relatives who may force them out of their home. This combination is particularly appealing to traffickers who seek persons who are at the margins of societies and are less protected.^b

Because of the stigma existing in families and society, LGBTQI+ are over-represented amongst children living on the streets and are often exposed to discrimination by law enforcement, social service providers, emergency housing and shelter facilities.^c In North America, approximately between 20 and 40 per cent of homeless youth^d identify as LGTBQI+, while in contrast, less than 5 per cent of the general population identifies as LGBTQI+.^e Homeless youth are vulnerable to both trafficking for forced labour and sexual exploitation because of poverty, histories of sexual abuse and lack of access mental health care.^f Furthermore, LGBTQI+ youth are more likely to engage in illegal activities or resort to ‘transactional sex’ in exchange for money, shelter, food and other necessities, compared to homeless heterosexual youth.^g The combination of homelessness, discrimination, limited resources, violence and ‘transactional sex’ significantly increases the vulnerability of LGBTQI+ individuals to being trafficked, particularly for sexual exploitation.

As of December 2019, the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) reports that 70 countries continue to criminalize same-sex relationships.^g In countries where same-sex relationships are criminalized, LGBTQI+ persons face more intense societal stigma,^h and those who fall victim to trafficking and

are forced into same-sex sexual exploitation are labelled as criminals rather than acknowledged as victims, violating the United Nations Trafficking Protocol and preventing LGBTQI+ victims of trafficking from exercising their rights and seeking help. Sexual abuse and exploitation against men and boys is often considered taboo, which limits trafficked men and boys from reporting their victimization and accessing victim rights and services.^a

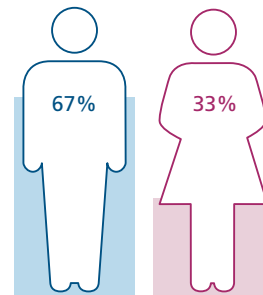
Most of the research on LGBTQI+ persons’ vulnerability to trafficking in persons has been conducted in North America, and, to a lesser extent in Europe and Latin America. The limited studies available reveal the need for increased research at a global level, especially in countries with strong social stigma and severe laws criminalizing same-sex relationships and/or transgender identities.

- a Martinez, O. and G. Kelle, *Sex Trafficking of LGBT Individuals: A Call for Service Provision, Research, and Action*. The international law news, 2013. 42(4).
- b U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report 2016*. 2016: Washington, DC.
- c Dank, M., et al., *Surviving the streets of New York: Experiences of LGBTQ youth, YMSM, and YWSW engaged in survival sex*. 2015; Xian, K., S. Chock, and D. Dwiggins, (2017) *LGBTQ Youth and Vulnerability to Sex Trafficking*, in *Human Trafficking Is a Public Health Issue*. 2017, Springer, p. 141-152.
- d There is no universally agreed international definition of the youth age group. For statistical purposes, however, the United Nations – without prejudice to any other definitions made by Member States – defines ‘youth’ as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. This definition, which arose in the context of preparations for the International Youth Year (1985) (see A/36/215), was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 36/28 of 1981.
- e Dank, M.L., et al., (2017) *Pretesting a human trafficking screening tool in the child welfare and runaway and homeless youth systems*. 2017: Urban Institute New York, NY.
- f Murphy, L.T., (2017) *Labor and sex trafficking among homeless youth: A ten-city study*. 2017, Modern Slavery Research Project, Loyola University New Orleans, Covenant House: New Orleans.
- g ILGA World, *State-Sponsored Homophobia 2019: Global Legislation Overview Update*, L.R. Mendos, Editor. 2019, ILGA: Geneva.
- h *Human Rights Council, Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General, Discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity* (A/HRC/19/41), p. 13.

Furthermore, most traffickers convicted in 2018 were citizens of the country where they were convicted. Around one fourth of those convicted were foreigners, but generally from the same region.

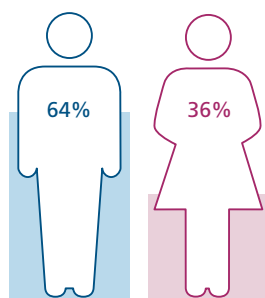
The citizenship profile of the offenders, however, differs in countries of origin and countries of destination. Typically, countries of origin generally convict fewer foreigners of trafficking in persons. On the contrary, countries of destination tend to record larger shares of convictions of foreign citizens.

FIG. 15 Shares of persons investigated or arrested for trafficking in persons, by sex, 2018 (or most recent)
80 countries (n=9,429)



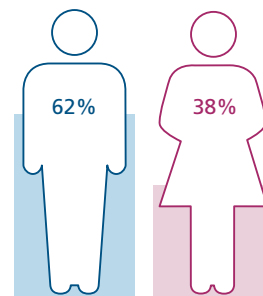
Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

FIG. 16 Shares of persons prosecuted for trafficking in persons, by sex, 2018 (or most recent)
87 countries (n=7,368)



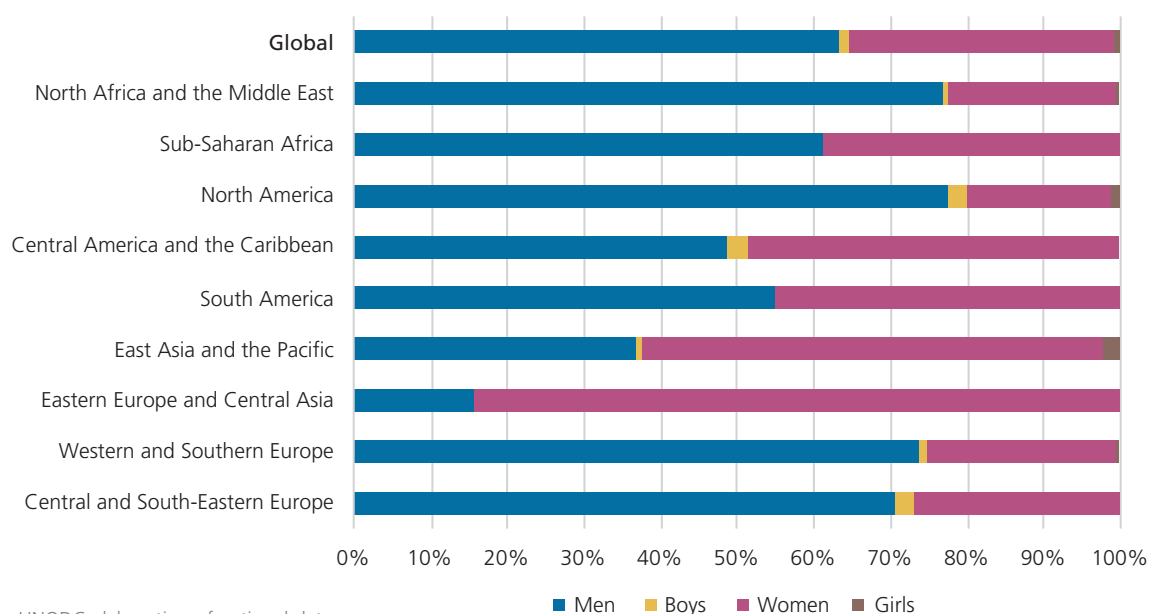
Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

FIG. 17 Shares of persons convicted of trafficking in persons, by sex, 2018 (or most recent)
88 countries (n=3,553)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

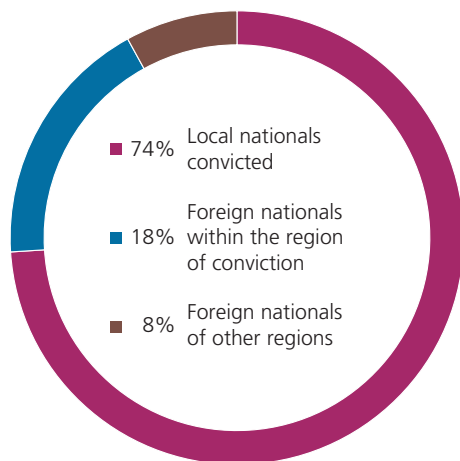
FIG. 18 Shares of persons convicted of trafficking in persons, by age group, sex and by subregion* of detection, 2018 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

*South Asia is not included in the analysis for lack of sufficient data

FIG. 19 Shares of national and foreign citizens among convicted traffickers (relative to the country of conviction), 2018 (or most recent)
104 countries (n=3,392)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

Traffickers: how they operate

A wide array of criminals and groups are involved in trafficking in persons. These traffickers may include young males who recruit their younger schoolmates into sexual exploitation,¹⁷ parents who exploit their children in begging,¹⁸ urban gangs¹⁹ and structured transnational organized criminal groups,²⁰ brokers negotiating children's work in rural villages,²¹ as well as licensed multinational recruitment agencies and legal companies.²²

17 Court case 27 – Canada; court case 56 – Mexico 2011; court case 281 – Hungary 2015.

18 Court case 61 – Norway 2012; court case 471 – Sweden 2010; court case 175 – Serbia 2014.

19 Court case 27 – Canada; court case 182 – United States of America 2014.

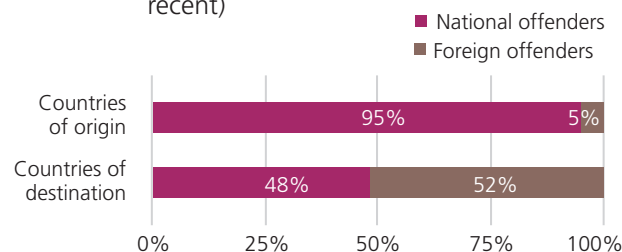
20 Court case 24 – Canada 2010; court case 39 – El Salvador 2011; court case 41 – Israel 2009; court case 75 – Argentina 2012; court case 265 – El Salvador 2017; court case 267 – France 2015; court case 270 – France 2015; court case 271 – France 2015; court case 321 – Spain 2014; court case 416 – France 2018; court case 417 – France 2018.

21 International Labour Organization (ILO) Country Office for Nepal, *Forced labour of adults and children in the agriculture sector of Nepal* (2013), page 50.

A/HRC/30/35/Add.1, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, Gulnara Shabinian, Mission to Ghana* (22 29 November 2013) page 27-38; A/HRC/30/35, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, Urmila Bhoola, Mission to Niger*, 30 July 2015, page 13.

22 International Labour Organization (ILO) Country Office for Sri Lanka and Maldives *Presence of Human Trafficking and Forced Labour in Labour Migration-Sri Lanka*, International Labour Organization, 2019, page 40-41.
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) *the Role of Recruitment Fees and Abusive and Fraudulent Recruitment Practices of Recruitment Agencies in Trafficking in Persons*, Vienna 2015, page 10.

FIG. 20 Shares of national and foreign citizens (relative to the convicting country) among convicted traffickers, by countries of origin* and destination** of trafficking flows, 2018 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

*Number of persons convicted whose citizenship was reported is 1587 in 46 countries of origin.

**Number of persons convicted whose citizenship was reported is 1676 in 37 countries of destinations.

Knowing the profile of the trafficker helps to define the appropriate criminal justice response. For example, dismantling a large, structured trafficking group requires specialized anti-organized crime mechanisms, while addressing exploitation in the context of an intimate relationship may require approaches more similar to those used in cases of domestic violence.

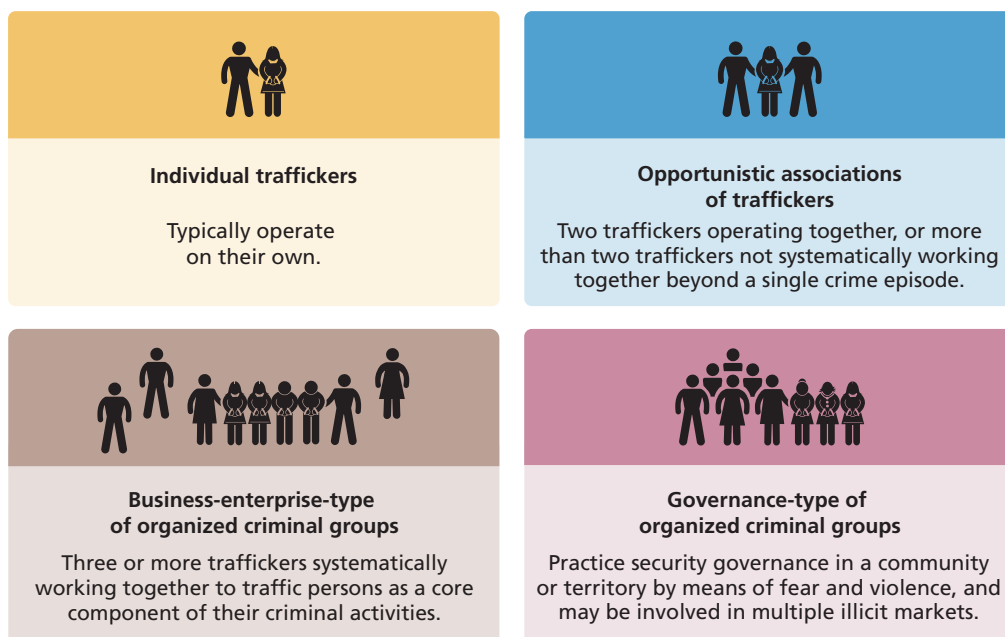
Furthermore, the question of 'who' commits the crime can also inform its scope and impact. For example, more structured organizations may traffic more victims for longer periods, affecting several individuals in a village, community or city, versus individual traffickers who typically operate on a smaller scale.

Trafficking in persons is perpetrated by actors with different level of organizational structures and can be divided into two broad categories: groups that meet the definition of organized criminal groups²³, and opportunistic traffickers that operate alone or in cooperation with one or other traffickers.

23 Article 2(a) of the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) contains a definition of 'organized criminal group' as a (I) group of three or more persons that was not randomly formed, (II) existing for a period of time and (III) acting in concert with the aim of committing at least one crime punishable by at least four years' incarceration (IV) in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit. It should be noted, however, that in accordance with the UNTOC, countries may apply more stringent definitions by reducing the minimum number of persons to be engaged in the criminal activity in order to form an organized crime group. Some countries consider a group formed by two or more persons as an Organized Crime group. For the purpose of this analysis, Organized Criminal Group is as defined by Article 2 (a) of the UNTOC.

The UNTOC covers only crimes that are 'transnational', a term cast broadly. The term covers not only offences committed in more than one State, but also those that take place in one State but are planned or controlled in another. Also included are crimes committed by groups that operate in more than one State, and crimes committed in one State that has substantial effects in another State.

Traffickers structure



Organized criminal groups engaging in the crime of trafficking in persons can be further distinguished into:

- **Governance-type** organized criminal groups, which apply security governance in a community or territory by means of fear and violence, and may be involved in multiple illicit markets²⁴;
- **Business-enterprise-type** organized criminal groups, involving three or more traffickers systematically working together to traffic persons as a core component of their criminal activities.

Opportunistic traffickers can be further grouped into:

- **Opportunistic association of traffickers** working together, where two traffickers operate together, or more than two traffickers do not systematically work together beyond a single crime act;
- **Individual traffickers** who typically operate on their own.

While the cases analyzed in the database comprise only a non-representative set of prosecuted cases, the resulting patterns are quite informative. The analysis suggests that only a limited number of cases prosecuted were driven by

criminal organizations with a governing structure rooted in the community where they operate. This result may be explained by these groups being more difficult to detect or because there is a lower rate of engagement of these groups in this kind of criminal activity.

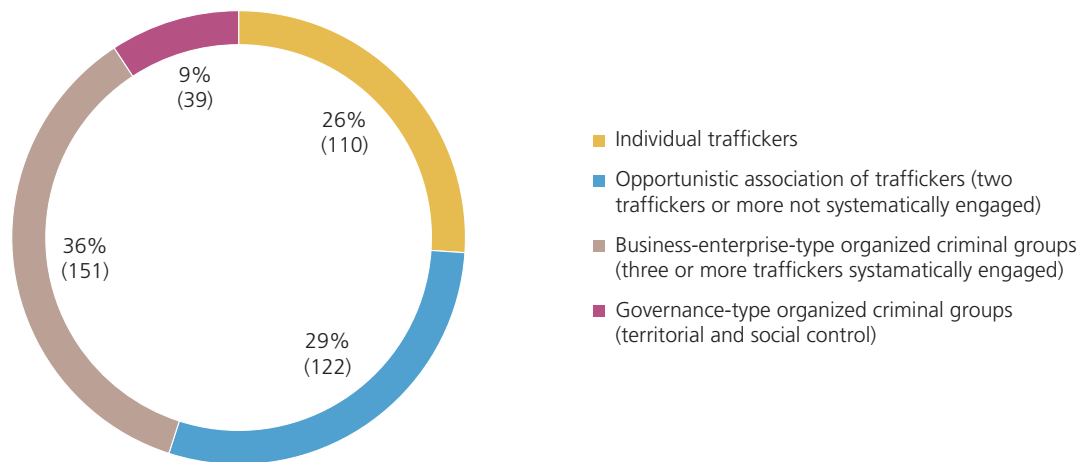
At the same time, however, organized criminal groups are able to traffic more victims, over longer time, and with more violent means. As such, most of the victims in the court cases considered for this analysis were trafficked by organized criminal groups.

While the sampling of cases does not represent the whole landscape, such an analysis may assist in assessing the impact of different criminal structures' involvement in trafficking in persons.

The vast majority of the victims in the court cases analyzed for this report are females. Considering cases where the information about the sex of the victims was available, female victims were reported in 88 per cent of the cases perpetrated by business-enterprise-type of criminal groups, in 91 per cent of cases operated by individual traffickers and in 97 per cent of the cases where the perpetrators can be considered governance-type of criminal groups or by an opportunistic association of traffickers. Male victims were more frequently reported to be trafficked by the business-enterprise-type of criminal groups (12 per cent of these cases), mostly for the purpose of forced labour.

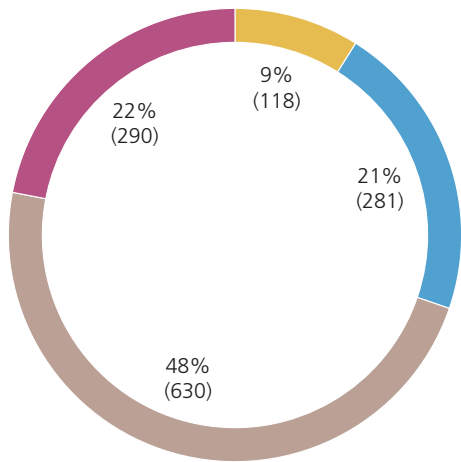
²⁴ When the narrative of the court cases made reference to criminal groups making use of violence, intimidation and fear to ensure social control over a community or a territory, these were categorized as governance-type organized criminal group. For more on this see Varese, F. (2010) *What is Organized Crime?*, in Varese, F. (ed.), *Organized Crime: Critical Concepts in Criminology*. London: Routledge, pp. 1–33.

FIG. 21 Number and shares of cases*, by type of criminal actor, as reported in GLOTIP court cases



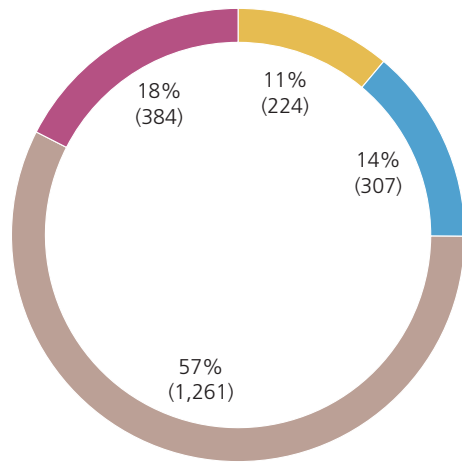
Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.
*This information was reported in 422 court cases of a total of 489 collected by UNODC for the purpose of this Report.

FIG. 22 Total number of traffickers involved in the cases*, by type of criminal actor, as reported in GLOTIP court cases



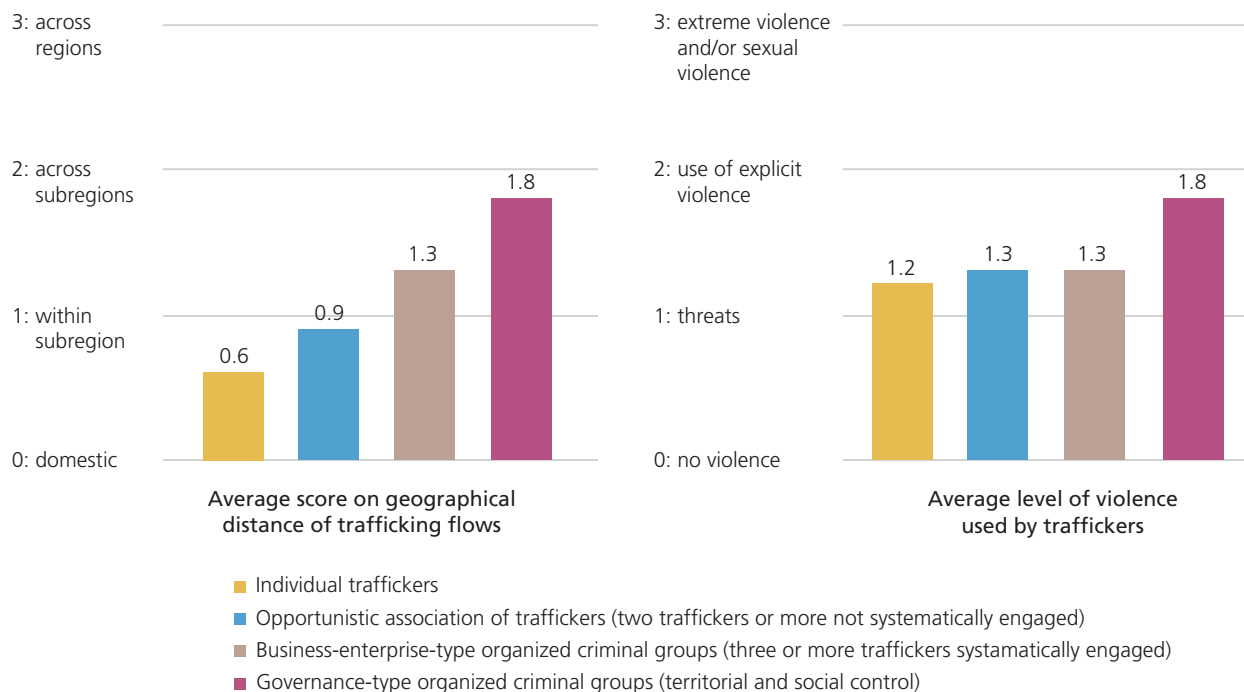
Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.
*This information was reported in 396 court cases on a total of 489 collected by UNODC for the purpose of this Report. In detail, 33 cases referred to governance type of organized crime, 136 cases referred to business-enterprise-type of organized crime, 117 cases referred to opportunistic association of two and/or three traffickers and 110 to individual traffickers. A total of 1,319 traffickers were reported in the court cases that included this information.

FIG. 23 Total number of victims involved in the cases*, by type of criminal actor, as reported in GLOTIP court cases



Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.
*This information was reported in 364 court cases on a total of 489 collected by UNODC for the purpose of this Report. In detail, 29 cases referred to governance type of organized crime, 123 cases referred to business-enterprise-type of organized crime, 113 cases referred to opportunistic association of two and/or three traffickers and 99 to individual traffickers. A total of 2,196 victims were reported in the court cases that included this information.

FIG. 24 Distance of trafficking flows* and level of violence** used by traffickers, by type of criminal actor, as reported in GLOTIP court cases

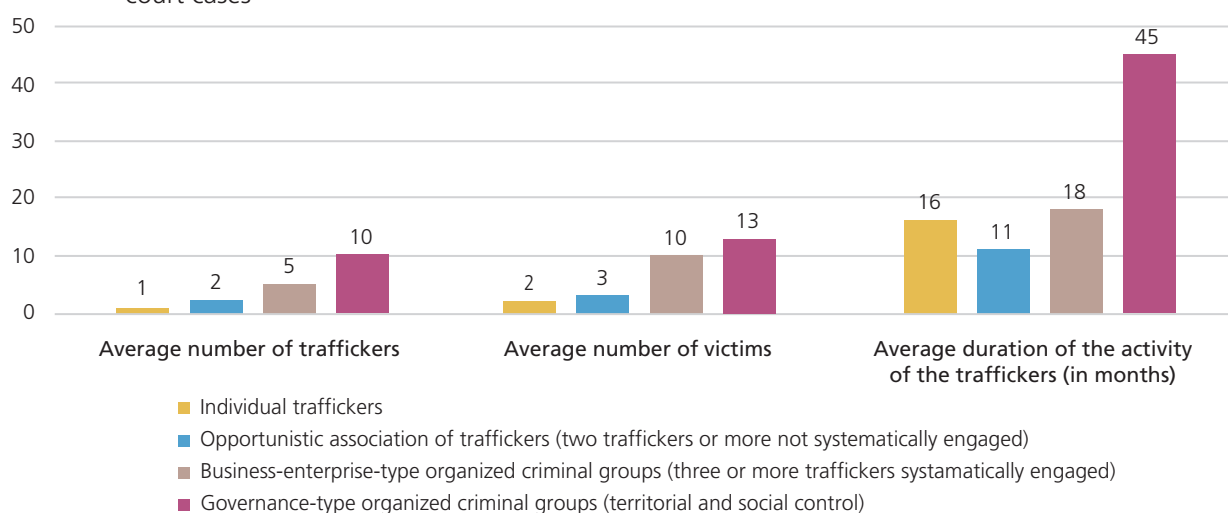


Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.

*This information was reported in 382 court cases of a total of 489 collected by UNODC for the purpose of this Report. In details, 30 cases referred to governance type of organized crime, 141 cases referred to business-enterprise-type of organized crime, 110 cases referred to opportunistic association of two and/or three traffickers and 101 to individual traffickers.

**This information was reported in 347 court cases of a total of 489 collected by UNODC for the purpose of this Report. In details, 29 cases referred to governance type of organized crime, 122 cases referred to business-enterprise-type of organized crime, 99 cases referred to opportunistic association of two and/or three traffickers and 97 to individual traffickers.

FIG. 25 Average number of traffickers*, average number of victims** and average duration of traffickers' activity*** per single case, by type of criminal actor, as reported in GLOTIP court cases



Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.

*This information was reported in 396 court cases of a total of 489 collected by UNODC for the purpose of this Report. In detail, 33 cases referred to governance type of organized crime, 136 cases referred to business-enterprise-type of organized crime, 117 cases referred to opportunistic association of two and/or three traffickers and 110 to individual traffickers.

**This information was reported in 364 court cases of a total of 489 collected by UNODC for the purpose of this Report. In details, 29 cases referred to governance type of organized crime, 123 cases referred to business-enterprise-type of organized crime, 113 cases referred to opportunistic association of two and/or three traffickers and 99 to individual traffickers.

***This information was reported in 224 court cases of a total of 489 collected by UNODC for the purpose of this Report. In detail, 20 cases referred to governance type of organized crime, 86 cases referred to business-enterprise-type of organized crime, 56 cases referred to opportunistic association of two and/or three traffickers and 52 to individual traffickers.

Organized criminal groups

There is evidence of large territorial criminal organizations engaging in trafficking in persons together with other forms of illicit trafficking, for example, the *Mara Salvatrucha* group in Central America.²⁵

There are other examples of transnational criminal groups involved in drugs trafficking, money laundering and other illicit trades active between West Africa and Europe that also engage in trafficking for sexual exploitation. For example, authorities in France reported some cases in which the criminal group *Supreme Eiye Confraternity* engaged in trafficking in persons along this route.²⁶ The involvement of the similar types of groups were reported by Spanish²⁷ and Italian²⁸ authorities in cases of trafficking of women in combination with other criminal activities, such as credit cards fraud or money counterfeiting.

Meanwhile, in the United States, authorities reported persons associated with the *Crips* engaged in trafficking for sexual exploitation across different American states.²⁹ Moreover, the US authorities also reported detecting a large gang specialized in trafficking for sexual exploitation across different countries Central and North America. This group operated for more than a decade with profits estimated at hundreds of thousands of US dollars (USD). The eight members of the group were connected by family ties and exploited the victims by threatening their families back home.³⁰ A similar modus operandi has been reported as being used by a group that traffics women for domestic servitude from Colombia to Mexico³¹, as well as by a group recruiting men from Central Europe for exploitation in the construction sector in Canada. These groups had members in the countries of origin who could threaten the families of the victims to secure the victims' obedience.³²

Intimate partners and relatives

A different trafficker profile involves intimate relationships. Literature³³ and court cases³⁴ have documented how young men traffic female victims by enticing them into a romantic relationship. Often, these traffickers operate alone, trafficking one victim at the time. Some studies report that they normally take advantage of girls or young women with difficult family backgrounds and who lack affection.³⁵

Usually under the pretext of a shortage of money, by means of emotional manipulation with increasing levels of physical threats or mistreatment, traffickers perpetuate the sexual abuse and exploitation of their partners. The level of manipulation often leads the victims to not perceive the situation as abusive, nor be willing to report partner abuse.³⁶ Therefore, the relationship between the victim and her exploiter makes this form of trafficking more similar to domestic violence than to a typical forms of organized crime.³⁷

Similarly, such methods are used by other people who the victim trusts, such as siblings³⁸ or parents. Indeed, some court cases describe mothers taking their teenaged daughters to one or more abusers to be sexually exploited,³⁹ violent fathers exploiting their children through street begging or the commission of crimes⁴⁰ or parents selling pictures of their children being sexually abused.⁴¹

25 Court case 265 – El Salvador 2017.

26 Court case 416 – France 2018; court case 417 – France 2018; court case 270 – France 2015; court case 271 – France 2015.

27 Court case 321 – Spain 2014.

28 Direzione Investigativa Antimafia (DIA), *Relazione del Ministro dell'Interno al Parlamento sull'attività svolta e sui risultati conseguiti dalla Direzione Investigativa Antimafia, Attività svolta e risultati conseguiti dalla direzione investigativa antimafia, Gennaio – Giugno 2019*, 2019, page 455.

29 Court case 182 – USA 2014.

30 Court case 337 – USA 2017.

31 Court case 488 – Colombia 2019.

32 Court case 24 – Canada 2010.

33 MYRIA, Federal Migration Centre, *Annual Report 2015, Trafficking and Smuggling in Human Beings Tightening the Links*, Brussels, January 2016, pp-23-40

Bundeskriminalamt, *Trafficking in Human Beings; National Situation Report*, 65173, Wiesbaden, 2014, p7; Dutch National Rapporteur, *Samen tegen mensenhandel Een integrale programma-aanpak van seksuele uitbuiting, arbeidsuitbuiting en criminele uitbuiting*, DNR, 2018, p12

34 Court case 27 – Canada; court case 27 Mexico; court case 94 – Belgium; court case 100 Canada; court case 173 – Serbia ; court case 191 – the Dominica Republic; court case 191-Spain; court case 281 – Hungary; court case 406 – Bolivia; court case 443 – Canada.

35 London Abused Women's Centre, *Sex Trafficking & Sexual Exploitation: Keeping Youth Safe*, LAWC, London, 2018, p.11; Federal Centre for the Analysis of Migration Flows, the Protection of Fundamental Rights of Foreigners and the Fight against Human Trafficking, *Building Bridges, Trafficking and Smuggling in Human Beings, Annual Report 2013*, Brussels, 2014, p23.

36 Verhoeven, M., et.al. (2013), *Relationships between suspects and victims of sex trafficking. Exploitation of prostitutes and domestic violence parallel in Dutch trafficking cases*, European Journal of Criminal and Policy Research, 12 December 2013.

37 *Ibid.*

38 Court case 4 – Armenia 2012.

39 Court case 83 – Australia 2013; court case 124 – Mexico 2014; court case 149 – South Africa 2013; court case 195 – Spain; court case 292 – Mexico 2016; court case 133 – Poland.

40 Court case 175 – Serbia, 2014; France, Court case 267, 2015; Court case 311 – the Netherlands, 2016.

41 Dominican Republic- Court case 438, 2018; Czechia – Court case 252, 2016; Australia – Court case 221, 2016; Israel – Court case 163, 2013; Israel – Court case 163, 2013.

Small and large recruiting agents

Some social norms, such as the practice of parents sending their child to work to sustain the family income, may provide fertile ground for the trafficking of children. These contexts often see both children and parents as the victims, with traffickers taking advantage of a situations of extreme poverty (see *Chapter 3 - Children; easy to target*).

Traffickers who specialize in recruiting children deceive families with an offer to provide some economic support to the household, while actually placing the children to work for others who will exploit them. One method documented in South Asia, for instance, is that in exchange for recruiting children, traffickers lend money to their parents in order to buy work tools. Then, due to the incurred debt with the trafficker, the parents are subsequently unable to withdraw their children from work. High interests are levied on the advance payment, putting families into permanent debt and trapping children in perpetual work. These methods to exploit children have been documented in different regions, in the agricultural,⁴² fishing⁴³ and other sectors.⁴⁴

At an international level, a similar scheme is used by traffickers operating in the context of labour migration. Recruiters in the community of origin get in touch with or are contacted by the person who wishes to emigrate, often the family or friend of someone who migrated in the past. The recruiter generally then liaises with more professional recruitment agents/agencies that will then provide services to assist the person to emigrate, including job placement in the destination country.⁴⁵

These agencies typically advance the funds for travel expenses and documents, as well as for the job placement.⁴⁶ Migrants are then charged these costs in the form of a debt they must pay back once they reach the destination. In some cases, the debt will be higher than what was agreed on and its payment will serve as a basis for the migrant's exploitation (see *Chapter 4 - Trafficking for forced labour; the economy of coercion*).⁴⁷

Yet, it is important to note that the knowledge of recruiters and agencies varies in regard to exploitation in the country of destination. In some cases, individual recruiters and recruitment agencies may act in good faith and are unaware of the exploitative situations that migrants eventually find themselves in. In others, these intermediaries are part of complex organized criminal groups involved in human trafficking.⁴⁸

These agencies may operate under the guise of legal and registered companies, and yet are criminal in the way they recruit and deceived victims for the purpose of exploitation.⁴⁹

Legal businesses and ordinary people

Sometimes business that may appear legitimate have been found to be involved in trafficking. Court cases have documented the convictions of owners and operators of companies in the agricultural,⁵⁰ fishing,⁵¹ cleaning,⁵² construction,⁵³ garment⁵⁴ and food service indus-

42 International Labour Organization (ILO) Country Office for Nepal, *Forced labour of adults and children in the agriculture sector of Nepal* (2013), page 50.

43 Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, Gulnara Shahinian, *Mission to Ghana, 22-29 November 2013*, page 27-38

44 Report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, Urmila Bhoola, *Mission to Niger, 30 July 2015*, A/HRC/30/35/Add.1, page 13.

45 International Labour Organization (ILO) Country Office for Sri Lanka and Maldives *Presence of Human Trafficking and Forced Labour in Labour Migration-Sri Lanka*, International Labour Organization, 2019, page 40-41. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) *the Role of Recruitment Fees and Abusive and Fraudulent Recruitment Practices of Recruitment Agencies in Trafficking in Persons*, Vienna 2015, page 10 Report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, *mission to the United Arab Emirates*, A/HRC/23/48/Add.1 page 6

46 Report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, *Mission to Malaysia*, 15 June 2015, A/HRC/29/38/Add.162. page 6, International Labour Organization (ILO), *Recruitment fees and related costs: What migrant workers from Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and Myanmar pay to work in Thailand*, International Labour Organization, 2020, p. 36.

47 Report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, *mission to Malaysia*, 15 June 2015, A/HRC/29/38/Add.162. p. 5.

48 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) *the Role of Recruitment Fees and Abusive and Fraudulent Recruitment Practices of Recruitment Agencies in Trafficking in Persons*, Vienna 2015, page 10 Corrado, A. (2018), *Is the Italian agriculture a pull factor for irregular migration – and, if so, why?*, European University Institute, page 14 . See Court case 93 – Belgium 2012; court case 117 – Indonesia 2015.

49 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights *Severe labour exploitation: workers moving within or into the European Union*, – FRA, Vienna, 2015, p. 32; Corrado, A. (2018), *Is the Italian agriculture a pull factor for irregular migration – and, if so, why?*, European University Institute, page 14; International Labour Organization (ILO), *Recruitment fees and related costs: What migrant workers from Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and Myanmar pay to work in Thailand*, 2020, p. 20.

50 Court case 307 – The Netherlands 2016; court case 285 – Israel 2016.

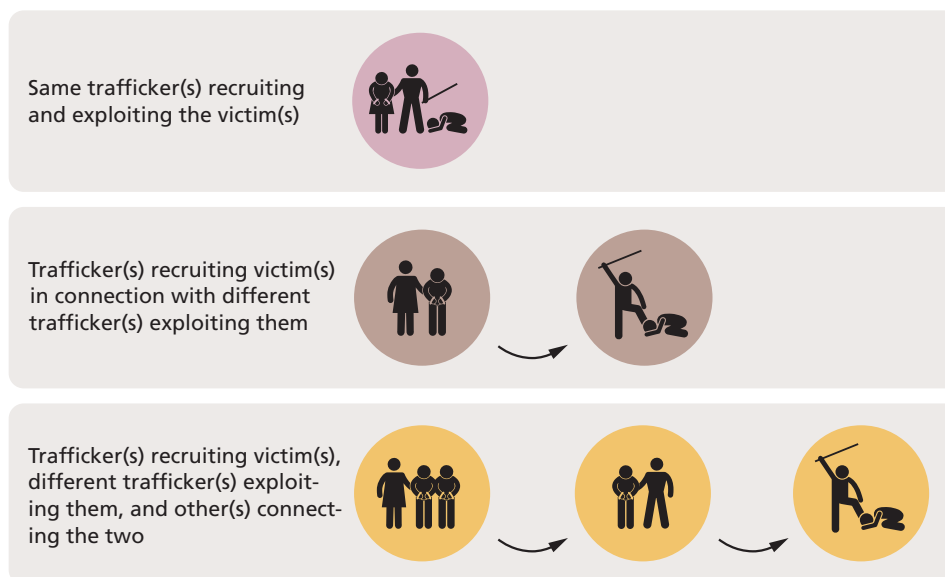
51 Court case 116 – Indonesia, 2014.

52 Court case 93 – Belgium, 2012.

53 Court case 101 – Czechia 2012; court case 331 – Ukraine 2014.

54 Court case 391 – Russian Federation 2017.

Business models for trafficking in persons



tries as having been convicted for trafficking persons for the purpose of forced labour.⁵⁵

The involvement of companies that operate in legal markets in trafficking is also documented in cases of trafficking for sexual exploitation. In a case reported by Belgian authorities, three offenders and four companies faced charges under various offences, including trafficking in persons, money laundering, tax fraud and insurance fraud. The offenders operated a complex scheme involving victims recruited with the promise of having regular contracts to engage in legal prostitution. The victims, however, were deceived about the working conditions and lured into sexual exploitation.⁵⁶

A type of trafficking that is normalized in an apparently legal context at the hands of ordinary, seemingly non-criminal people, is trafficking for domestic servitude. Victims of this form of trafficking are typically recruited to work in houses of middle or high-income families.

In documented cases of trafficking for domestic servitude, literature and case narratives refer to family members forcing their domestic workers to work long hours, a lack of personal space, and coerced into limited movement and socialization outside the house. In a case reported by Canadian authorities, the person charged with

a human trafficking offence was a highly educated father of three children who recruited a Filipino woman to work as a nanny. While the woman was promised regular travel documents, once she arrived in the destination country, she realized she had been tricked into irregular immigration. She was socially isolated, forced to work as domestic servant and paid less with longer working hours than agreed upon before departure.⁵⁷

In more violent cases of trafficking for domestic servitude, family members have abused victims physically, sexually and/or psychologically (see *Chapter 4 - Trafficking for forced labour; the economy of coercion*).⁵⁸

The business behind trafficking

Some court cases have shown that the entire trafficking process may involve more than one group, with some groups that specialize in recruitment of victims and others that specialize in exploitation. For example, Hungarian authorities dismantled a criminal scheme consisting of a group of people recruiting young women in Hungary that were to be sold to a different group for exploitation in Switzerland.⁵⁹ A similar business model was used by a network involved in trafficking for forced marriage in

55 Court case 7 – Australia, 2012; court case 433 – Norway, 2019; court case 190 – Dominican Republic, 2014; court case 235 – Belgium, 2014; court case 104 – Czechia, 2012.

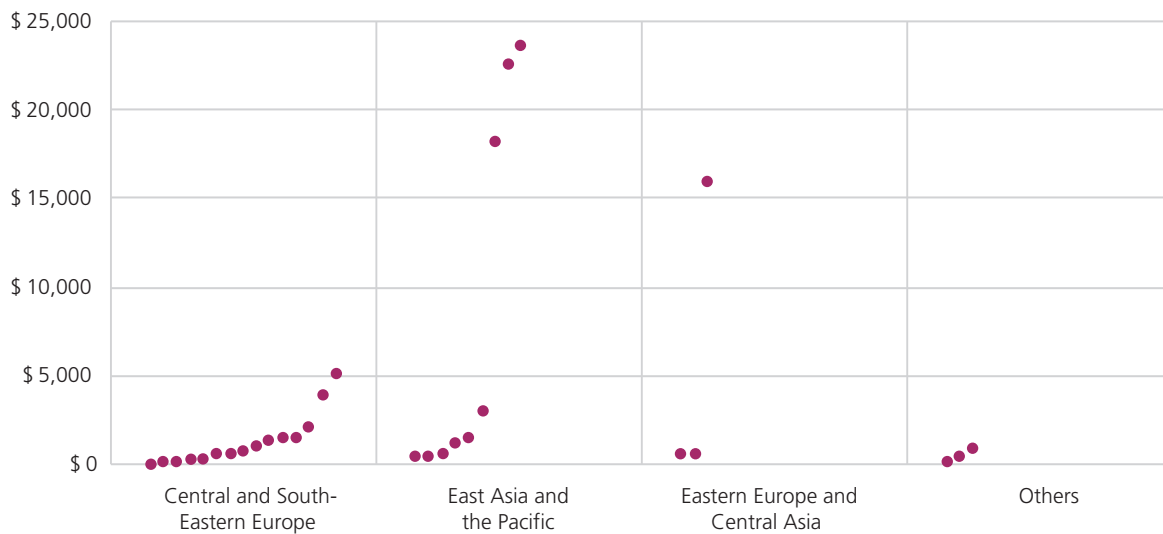
56 Court case 95 – Belgium, 2013.

57 Court case 98 – Canada, 2013.

58 Court case 22 – Brunei Darussalam 2012; court case 70 – United States of America 2012; court case 21 – Brunei Darussalam 2012; Report of the Special Rapporteur trafficking in persons, especially women and children, *mission to Jordan*, 2016, A/HRC/32/41/Add.1, p. 6; Report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, *mission to Malaysia*, A/HRC/29/38/Add.162., p. 6

59 Court case 112 – Hungary 2013.

FIG. 26 Monetary value of victims in USD, based on amount paid by traffickers to “buy” one victim from other traffickers, as reported in the GLOTIP court cases*, by region



Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.

*The subset of analysed court cases includes: 15 cases in Central and South Eastern Europe, nine cases in East Asia and the Pacific, three cases in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, one case in the Middle East and North Africa, one case in Sub-Saharan Africa, one case in Western and Southern Europe.

East Asia, where one group specialized in finding women in the rural areas of South-East Asia. Victims were then sold to a broker who sold them to another group that specialized in reselling them for forced marriage to men in other countries.⁶⁰

The use of traffickers that act as brokers between other traffickers, that facilitate the buying and selling of victims, is reported in multiple cases, and showing the level of complexities of some human trafficking markets. To illustrate, Austrian authorities reported a group that specialized solely on brokering women for sexual exploitation. The role of the group was to facilitate the distribution of victims among procurers operating in different European countries.

Authorities reported the group did not make use of violence but used their good reputation to relate with business partners and intimidation to relate with victims.⁶¹

In these schemes, victims are sold by the recruiting group to the exploiting group with brokers also profiting from negotiations over the victims' price.

The traffickers' financial gains

Traffickers consider their victims as commodities that can be used and sold for financial gain, without regard for human dignity and rights. There are different phases

at which traffickers make profits.

Groups specialized in recruiting victims make profits by 'selling' victims, with the amount depending on their ability to negotiate the monetary value per victim. Whereas at the exploitation phase, profits are made from the selling of exploited services to third parties, or from reduction of costs derived from the victims' un-paid services.

Between 2007 and 2017, 15 countries in six regions of the world reported information on the monetary value exchange between traffickers to recruit a victim. In the reported data, the majority of cases involved women (26 cases). A few cases involved girls (two cases), a man, or a baby (one case each). According to the narrative of the case files collected, women victims of trafficking were bought for as little as 36 USD and for as much as 23,600 USD.⁶²

In 26 out of the 30 recorded cases, women and girls were sold to their future exploiter for less than 5,000 USD, with victims sold for less than 1,000 USD in eight of these cases. In 22 out of the 30 cases, the intermediary received less than 2,000 USD for each victim successfully recruited. Cases of domestic trafficking presented the lowest recorded monetary values, with victims sold for a maximum of 600 USD, with the average value reported being 250 USD.

⁶⁰ Court case 207 – China 2014.

⁶¹ Court case 225 – Austria 2014.

⁶² Average = 3,662 USD; median = 870 USD; based on current prices.



While these findings are not representative of the dynamics of the trafficking in persons market worldwide, they do challenge many of the market value estimations commonly provided.⁶³ While some studies have tried to estimate the market value of sexual exploitation,⁶⁴ limited analysis has been done to estimate profits at recruitment. An analysis of the legal proceedings in the United States revealed that intermediaries may charge up to 100,000 USD per person recruited.⁶⁵ The 30 cases considered from the 489 case narratives provided by Member States to UNODC suggest that these figures may be sensational outliers, and that the actual monetary transaction to recruit a trafficking victim appears to be far less than expected.

Comparing the monetary returns described in the analyzed court cases to national average incomes, suggests that recruiting trafficking victims may not be more profitable than an average job in the legal sphere. A single trafficker recruiting victims in Central and South-Eastern Europe and selling them to groups in Western Europe would have to recruit at least 20 women per year to reach the average annual salary in their own countries.⁶⁶

Moreover, compared to other illegal markets, the criminal

activity of trafficking in persons appear much less profitable than other types of trafficking. The wholesale price of one kilogram of crystal methamphetamines produced in Central and South-Eastern Europe ranges from 19,500 USD to 26,500 USD.⁶⁷ This means that in this part of the world recruiting one victim (for 1,500 USD - 2000 USD) to be later sexually exploited is worth the same to criminals as selling 80-100 grams of methamphetamines, or as little as one pistol in the illegal firearms market⁶⁸ or the value of two kilos of illegally traded live glass (juvenile) eels.⁶⁹

The income made by a trafficker recruiting a woman in South-East Asia for forced marriage (reported to be 3,000 USD maximum) is about the same as the annual minimum wage in the subregion.⁷⁰ In comparison with the wholesale price of crystal methamphetamines produced in South-East Asia, one woman recruited worth as little as 100-200 grams of methamphetamines.⁷¹

As is the case with other markets, profits gained by traffickers are more pronounced when made closer to the 'product's' final consumption, which is the case of trafficking in persons, is the exploitation phase. In East Asia, a trafficked bride can be sold for about 10,000 USD,⁷² cheaper than the value of 15 kilograms of ivory⁷³ or than 40 grams of

63 The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG) (2018). *Financial Flows from Human Trafficking* p.74.

64 Aronowitz, A et al., *Analyzing the Business Organization of Trafficking in Human Beings in Order to Decrease Vulnerabilities and to Better Prevent the Crime*, OSCE/UN.GIFT, Vienna, 2010.

65 Zakhari, B.S. (2005). *Legal Cases Prosecuted under the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000*. In *Human Traffic and Transnational Crime: Eurasian and American Perspectives*. Edited by S. Stoecker and L. Shelley. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

66 Average job earnings in USD Dollars for Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovenia as reported by the OECD Better Life Index. See OECD estimates based on OECD (2019), *OECD Economic Outlook*, Volume 2019 Issue 2, OECD Publishing, Paris. <https://doi.org/10.1787/b2e897b0-en> and OECD Annual National Accounts Prices and Purchasing Parities Database, http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=SNA_TABLE4.

67 UNODC data collected from national authorities through the Annual Report Questionnaire (ARQ). See <https://dataunodc.un.org/data/drugs/Retail%20drug%20price%20and%20purity%20level>

68 UNODC, *Global Study on Firearms Trafficking*, 2020. (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.20.IV.1), page 60.

69 UNODC, *World Wildlife Crime Report 2020*, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2020. Page 55.

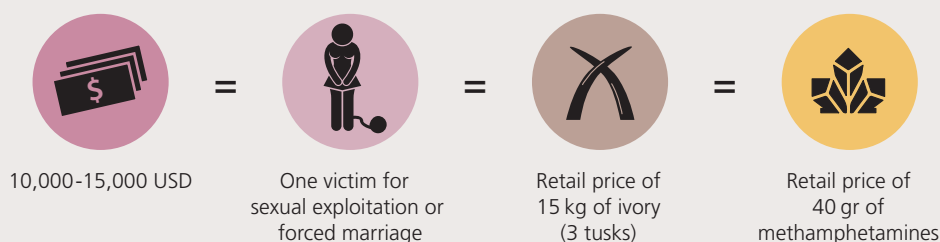
70 See Statistics of wages; Statutory gross monthly minimum wages in US dollars (converted using exchange rates and 2017 PPPs), latest year in <https://ilostat.ilo.org/topics/wages/fa>

71 UNODC data collected from national authorities through the Annual Report Questionnaire (ARQ). See <https://dataunodc.un.org/data/drugs/Retail%20drug%20price%20and%20purity%20level>

72 Court case 207 – China 2014.

73 UNODC, *World Wildlife Crime Report 2020*, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2020. Page 100.

Monetary values given by traffickers in East Asia at exploitation phase and retail market



crystal methamphetamines sold to the final consumer.⁷⁴ Victims recruited for a few thousand dollars in South-East Asia are sold for sexual exploitation in Australia or in Japan for 10,000–15,000 USD.⁷⁵

In another case, Belgian authorities reported on a group of five persons who sexually exploited women in a massage parlor. The women were originally ‘bought’ in South-East Asia from another group that specialized in recruiting women with the promise of a job in Europe. The group in Belgium paid 2,800 USD for each woman recruited. Once at the destination, the group demanded the victims pay off a debt of 12,000 USD and then exploited them under a scheme of repaying it. The network trafficked about 50 victims in two years. Considering only the recruitment costs, it can be roughly estimated that the traffickers’ profit was about 450,000 USD over the course of two years.

Debts, often inflated, allegedly relate to the costs of the victim’s travel (e.g. transportation, visa, etc.) and accommodation expenses that are initially covered by the trafficker. In some cases, however, the debt serves more as a coercive instrument than as a source of income, as it bonds the victim to the trafficker and discourages them from escaping or seeking alternatives.

Little information is available on traffickers’ profits deriving from exploitation. The total estimated crime proceeds estimated for single court cases were generally in the range of a few thousand US dollars, except for some cases in which they exceeded 100,000 USD. These exceptional cases concern large criminal organisations, which exploited multiple victims (in two cases, more than 100) over a period of more than three years, either through sexual exploitation, forced labour or forced criminal activity.

One of the highest proceeds in the court cases collected for this *Report*⁷⁶ refer to a group involving a dozen offenders, trafficking thousands of children for forced criminal activity over two and a half years in different Western and Southern European countries. The children were forced to commit a number of thefts (mainly pickpocketing) per day. Investigators estimated the total proceeds at 1.1 million USD for the whole period of activity of the criminal group.⁷⁷ In another case, US law enforcement traced tens of millions of dollars to an organization involving 35 offenders who have trafficked hundreds of women from South-East Asia to several US cities for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

In the large majority of reported cases, however, traffickers earned less than 5,000 USD per victim (in 12 cases out of 16 cases reporting this information). Only 3 cases reported monthly earnings per victim above 10,000 USD per victim.

These cases are illustrative of the wide range of profits made by traffickers. Estimating the global size of the trafficking in persons market in terms of illegal profits remains challenging given the lack of a reliable estimate of the global number of victims.

The relatively low income made by single traffickers show how little the victims are valued in the illicit market of trafficking. Traffickers trade their victims as commodities. Cases reveal that victims are “priced” at as little as a few hundred dollars, equivalent to a few grams of methamphetamine.

While from a monetary value perspective, the size of the trafficking in persons market may be smaller than other criminal markets, the harm associated to trafficking in persons has no comparable metrics.

⁷⁴ UNODC data collected from national authorities through the Annual Report Questionnaire (ARQ). See <https://data.unodc.un.org/data/drugs/Retail%20drug%20price%20and%20purity%20level>

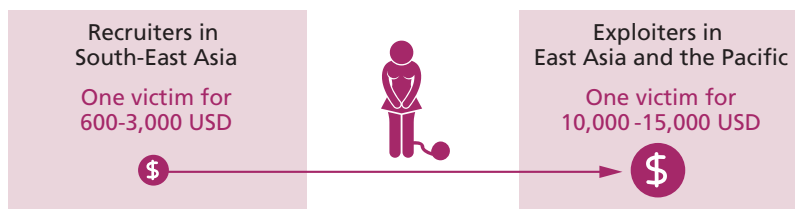
⁷⁵ Court case 8 – Australia, 2007; court case 203 – Japan, 2016.

⁷⁶ The estimated proceeds for traffickers was reported in 49 court cases of a total of 489 collected by UNODC for the purpose of this Report.

⁷⁷ Court case 267 – France 2015.

Monetary values given by traffickers

VICTIM OF TRAFFICKING FOR MARRIAGE OR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION



CRYSTAL METH



Trafficking for exploitation in criminal activities – a double victimization

Trafficking in persons for the purpose of exploitation in criminal activities is a form of trafficking that has risen in numbers and is gaining increased attention in different parts of the world. About 5 per cent of the total victims of trafficking detected in 2018 were exploited in the commission of crimes. This form of trafficking has been detected in a dozen countries in all regions of the world.

This form of trafficking entails recruiting and exploiting persons, often children, to commit crimes for the monetary benefit of traffickers (see *Chapter 3 – Children; easy to target*). The crimes recorded range from petty crimes such as shoplifting, pickpocketing or other forms of petty thefts,^a to more serious crimes, such as forcing children to grow, transport, traffic or sell drugs.^b In the cases of *county lines*, for example, British authorities have widely documented the use of children trafficked for the transportation of drugs.^c Recruiting migrant children for the purpose of drug trafficking has also been documented along migration routes from the Middle East to Europe.^d

Trafficking for exploitation in criminal activities also goes beyond drug production and trafficking. In some cases, victims of trafficking are forced to participate in murders^e, or children are forced into violent extremism.^f This form of trafficking is often characterized by a high degree of organization of the trafficking networks. In a case reported by Central American authorities, a crimi-

nal group recruited women for the purpose of marrying wealthy men from the United States with false promises of accessing American citizenship. After some months of marriage, the men were killed by members of the group, who then cashed in on the life insurance these men had registered for their wives. These women were forced to be part of the criminal plot and as such, the court considered them as trafficking victims, while the members of the criminal group were charged with homicides and trafficking in persons.^g

The phenomenon of child recruitment and exploitation by terrorist and violent extremist groups is a form of trafficking in persons and a serious form of violence against children.^h This crime clearly illustrates the linkages between trafficking for exploitation in criminal activities, terrorism and violent extremism, representing an area of particular concern. The recruitment of children can often lead to their sexual exploitation, enslavement and involvement in armed violence, including for the purposes of committing criminal offences such as acts of terrorism, war crimes and crimes against humanity.ⁱ

This serious form of violence violates children's rights and has long-lasting consequences on the wellbeing of the child's physical, emotional and mental health^j, as well as on their families, communities and society at large. These children should therefore be treated primarily as victims of violations of international law,^k with primary consideration given to their best interests, such as rehabilitation and reintegration.

The level of organization of the group is not necessarily related to the level of violence of the crimes perpetrated. French authorities have, for instance, dismantled a large criminal network organizing the exploitation of more than two thousand children in theft, operating in the south of France, Spain, Italy and beyond, with a large number of petty thefts over a period of two years. The logistics for moving the children around were very well organized. The group was involved in complex money laundering schemes and was made up of active or retired thieves organized in hierarchically modes with specific assigned roles.¹

Other cases refer to East Asian victims trafficked for the purpose of scamming at call-centres. Victims were forced to defraud wealthy people by contacting them and convincing them to make large bank transfers. The victims of trafficking engaged in the scam were forced to live and work segregated from society, with no remuneration, by the criminals who were cashing in on the proceeds of the fraud.^m The very same scheme was also reported by media in different parts of Europe, suggesting that this could be a form of trafficking that may be widespread around the world.ⁿ

Besides the structured level of organization, trafficking in persons for exploitation in criminal activity normally implies a high level of monetary return connected to the illegal markets that victims' exploitation is contributing to. Drug trafficking is very lucrative^o and exploiting people to engage in this crime reduces not only the economic costs, but also the risk of arrest. The French petty thefts case resulted in profits estimated at more than one million euros in less than two years of activities.

This form of criminal activity may still be limited in terms of numbers detected but brings large economic and criminal incentives.

This type of trafficking creates complexity in legal and criminological frameworks. Trafficking in persons to commit a crime represents a concrete form of poly-crime, with structured criminal organizations active in different criminal activities. One crime is human trafficking and others are the crime that victims are obliged to perpetrate: drug trafficking, systemic fraud, organized petty thefts or others where traffickers have a solid know-how. In terms of victims, there are two categories: the victims of thefts, fraud or other crimes and the trafficking victims that are the perpetrators of these crimes.

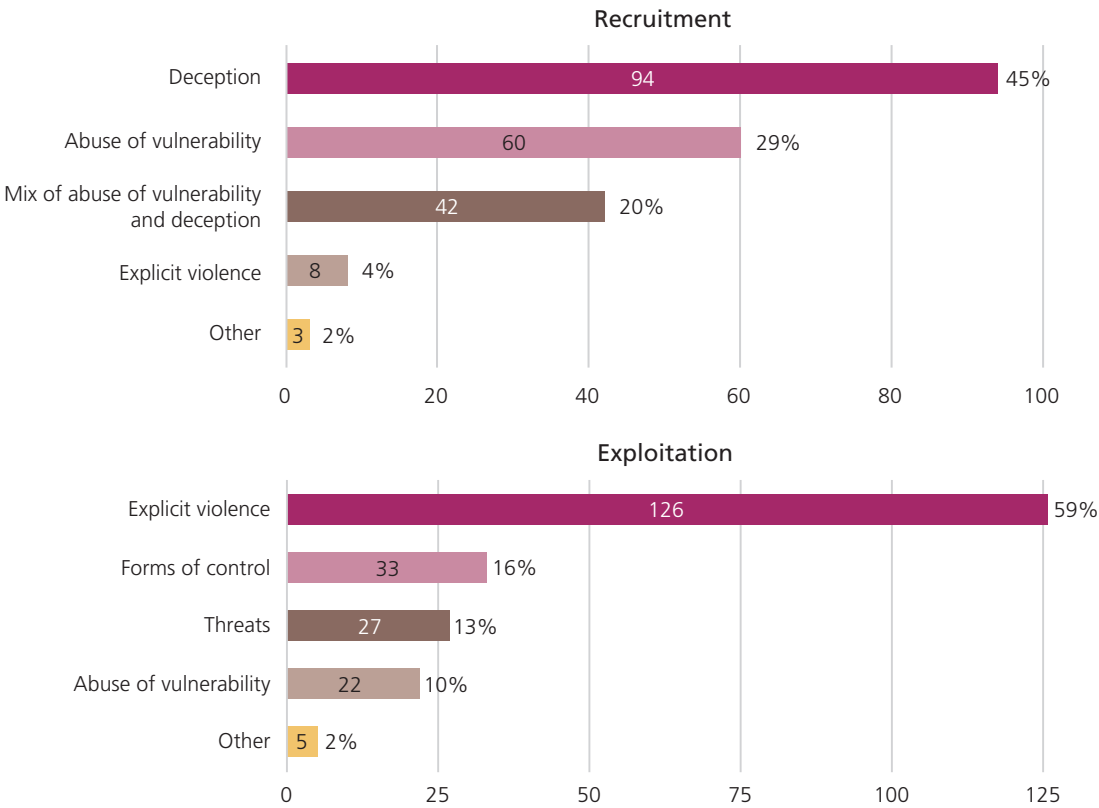
This is the complexity that traffickers exploit and that raise the challenges in terms of how criminal justice and protection systems should treat victims in these circumstances in order to create disincentives for this kind of

traffickers, protect victims, and ensure their access to justice.

Forcing trafficking victims to perpetrate crime is a way for criminals to make victims liable. If the victims perceive themselves as "partners in crime", they are not likely to report their abusers.^p In addition to trafficking victims' fears for their personal safety and of reprisals by the traffickers, the added fear of prosecution and punishment only further discourages victims from seeking protection or cooperating with law enforcement.

- a Court case 60 – Norway 2012, court case 61 – Norway 2012, court case 136 – Poland 2014, court case 184 – Norway 2015, court case 267 – France 2015, court case 311 – Norway 2017, court case 341 – United Kingdom 2017, court case 354 – Poland 2016, court case 404 – Austria 2018, court case 415 – France 2017, court case 475 – France 2019 (Ali Baba case), court case 481 – Lithuania.
- b Court case 308 – Netherlands 2016, court case 439 – Mexico 2017, court case 475 – France 2019; court case 470 – Germany, see National Crime Agency *County Lines Drug Supply, Vulnerability and Harm* 2018, January 2019, page 1.
- c National Crime Agency *County Lines Violence, Exploitation & Drug Supply* 2017, January 2018 page 1, page 14.
- d Healy, Claire (2019). *The Strength to Carry On: Resilience and Vulnerability to Trafficking and Other Abuses among People Travelling along Migration Routes to Europe*. Vienna: ICMPD., page 210-212
- e Court case 265 – El Salvador 2017, court case 439 – Mexico 2017.
- f Uganda Police, *Annual Crime Report 2018*, 2018, Kampala, page 50.
- g Court case 265 – El Salvador 2017.
- h United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, (2017). *Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups: The Role of the Justice System*. Vienna: United Nations, p. 2
- i See A/70/836-S/2016/360, A/69/926-S/2015/409 and A/HRC/30/67.
- j United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime *Handbook on Children Recruited and Exploited by Terrorist and Violent Extremist Groups: The Role of the Justice Section*, 2017 at 2.
- k Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups (Paris Principles), February 2007, <https://www.unicef.org/emerg/files/ParisPrinciples310107English.pdf> para.3.6.
- l Court case 267 – France 2015.
- m Court case 222 – Australia 2017.
- n See press articles in Slovenia: <https://english.sta.si/2753753/prison-sentences-handed-out-in-taiwanese-call-centres-case>, in Spain; <https://cn.reuters.com/article/instant-article/idUSKCN-1T80IP> in Croatia; http://www.china.org.cn/world/Off_the_Wire/2018-01/30/content_50350812.htm in Portugal; <https://www.theportugalnews.com/news/police-arrest-people-traffickers/50981> All accessed 11 June 2020;
- o United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2020) *World Drug Report 2020* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.20.XI.6). Booklet 4, page 14.
- p Shared Hope International (2020) *Responding to Sex Trafficking Victim-Offender Intersectionality: A Guide for Criminal Justice Stakeholders*, Villanova Law Institute to Address Commercial Sexual Exploitation; Minna Viuhko (2019) *Just trust me and you'll make a fortune – relationships between offenders and victims of human trafficking*, *Nordic Journal of Criminology*, 20:2, 196-212.

FIG. 27 Number and shares of cases, by means used by traffickers for the recruitment* and for the exploitation** of adult victims, as reported in GLOTIP court cases



Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.
*This information was reported in 207 court cases of a total of 489 collected by UNODC for the purpose of this Report.
**This information was reported in 213 court cases of a total of 489 collected by UNODC for the purpose of this Report.

The means used by traffickers: tools of control

Traffickers employ different tactics to gain control over and exploit their victims. The means used by traffickers are listed in the international definition of the crime: *“the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person”*.⁷⁸

According to this definition, in the context of trafficking of adults⁷⁹, at least one of these “means” must be employed in order to constitute the offence of trafficking in

persons. In most accounts of trafficking, however, traffickers make use of different means in combination or in sequence at different phases of the trafficking process. They typically start out using deceptive means, while later resort to more violent means. It appears traffickers make use of different means during the different phases of the trafficking process.

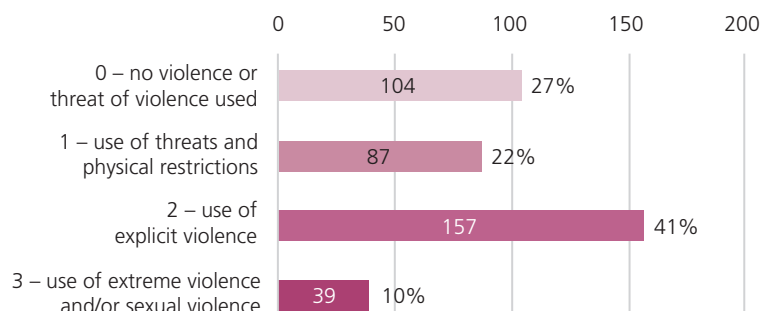
First establishing trust, second forcing the will

The means used by traffickers to recruit adult victims⁸⁰ are characterized by an almost exclusive absence of direct physical violence. In fact, among those considered for this analysis, only eight cases report physical violence being used to recruit or otherwise gain control of their victims. In the recruitment phase, traffickers commonly make use of deceptive ploys, such as promising false income

78 The United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime; Article 3, paragraph (a).
79 When the victim is a child, a trafficking act for the purpose exploitation is enough to constitute the crime of trafficking definitively and the means become irrelevant. See The UN Protocol, article 3, paragraph (c).

80 The analysis refers only to adult victims as, according to the UN Trafficking Protocol, when the victim is a child, the “means” are not required to define a trafficking case.

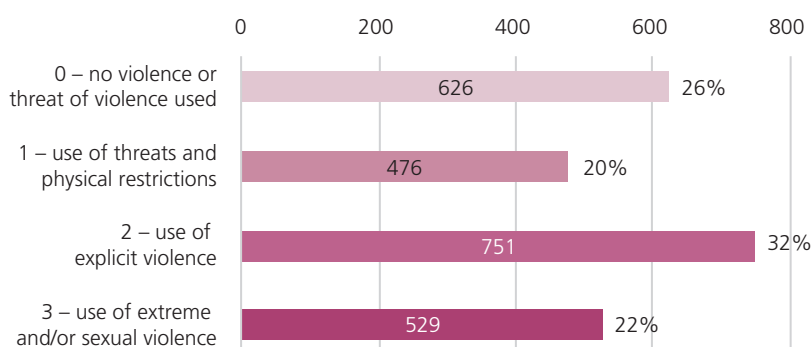
FIG. 28 Number and shares of cases, by level of violence at any point of the trafficking process (adults and child victims), as reported in GLOTIP court cases*



Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.

*The level of violence used by traffickers was reported in 387 court cases of a total of 489 collected by UNODC for the purpose of this Report.

FIG. 29 Number and shares of victims, by level violence at any point of the trafficking process (adults and child victims), as reported in GLOTIP court cases*



Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.

*The analysis refers to the 2,382 victims reported in 387 court cases which mentioned the level of violence used by traffickers.

opportunities. The means used span from fake and lucrative job advertisements⁸¹ to direct outreach by traffickers under the pretense of wanting friendships.⁸² Deception is often used in combination with targeting and abusing the victim's situation of economic need.

Even if the means are not required to define a case of trafficking when the victims are minors, it should be noted that the proportion of the means of recruitment remains broadly the same if cases of child trafficking are included in the analysis.

Contrary to the recruitment phase, during exploitation, a large number of court cases reported the use of explicit violence. Still, a significant number of cases reported other forms of controls like the confiscation of travel documents and/or taking advantage of the migration status of victims as a mean to control the victim during exploitation. Likewise in this analysis, the results do not change if the cases of child trafficking are considered.

The violent nature of this crime is clear. Although not necessarily representative of the trafficking phenomenon, victims were physically coerced into exploitative practices in more than a half of the cases of trafficking in persons reported by Member States. The results are broadly confirmed when the number of victims, rather than cases, are considered. In about 10 per cent of these cases, and for 22 per cent of the victims considered, traffickers make use of extreme violence against the victims.

It should be noted, however, that in a considerable number of cases, traffickers did not appear to use explicit violence during the entire trafficking process. In about 27 per cent of the analysed court cases and 26 per cent of the victims considered, traffickers made use of non-violent or physically restrictive means. In most of these cases, traffickers abused victims' vulnerabilities, for instance, an emotional or economic dependence on the trafficker.

81 Court case 219 – Egypt 2014.

82 Court case 99 – Canada 2013.

Female victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation as defendants: a case law analysis

Through a gender lens, UNODC analysed case law on trafficking for sexual exploitation involving female defendants, who had been or were simultaneously exploited as trafficking victims. These victims are defined here as victims-defendants (V/Ds). The resulting analysis is based on 53 judicial decisions^a from 16 jurisdictions.^b The results that emerge from the analysis show that V/Ds are typically engaged in acts proximate to exploitation (recruitment of new victims, controlling victims, collecting proceeds, etc). In this way, traffickers use V/Ds to shield themselves from prosecution. Criminalizing victims who have engaged in acts of trafficking directly plays into their instrumentalization by traffickers to avoid punishment.

The case law analysis further highlights the intersection between human trafficking and domestic and intimate partner violence. In at least 25 per cent of the cases examined, V/Ds were subject to multiple forms of gender-based violence prior to and while being trafficked, including from early childhood. Despite the critical nature of the V/D's relationship to the trafficker in the case law examined, very few courts addressed these dimensions. Furthermore, an examination of victims' roles in offending also revealed a different set of motives from those typically ascribed to traffickers, including seeking alleviation from their own exploitation, securing the trafficker's affection and having no alternative but to obey the trafficker's orders, among others.

The analysis further demonstrates that the "means" of coercion and "abuse of a position of vulnerability" remain unclear in judicial practice. The same applies with the issue of "consent." All of these aspects are crucial, as the relationship between the V/Ds and the traffickers in many of the cases could be characterized by the dynamics of "coercive control," as it is understood in the domestic and intimate partner violence context.

Moreover, the case law analysis illuminates several mechanisms by which V/Ds are excluded from the protection theoretically offered by the non-punishment principle, expunction statutes and international guidelines, such as the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (Bangkok Rules). These generally include burden of proof requirements, early plea agreements, temporality requirements and explicit statutory exceptions provided for V/Ds. Whether "forced criminality" is recognised as a "purpose" within national anti-trafficking legislation may also have an impact on the application of the non-punishment principle. In addition, the analysis shows that courts also engaged in divergent interpretations of the V/D's prior trafficking experience and other forms of victimisation for the purposes of sentencing, whereby the V/D's trafficking experience was applied as both an aggravating and mitigating circumstance. *This case law analysis is available at:* <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/publications.html>

a Available in the case law database of the UNODC Knowledge Portal on Trafficking in Persons, URL: <https://sherloc.unodc.org/cld/en/v3/htmls/index.html>.

b Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Serbia, South Africa, United Kingdom, the United States and the European Court of Human Rights.

Trafficking flows

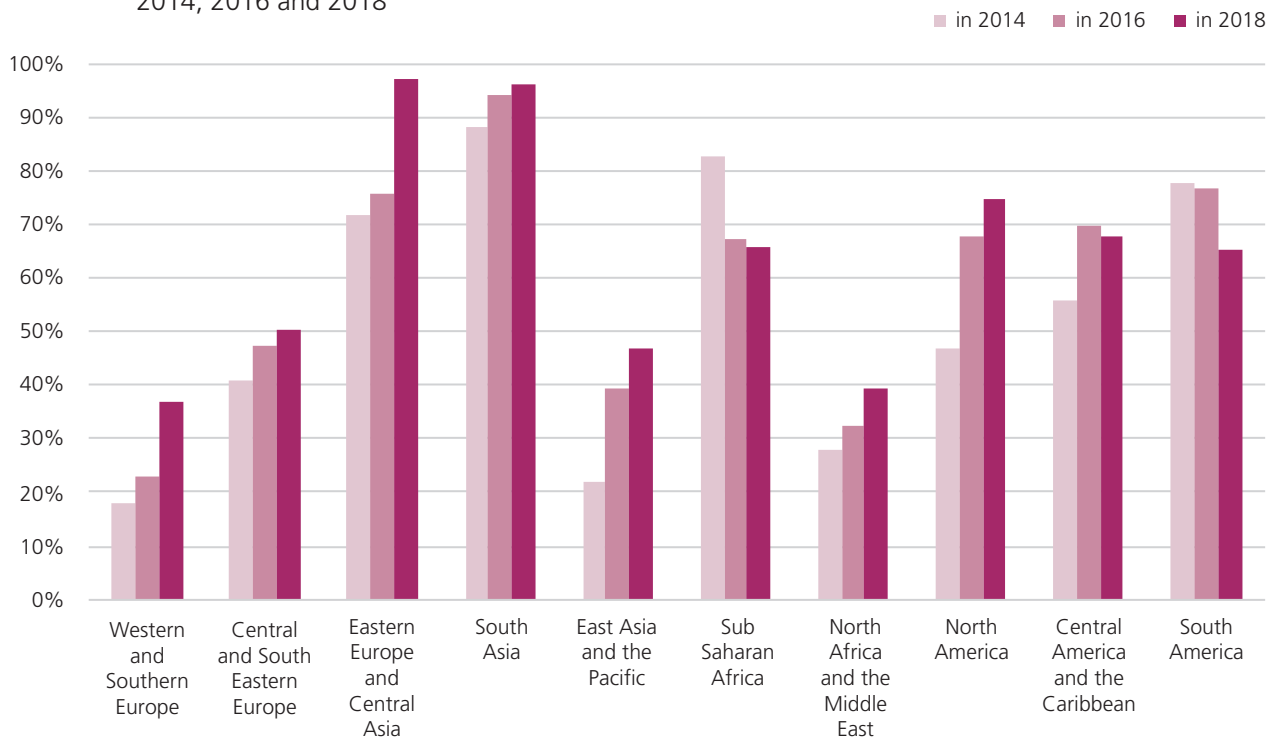
Based on the data collected, UNODC was able to record 534 different trafficking flows.⁸³ More than 120 countries reported having detected victims from more than 140 different countries of origin. However, it is likely that some flows have not been detected by national authorities, and the diffusion of human trafficking may be more complex than what emerges from this analysis. The trafficking flows are generally characterized by a lim-

ited geographical range. Victims are typically trafficked within geographically close areas.⁸⁴ Globally, most detected victims are citizens of the countries where they are detected. In 2018, over half of victims whose citizenship was reported were detected in their own countries.

83 For the purpose of this analysis "flow" has been defined as a combination of one origin country and one destination where at least 5 victims were detected during the period considered.

84 See page 13 of the UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2012 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.13.V.6). ; See pages 38-39 of the UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2014 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.14.V.10); See page 41-42 of the UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2016 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.IV.6); See page 41-44 of the UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.19.IV.2).

FIG. 30 Shares of victims detected within their own country's borders, by subregion, 2014, 2016 and 2018



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

Moreover, the share of detected victims domestically trafficked has increased over the last few years.

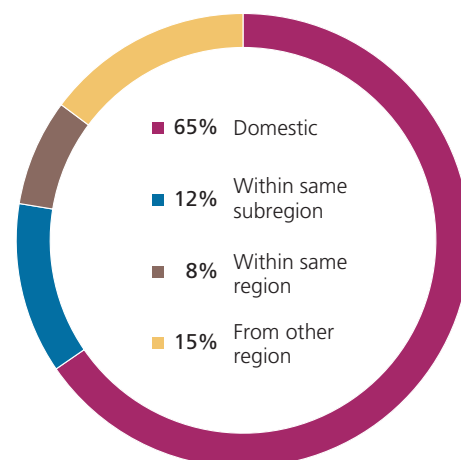
Yet, not all countries have detected the same levels of domestic trafficking. Most countries in South Asia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia recorded higher levels of domestic trafficking compared to other regions. Over the last few years, however, countries in Western and Central Europe and in North America have also increasingly detected their own nationals trafficked within national borders.

Analysis of the information emerging from the court cases could shed light on the common characteristics of domestic trafficking in high income countries.⁸⁵

In these countries, domestic trafficking tends to be different compared to patterns that characterize cross-border trafficking. In most of the cases considered for this analy-

sis, victims are girls or young women trafficked for sexual exploitation. Most of these victims are targeted due to personal risk factors, such as behavioural issues associated with a difficult upbringing or addiction. Following the World Health Organization classification, these risk

FIG. 31 Shares of detected victims, by geographical reach of trafficking flows,* 2018 (or most recent)

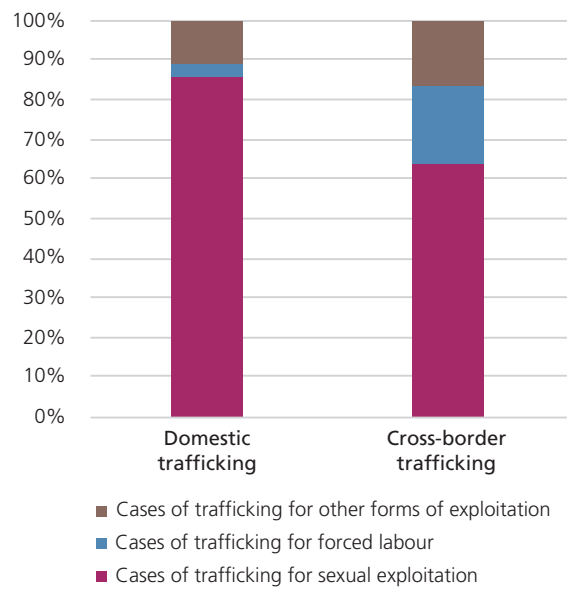


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

*Estimate based on 36,137 detected victims whose citizenship was reported by 105 countries.

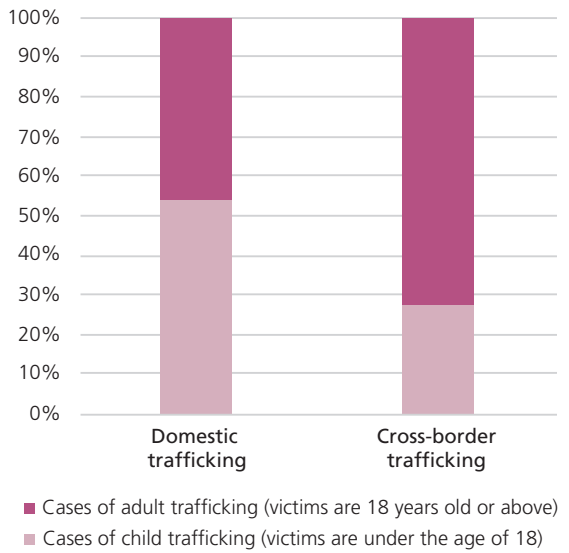
⁸⁵ The court cases analysed were collected from 34 countries classified by the World Bank as high-income countries: Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Brunei, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay.

FIG. 32 Shares of cases, by forms of exploitation, as reported in the GLOTIP court cases. Comparison domestic and cross-border trafficking in high income countries*



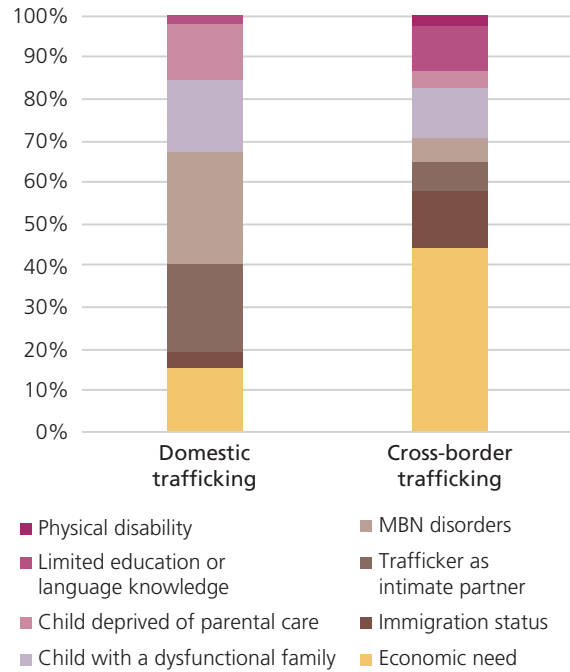
Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.
*The analysis was conducted on 54 cases of domestic trafficking and in 172 cases of cross-border trafficking that reported the form of exploitation.

FIG. 33 Shares of cases, by age group, as reported in the GLOTIP court cases. Comparison domestic and cross-border trafficking in high income countries*



Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.
*The analysis was conducted on 56 cases of domestic trafficking and in 172 cases of cross-border trafficking that reported the age of the victims.

FIG. 34 Shares of cases, by condition before trafficking, as reported in the GLOTIP court cases. Comparison domestic and cross-border trafficking in high income countries*



Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.
*Of the total 249 cases collected for the purpose of this Report, information on the age of the victims was reported in 52 cases of domestic trafficking and in 112 cases of cross-border trafficking.

factors are defined as *mental, behavioural or neurodevelopmental disorders (MBN disorders)*.⁸⁶ In other cases, victims are found to be emotionally attached to the trafficker or part of a dysfunctional family.

On the other hand, cross-border trafficking victims in high income countries are more likely to be adults, trafficked for a variety of exploitative purposes, and targeted because they are in economic need or with irregular migration status.

The flows in domestic trafficking; limited movement and internal migration

While victims of domestic trafficking are not transported across borders, court narratives show that they may still be subject to significant geographical movements.

86 The International Classification (ICD-11) of the World Health Organization defines ‘Mental, behavioural and neurodevelopmental disorders’ as syndromes characterised by clinically significant disturbance in an individual’s cognition, emotional regulation, or behaviour that reflects a dysfunction in the psychological, biological, or developmental processes that underlie mental and behavioural functioning. These disturbances are usually associated with distress or impairment in personal, family, social, educational, occupational, or other important areas of functioning. See <https://www.who.int/classifications/icd/en/>

In a relatively large number of court cases, victims were exploited at a location in close proximity to where they were recruited. A typical example involves girls recruited in a suburban area and exploited in nearby motels or bars. Armenian authorities, for example, reported a case in which underage girls who were recruited in the surroundings of a hotel in the capital city were then sexually exploited within the premises of the same hotel.⁸⁷

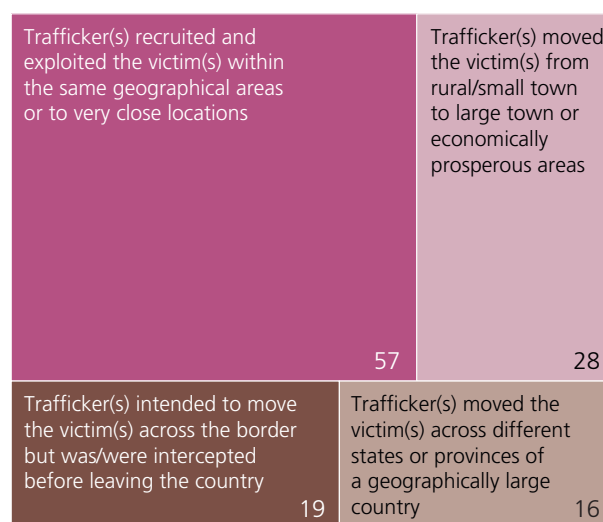
In other cases, traffickers moved victims from poorer to richer areas, in flows following patterns of internal migration. Authorities in the Dominican Republic, for instance, reported victims recruited in the suburbs of the capital city who were sexually exploited in the tourist zones along the coast.⁸⁸ Indeed, victims trafficked from poor communities to tourist areas is a reported pattern.⁸⁹ Likewise, trafficking may also follow the flows towards places of economic activity. Some countries in West Africa reported children recruited in rural areas are exploited for forced labour on cocoa plantations in Côte d'Ivoire or in fishing on Lake Volta in Ghana.⁹⁰ Cases of victims trafficked from small villages to urban areas are also frequently reported.⁹¹

Additionally, victims of domestic trafficking may still be trafficked across large distances when they are recruited and exploited in different states or provinces of large countries, such as Argentina,⁹² Canada,⁹³ China,⁹⁴ Mexico,⁹⁵ the Russian Federation⁹⁶ or the United States of America.⁹⁷

Yet, not all cases of domestic trafficking were intended to be as such. Some national victims may be detected before they can be trafficked abroad: even if they did not leave the country, their cases relate to cross-border trafficking, rather than domestic trafficking.⁹⁸

The Hungarian authorities, for example, reported the case of a young man who agreed to sell his Hungarian girlfriend for sexual exploitation abroad. Investigators detected the case and assisted the victim before she left country.⁹⁹ Similarly, Moldovan authorities intercepted a young woman recruited in Moldova who was to be trafficked to Turkey, together with her trafficker, at the Chisinau airport before leaving the country.¹⁰⁰ In these cases, the victim was recruited for the purpose of exploitation – which makes this a trafficking in persons case – but the transportation across the border was prevented and consequently the victim was recorded in the country of recruitment.

FIG. 35 Number of cases of domestic trafficking, by geographical reach, as reported in the GLOTIP court cases*



Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.

*Based on 120 court cases of domestic trafficking where the movement of the victim was specified in the case narrative.

87 Court case 78 – Armenia, 2014.

88 Court case 258 – Dominican Republic, 2017.

89 Court case 124 – Mexico, 2014; court case 214 – Argentina, 2015; court case 215 – Argentina, 2015; court case 255 – Dominican Republic, 2017; court case 148 – South Africa, 2013.

90 Court case 373 – Cote d'Ivoire 2014; court case 374 – Cote d'Ivoire 2015; court case 489 – Ghana 2018.

91 See Court case 4 – Armenia 2012; court case 38 – El Salvador 2008; court case 56 – Mexico 2011; court case 63 – Poland year NA; court case 143 – Russian Federation 2013; court case 167 – Moldova 2013; court case 208 – China 2014; court case 345 – Honduras 2014; court case 397 – Argentina 2018; court case 406 – Bolivia 2018; court case 451 – Myanmar 2019; court case 489 – Colombia 2018.

92 Court case 212 – Argentina 2017; court case 213 – Argentina 2017.

93 Court case 55 – Mexico 2010; court case 123 – Mexico 2015; court case 440 – Mexico 2017.

94 Court case 206 – China 2014.

95 Court case 25 – Canada; court case 26 – Canada 2012; court case 243 – Canada 2017; court case 446 – Canada 2018.

96 Court case 143 – Russian Federation 2014.

97 Court case 71 – USA 2013; court case 182 – USA 2014; court case 183 – USA 2014; court case 460 – USA 2018.

98 Court case 111 – Hungary 2012; court case 127 – Mongolia 2012; court case 145 – Russian Federation 2014; court case 155 – Vietnam 2014; court case 168 – Moldova 2013; court case 231 – Belarus 2016; court case 246 – Chile 2017; court case 249 – Cote d'Ivoire 2014; court case 266 – El Salvador 2017; court case 308 – The Netherlands 2016; court case 315 – Panama 2016; court case 368 – Russian Federation 2016; court case 376 – Cote d'Ivoire 2016; court case 280 – Morocco 2017; court case 389 – Russian Federation 2017; court case 447 – Myanmar 2018; court case 448 – Myanmar 2018; court case 449 – Myanmar 2018; court case 449 – Myanmar 2019.

99 Court case 111 – Hungary 2012.

100 Court case 168 – Moldova 2013.

Increasing representation of domestic trafficking – a rise in severity or greater attention paid by national authorities?

The continuous increase of the proportion of national victims in the total number of detected victims may reflect a number of changes: an actual increase in the trafficking of national victims, an increase in the awareness and priority of national authorities and/or an evolution of national jurisprudence. Greater detection may be attributed to increased awareness due to better training of service providers, law enforcement, health care workers and the public to identify victims.^a Growing public awareness of victims of trafficking is influenced by media portrayal of victims and may impact bystander recognition and reporting of victims.^b

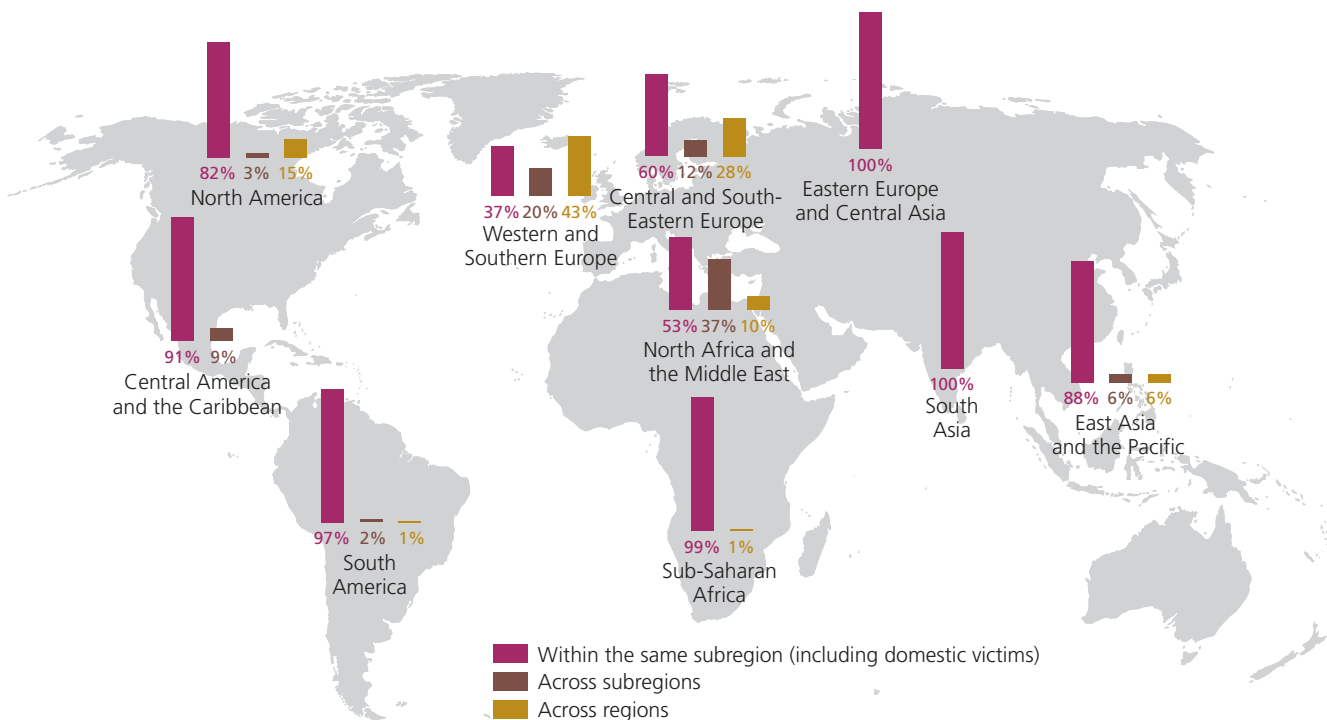
It could be that such forms of domestic trafficking have existed for long time before they began to be recorded as human trafficking, but that only now national authorities are identifying these as trafficking in persons. Similarly, the rising number of domestic trafficking cases could be connected to different prioritization of certain forms of exploitations, namely child sexual exploitation. Trends in cases of trafficking in persons in countries in North America reveal a notable increase in prosecutions of domestic trafficking for sexual exploitation among women and girls. Specific to the United States, reports of trafficking prosecutions may reflect the long-term effects of earlier normative changes and policy initiatives in the context of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000^c, subsequent amendments and changes to federal legislation, as well as new policies regarding child sexual exploitation. With each reauthorization, the TVPA has evolved from its initial primary focus on international trafficking and funding services for immigrant victims in the United States to a greater focus on domestic victims, particularly those trafficked for sexual exploitation.^d

With this type of policy development, the increase in domestic trafficking may not necessarily reflect an increased incidence of this type of crime, but rather may be construed as the result of more resources invested in combating child sexual exploitation than in the past.

There are quite a few countries reporting new forms of trafficking targeting mainly national victims. The United Kingdom, for instance, has been recording more victims of trafficking forced to transport drugs. Victims are mainly British boys and young men, and the number has been increasing over the last few years. National authorities report these victims are youth with mental health or behavioural issues and, often, from a disadvantaged family background.^e

- a. Kiss, L. and C. Zimmerman (2019), Human trafficking and labor exploitation: Toward identifying, implementing, and evaluating effective responses. *PLOS medicine*, 2019. 16(1): p. e1002740.
- b. Bishop, R.A., C.V. Morgan, and L. Erickson (2013), *Public awareness of human trafficking in Europe: How concerned are European citizens?* *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 2013. 11(2): p. 113-135.
- c. Current federal trafficking in persons legislation in the United States of America includes forced labor and commercial sex.
- d. A 2016 report conducted by the US Government Accountability Office on the assessment of domestic human trafficking grants reported increased funding for human trafficking victim services. From FY2014 to FY2015, national institutions received \$1.44 million in increased funding for domestic trafficking victims, whereas, funding for foreign victim services increased by \$0.1 million (See United States Government Accountability Office, Report Congressional Committees, *Human Trafficking: Agencies have taken steps to assess prevalence, address victims issues, and avoid grant duplication*, GAO-16-555, June 2016, pp 22-24).
See also: Brennan, D. (2008), *Competing claims of victimhood? Foreign and domestic victims of trafficking in the United States*. *Sexuality Research & Social Policy*, 2008. 5(4): p. 45.
Siskin, A. and L.S. Wyler, *Trafficking in persons: US policy and issues for Congress*. 2012, Congressional Research Service: Washington, DC.
Zhang, S.X., (2012) *Trafficking of Migrant Laborers in San Diego County: Looking for a Hidden Population*. 2012, San Diego State University: San Diego, CA.
- e. United Kingdom National Crime Agency *County Lines Violence, Exploitation and Drug Supply*. 2017, National Briefing Report, November 2017, page 15.

MAP. 7 Shares of detected victims by type of trafficking flows, by subregion, 2018 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Cross-border trafficking; subregional, transregional and global flows

Most cross-border trafficking flows around the world are limited within the same subregion or region. Accordingly, most victims detected in South America are citizens of other South American countries, with a limited flow originating from the Caribbean islands. Most victims detected in Europe are Europeans, but with significant flows originating from other regions, and so forth.

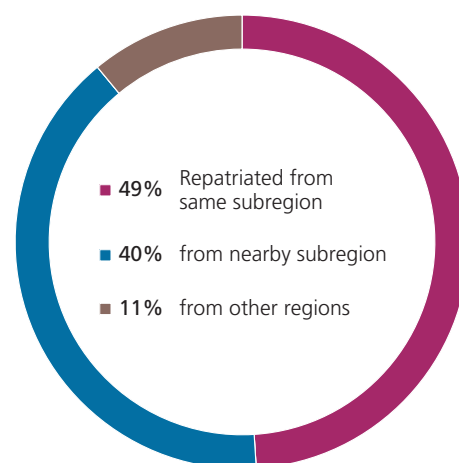
Western and Southern Europe, the affluent countries of the Middle East and North America are the only destinations with significant levels of detected victims trafficked from other regions.

Data on repatriated victims confirm the broad pattern of trafficking being mainly confined within subregions.¹⁰¹

Furthermore, repatriation data also reveal additional long-distance trafficking activity. South American citizens, for example, have been found to be trafficked to and repatriated from Europe, North America, East Asia and the

Middle East. Victims from West, East and Southern Africa are also trafficked to and repatriated from the Middle East. Similarly, repatriation data show that victims from Central and South-Eastern Europe are also trafficked to and repatriated from Eastern Europe.

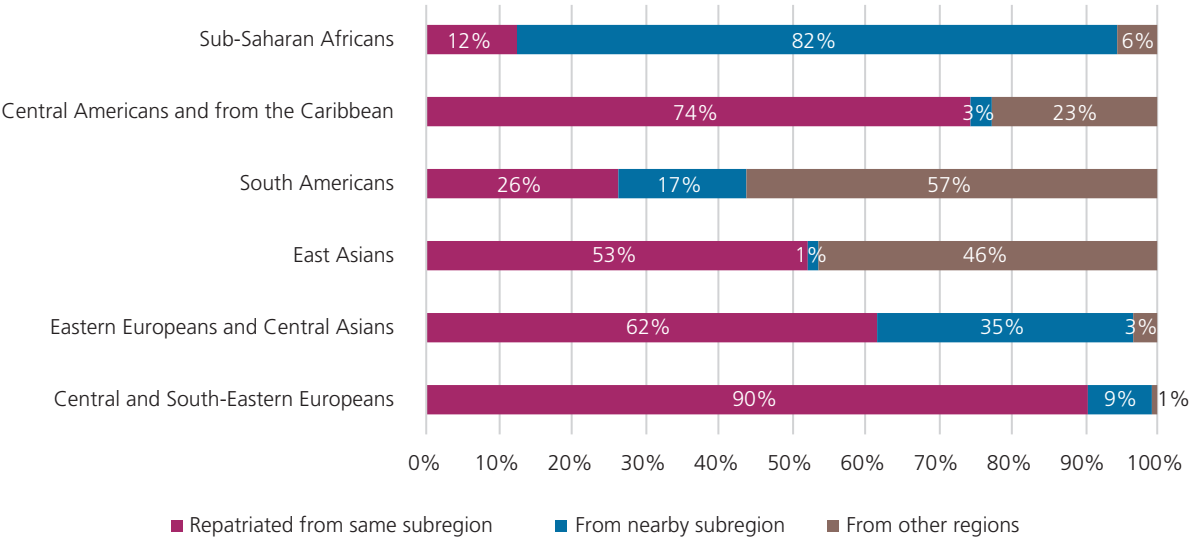
FIG. 36 Shares of victims of trafficking repatriated to their country of origin, by type of trafficking flows, 2017–2018
30 countries (n=4,589)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

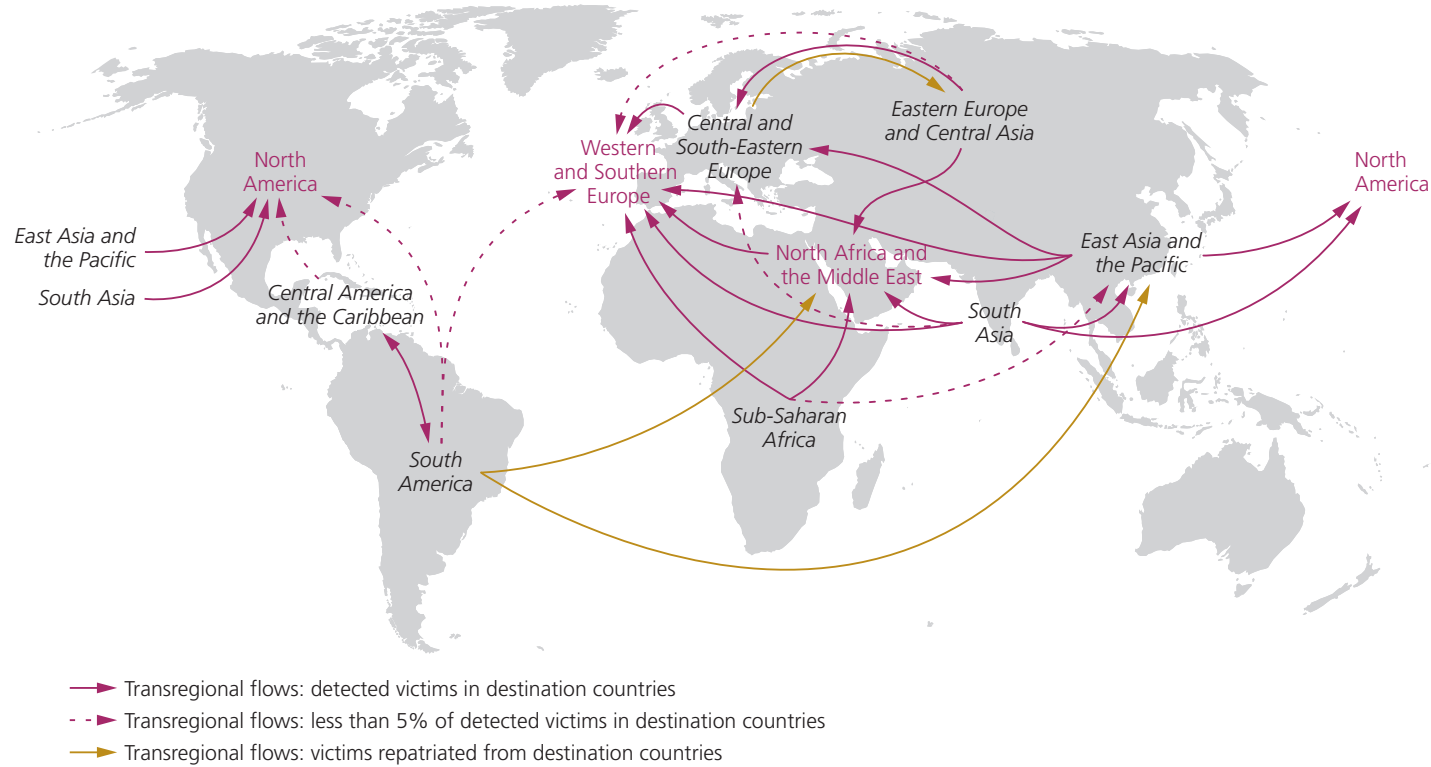
¹⁰¹ Repatriation data refer to countries reporting their own citizens detected as victims of trafficking in persons in another country and repatriated. The UNODC questionnaire used for this Report enquires national authorities about the number of their own citizens repatriated per year. It further enquires on the countries these victims were repatriated from. This information is used as a proxy for the destinations of these trafficking victims.

FIG. 37 Shares of victims of trafficking who were repatriated to their country of origin, by area of repatriation, 2017–2018



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

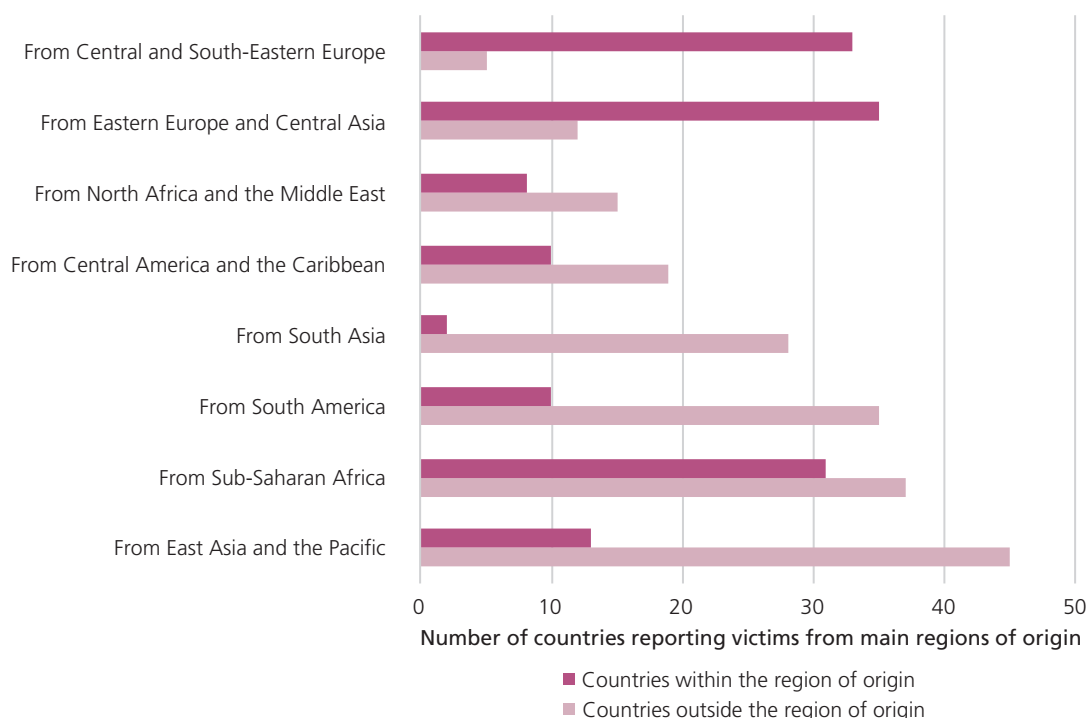
MAP. 8 Main detected transregional flows, 2018 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

FIG. 38 Number of countries where victims were detected to be trafficked to, by area of citizenship of the victims and geographical reach of trafficking flows, 2017–2018



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

When data on detection and repatriation is considered together, it shows that Europe, the Middle East, North America and some countries in East Asia and the Pacific are destinations for trafficking victims from a wide range of origins. In particular, for the period 2017–2018, countries in Western and Southern Europe detected victims of 125 different citizenships.

As far as the origin of transregional trafficking flows is concerned, during the reporting period, victims from East Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa were detected in a large number of countries in almost every region of the world. On the contrary, Central and South-Eastern European victims were detected in large numbers, but mainly in European destinations.

Institutional responses

Legislation

As of August 2020, 169 countries among the 181 assessed have legislation in place that criminalizes trafficking in persons broadly in line with the United Nations Trafficking in Persons Protocol.

Between August 2018 and August 2020, one country amended its trafficking legislation to be partially in compliance and two countries amended their legislation to

become fully in accordance with the definition of trafficking from the United Nations Trafficking in Persons Protocol.

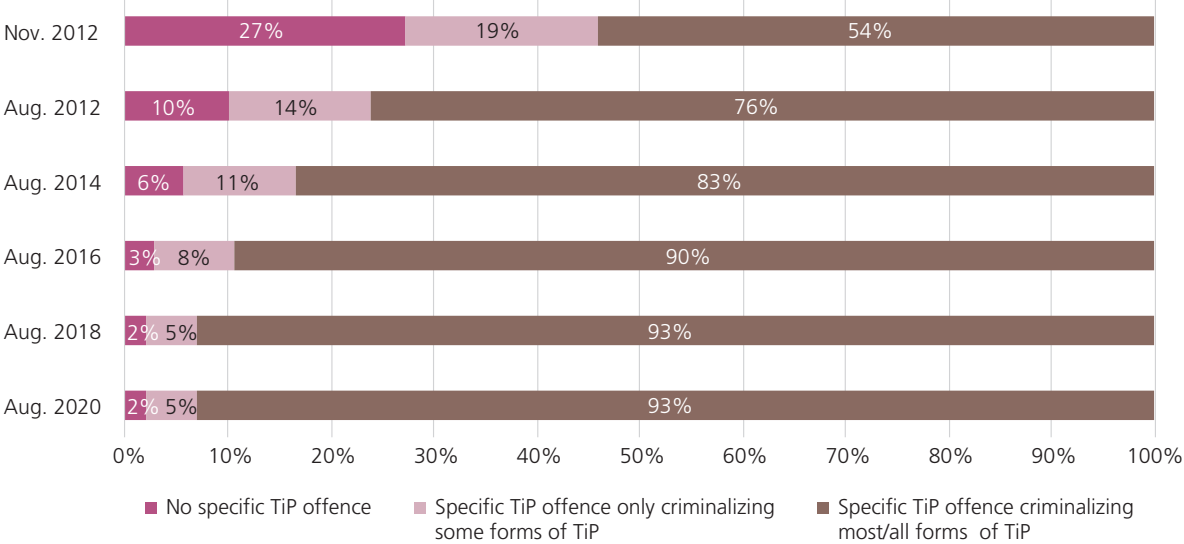
For 12 of the 193 United Nations Member States, the status of their trafficking legislation is unknown to UNODC. Another nine countries have anti-trafficking legislation that only criminalizes some aspects of the trafficking definition (for example, only trafficking for sexual exploitation or trafficking in children). Three countries have criminal codes that do not include the offence of trafficking in persons.

Some countries in Africa and the Middle East either lack trafficking legislation or have partial legislative coverage. Other countries in Asia and Latin America still define trafficking in persons differently from United Nations Trafficking in Persons Protocol, considering only some aspects of the crime.

Criminal Justice Response

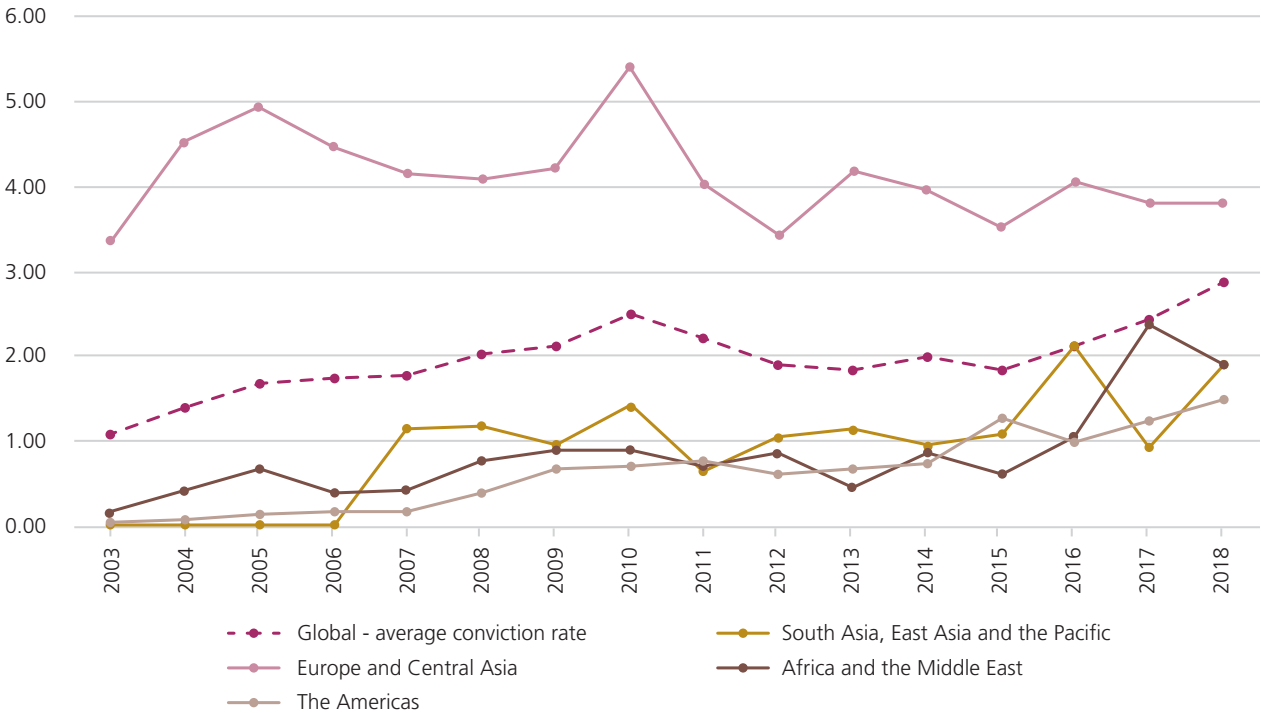
Over the last decade, UNODC has reported on the weak criminal justice actions taken by national authorities to combat trafficking in persons, demonstrated by the limited number of convictions for trafficking in persons reported by countries.

FIG. 39 Criminalization of trafficking in persons as a specific offence covering all or some forms of trafficking in persons (TiP) as defined in the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol, shares of countries 2003–2020, (181 countries)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

FIG. 40 Average conviction rates (per 1,000,000 population) globally and by region, 2003–2018



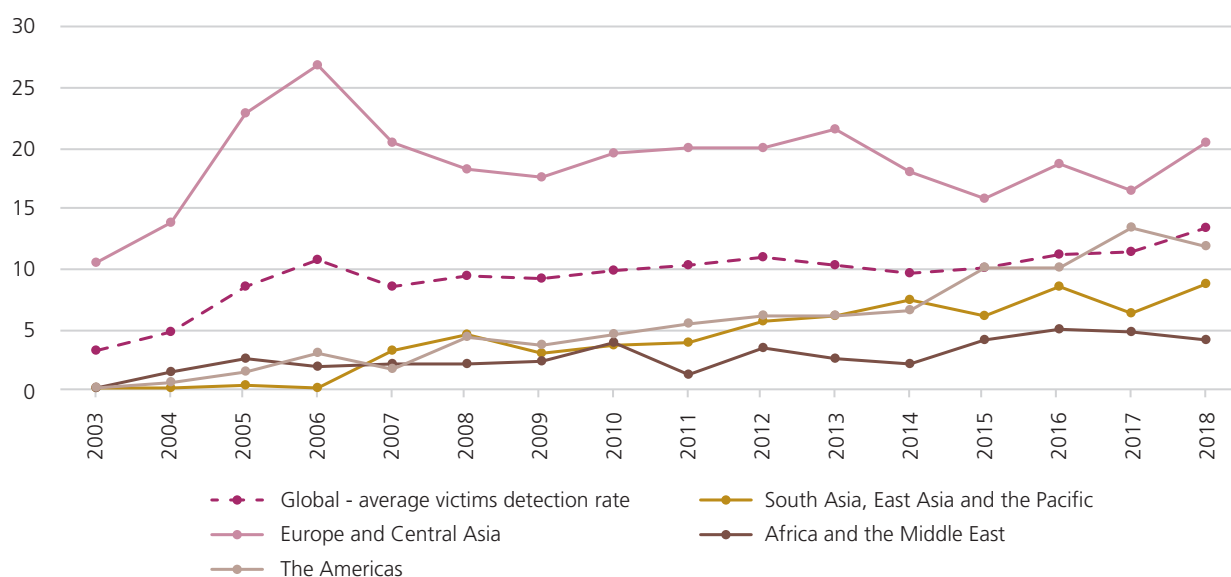
Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

The number of convictions in any given country typically reflect two main factors: the actual severity of the crime and the capacity of state authorities to convict criminals. High numbers can generally be understood as an indication of multiple incidents of trafficking, or as an indication of an efficient criminal justice system. Therefore, there is no ideal threshold of convictions that may indicate an effective response to trafficking in persons. However, recording no or a few convictions per year in countries whose citizens are trafficked and detected by authorities in other countries, is a red flag for an alarming level of impunity.

Over the years, the conviction rate for trafficking in persons has increased in parallel to a broader adoption of the offence of trafficking in persons in national legislations.

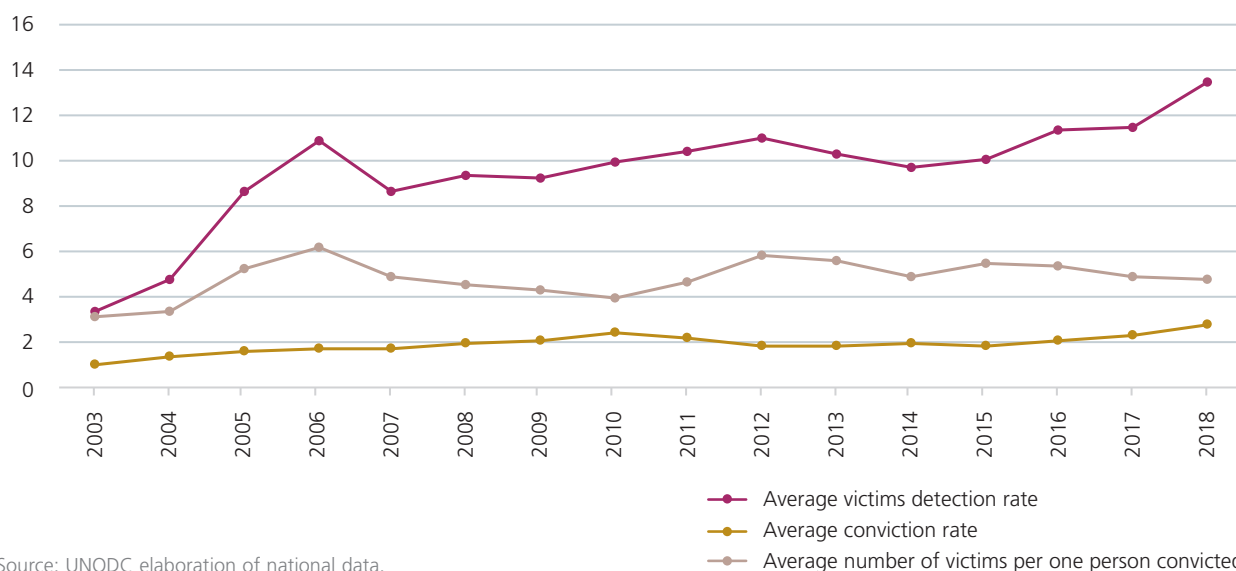
Globally, the number of persons convicted per 1,000,000 population (conviction rate) has almost tripled since the year 2003. Countries that introduced anti-trafficking legislation before the year 2003, such as many European countries, continue to record a higher conviction rates than other parts of the world. Those with more recent legislation record significant increases compared to the previous years.

FIG. 41 Average victims detection rates (per 1,000,000 population) globally and by region, 2003–2018



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

FIG. 42 Average number of victims per one person convicted of trafficking in persons, 2003–2018



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

While European countries record the highest conviction rates globally, their trend is stable or decreasing. It is difficult to assess whether this is the result of a saturation of law enforcement capacity, a lower prioritization of the fight against trafficking or a reduction in trafficking activity.

Most of the recorded increase in the global conviction rates is the result of more convictions recorded in East Asia, the Middle East and the Americas. Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa still record a limited number of convictions per 1,000,000 population. Data from South Asian countries are difficult to consider over a longer period, due to changes in legislation and a lack of consistent data over the years.

Global and regional trends in conviction rates mirror trends in the number of victims detected per 1,000,000 population. Globally, in 2018, each country on average reported about 13 victims of trafficking per 1,000,000 population, more than triple the four victims recorded in 2003.

Similarly with victims, European countries recorded much higher rates of victim detection compared to the rest of the world. This number, however, has been stagnating or decreasing over the last few years.

On the contrary, countries in other regions have increased the number of detected victims per 1,000,000 population. In the period considered, per 1,000,000 population, five victims were recorded in Africa and the Middle East, eight in Asia and 12 in the Americas, representing a strong upward trend from about zero recorded in 2003.