

Factsheet 2. Official Data at a Glance in 2022

2022 Official Data at a Glance

The diagrams below (presented in absolute numbers unless stated otherwise) illustrate the official data of the State, based on the victims of trafficking in the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) in 2022. The Department of Justice and An Garda Síochána are the sources of data.

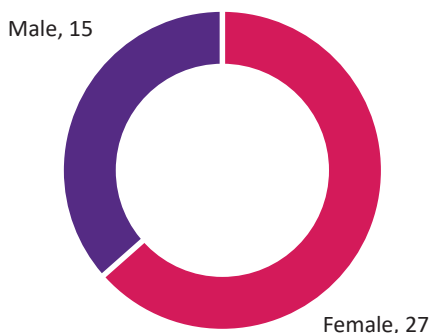
Main statistics

The State reported that there were 42 cases officially accepted in the National Referral Mechanism for victims of trafficking in 2022. This represents a small decrease (by 2) compared to 2021 and a small increase compared to 2020 (38 cases), overall it remains in line with the lower trends emerging since 2019. Studies have found that the annual data represents an underestimate of around 39%, which would bring the estimated number for total number of victims over the year as high as 60. The overall number of recorded cases depends on the parameters of the National Referral Mechanism, a system, which is currently under review.

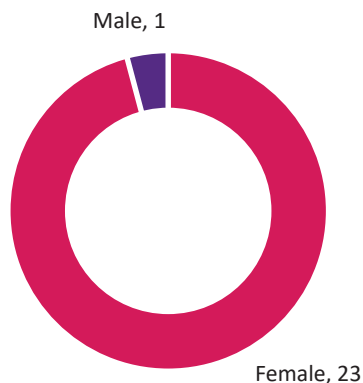
Gender

the majority of victims in 2022 were female (64%), which is in line with the gendered character of the crime (Diagram 9). Trafficking for sexual exploitation is particularly gendered, with the level of female victims exceeding 96% (Diagram 10). Trafficking for labour is also notably gendered in 2022 indicating that more men (80%) are exploited than women.

— **Diagram 9. Victims of trafficking referred to the NRM in 2022, by gender**



— **Diagram 10. Victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation referred to the NRM in 2022, by gender**



Types of exploitation

In 2022, trafficking for sexual exploitation remains the most reported type of exploitation in the National Referral Mechanism (24, 57% of all cases), followed by trafficking for labour exploitation (15, 37%). Trafficking for forced criminal activities (2 cases, 5%) re-emerged in the national statistic, after zero cases in 2021. Of note is the detection of a new type of exploitation, involving a case of suspected trafficking for organ removal. In this regard, the situation in Ireland mirrors the wider EU where novel and less known forms of exploitation, such as forced marriages and illegal adoption/surrogacy are on the rise. (Diagram 11)

— **Diagram.11 Victims of trafficking referred to the NRM in 2022 by, exploitation**

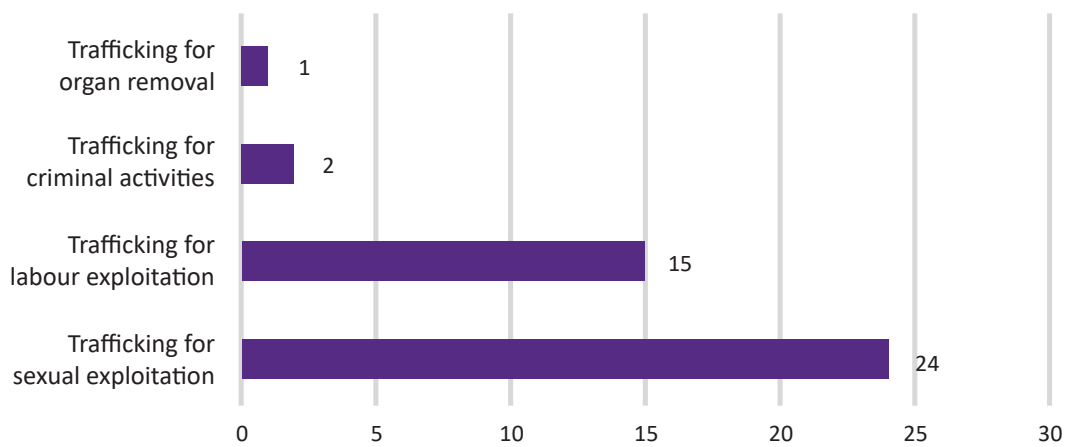
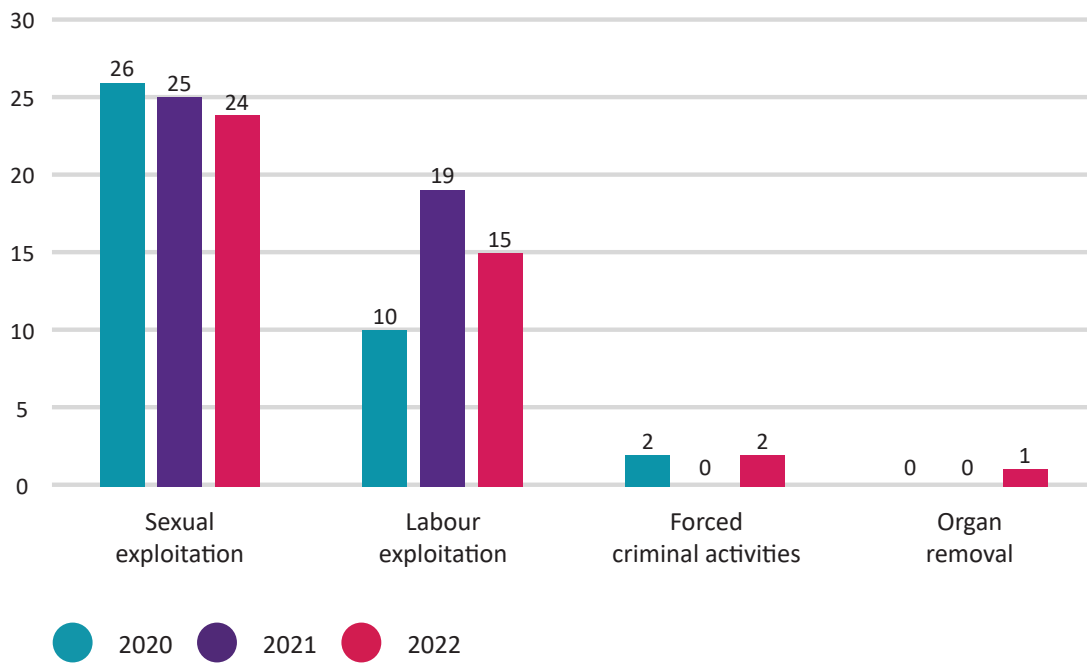


Diagram 12 presents the levels of the different types of exploitation over the years. Trafficking for sexual exploitation shows steady high levels but a slight declining trend over the last three years. On the other hand, trafficking for labour exploitation exhibits fluctuations linked to discovery of greater number of cases in specific employments.⁸³⁴

— **Diagram 12. Trends in types of exploitation over the last three years - 2020, 2021, 2022**

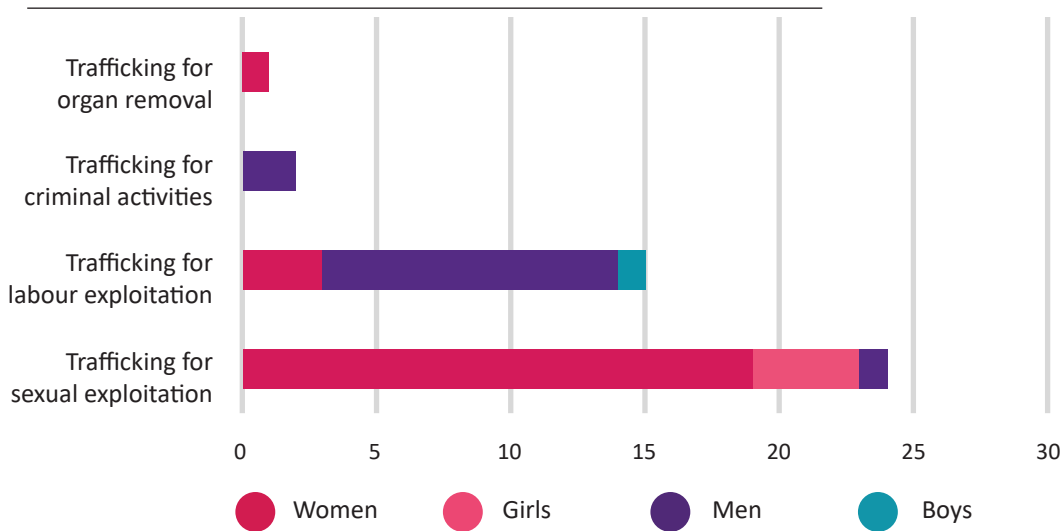


834 The Commission has previously concluded that trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation sees notable, sporadic surges linked to the operations of various production and service sectors. For instance, in the past, a data surge in 2015 was due to victims discovered in temporary Romanian car wash businesses, in 2016 it was linked to a waste recycling business investigation where 23 Romanian nationals were identified as potential victims. Similarly, the higher numbers in 2018 could be accounted for by the suspected trafficking in the fishing and farming industry respectively.

Age of victims

In 2022, we have 5 reported cases of trafficking of minor victims (12% of all victims in 2022). This is a notable report, as it ceased the complete lack of child victims identification over the previous reporting years - 2020 and 2021. Trafficking of children for the purposes of sexual exploitation is prevalent (almost 10% of all victims in 2022) and represents a concerning phenomenon. It entirely affects female children. (Diagram 13)

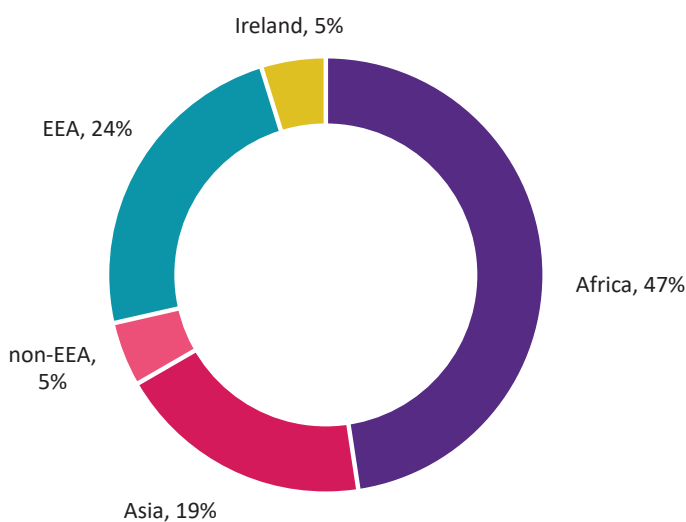
— **Diagram. 13 Victims in 2022 by exploitation, gender and age**



Regions of origin

Africa is the primary region of origin for victims of trafficking in Ireland, followed by the EEA and Asia that are also of note. Non-EEA Europe and Ireland are also represented. (Diagram 14)

— **Diagram.14 Victims in 2022, by region of origin**



The data also indicates that Africa is the most important region of origin for trafficking for sexual exploitation, while the EEA is the most represented region in trafficking for labour exploitation. Asia is a notable region of origin for both TSE and TLE, and the sole region for TCA.

— **Diagram 15. Victims in 2022, by region of origin and type of exploitation**

