

## CHAPTER 3

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# Regional overviews

# Africa and the Middle East

## North Africa and the Middle East\*



\* This region comprises of North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries (Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates) and the other countries of the Middle East (Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, and Yemen).

## KEY FINDINGS FOR NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST, 2022

Trends compared to 2019 (pre-Covid)

**-43%**



*in the detection of victims*

**+20%**



*in the number of convictions*

Main profile of the victims detected (2022 or most recent)

**62%**



*of detected victims in North Africa are children*

**81%**



*of detected victims in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries are women*

**60%**



*of detected victims in the other countries of the Middle East are women*

Main forms of exploitation detected (2022 or most recent)

**65%**



*Around 65% of trafficking in North Africa and in GCC countries is for forced labour*

**60%**



*of trafficking in the other countries of the Middle East is for sexual exploitation*

Main flows detected (2022 or most recent)

**48%**

*of all victims in North Africa originate in East Africa*

**43%**

*of all victims in the GCC countries originate in South Asia and East Asia*

**43%**

*of all victims in the other countries of the Middle East originate from within the region*

## Victims

There is great diversity in terms of victim profile across the three subregions of North Africa and the Middle East. In North Africa, boys, girls and women were detected in near equal shares with boys comprising the largest by a slim margin (33 per cent of the total) in 2022. The countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) report a majority of women trafficked while children were rarely detected (3 per cent). The other countries of the Middle East report a majority of women trafficked and a significant share of detected victims were men.

**Fig. 94** Share of detected victims of trafficking in North Africa and the Middle East, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*

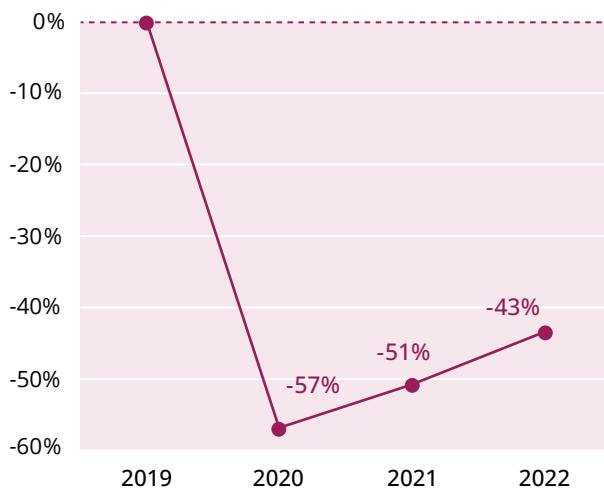


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on data on sex and age of 2,077 victims detected in 14 countries and territories in North Africa and the Middle East.

After a significant decline between 2019 and 2020, detections of victims in North Africa and the Middle East have risen gradually. In 2022, the detection rate was still below that of 2019.

**Fig. 95** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in North Africa and the Middle East, base year 2019\*

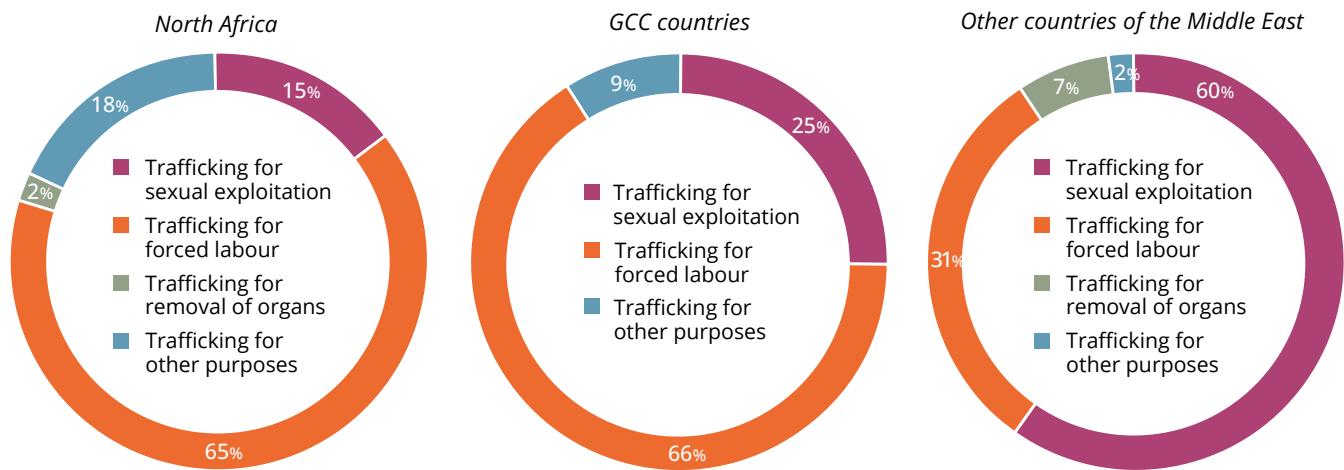


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on 14 countries in North Africa and the Middle East reporting on this indicator during the period considered.

As it is the case with the profile of the victims, the forms of exploitation detected across the three subregions in North Africa and the Middle East differ. In North Africa and in the countries of the GCC, forced labour accounted for around 65 per cent of all detected trafficking in 2022. Conversely, in other countries of the Middle East, trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation comprised 60 per cent of the total, while just over 30 per cent of all trafficking was for forced labour. North Africa recorded the greatest share of trafficking for other purposes (18 per cent of the total), typically child begging. The other countries of the Middle East recorded the largest share of trafficking for the purpose of organ removal.

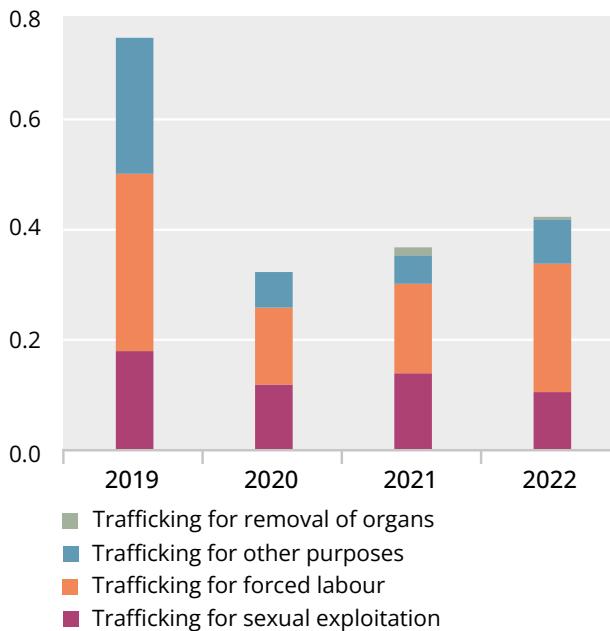
**Fig. 96** Share of detected victims of trafficking in North Africa and the Middle East, by forms of exploitation, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on data on sex and age of 2,254 victims detected in 14 countries and territories in North Africa and the Middle East.

**Fig. 97** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in North Africa and the Middle East, by form of exploitation, 2019–2022\*

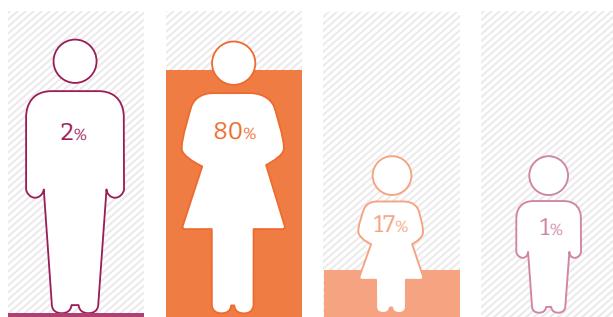


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on 14 countries in North Africa and the Middle East reporting on this indicator during the period considered.

As in many regions, trafficking for sexual exploitation is detected as almost exclusively involving female victims.

**Fig. 98** Share of detected victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in North Africa and the Middle East, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 253 victims detected in 11 countries and territories in North Africa and the Middle East.

In contrast to many other regions, women comprised the greatest share of those detected as trafficked for forced labour in 2022. A significant share of children (32 per cent of the total) were also trafficked for forced labour in 2022.

**Fig. 99** Share of detected victims of trafficking for forced labour in North Africa and the Middle East, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*

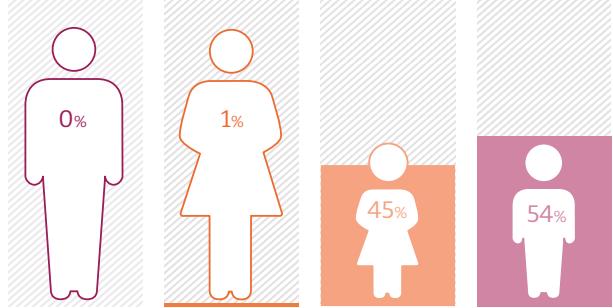


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 853 victims detected in 11 countries and territories in North Africa and the Middle East.

Virtually all victims detected as trafficked for other purposes in 2022 in North Africa and the Middle East were children mainly exploited in forced begging – near equal shares of boys (54 per cent) and girls (45 per cent). Trafficking for organ removal (a total of 41 victims detected in 2022 or more recent), on the other hand, mostly involves adult victims, particularly men.

**Fig. 100** Share of detected victims of trafficking for other purposes in North Africa and the Middle East, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

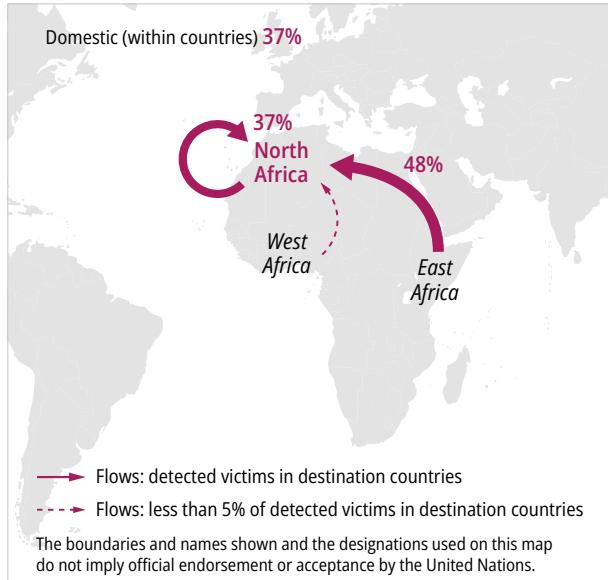
\* Based on data on sex and age of 853 victims detected in 11 countries and territories in North Africa and the Middle East.

## Trafficking Flows

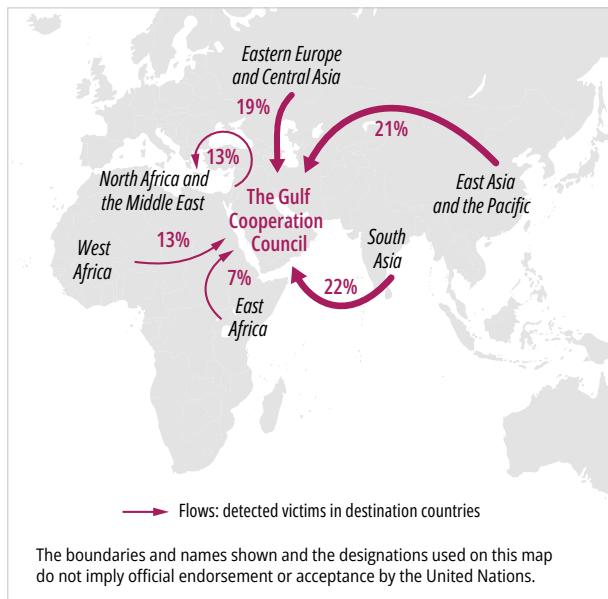
All three subregions of North Africa and the Middle East recorded a great diversity of flows in 2022. While some domestic and intra-regional trafficking was recorded, it was more limited in comparison to other regions. The countries of the GCC and other countries of the Middle East in particular recorded a wide variety of flows, including from distant regions such as East Asia, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and South America.

**Map. 10** Share of detected victims of trafficking in North Africa and the Middle East, by region of citizenship, 2022 (or most recent)\*

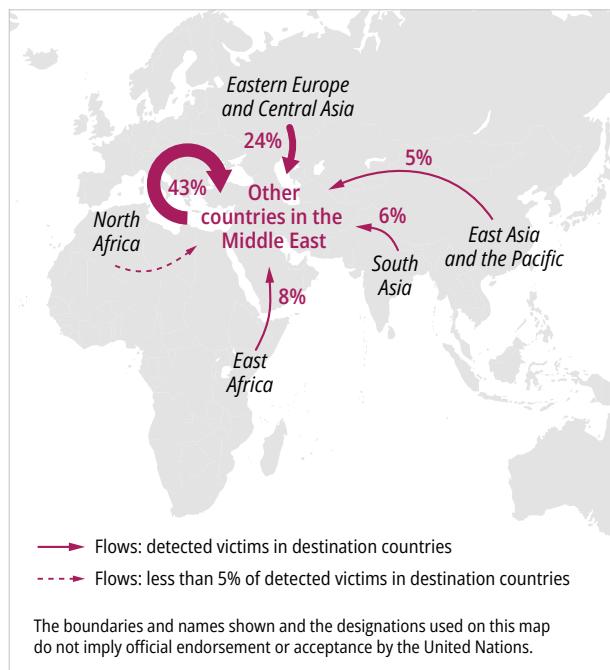
### North Africa



### Gulf Cooperation Council countries



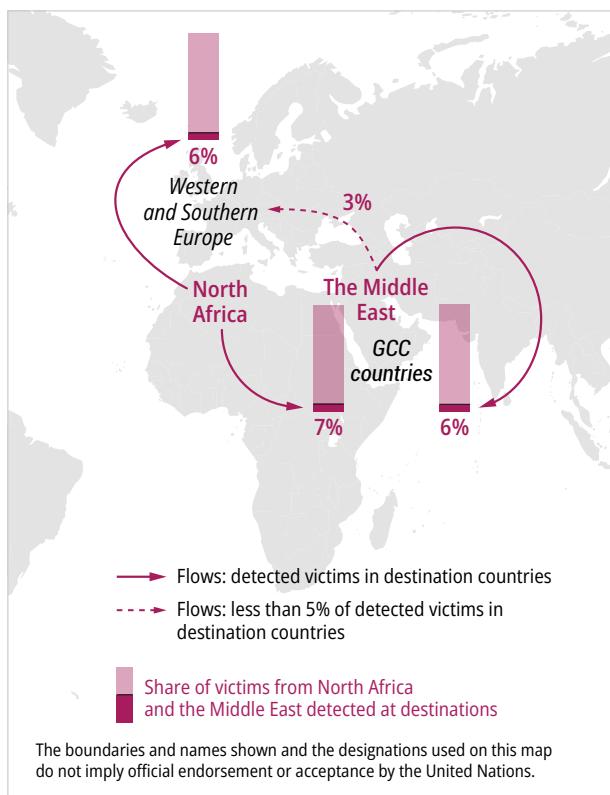
### Other countries of the Middle East



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on data on sex and age of 1,580 victims detected in 14 countries and territories in North Africa and the Middle East.

**Map. 11** Trafficking flows from North Africa and the Middle East to other regions, by share of the victims from the region detected at destination, 2022 (or most recent)



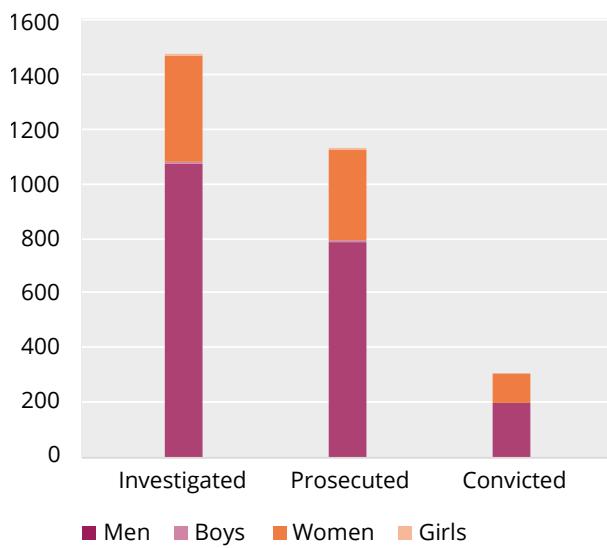
Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

Victims from North Africa and other countries of the Middle East were detected in both Western and Southern Europe and the countries of the GCC. In Western and Southern Europe, North Africans comprised 6 per cent of all victims detected while victims from the Middle East accounted for 3 percent. Meanwhile, in the neighboring countries of the GCC, victims from North Africa comprised 7 per cent of all victims detected in 2022, and victims from other countries of the Middle East made up 6 per cent.

## Traffickers

The majority of those investigated, prosecuted and/or convicted for trafficking in persons in North Africa and the Middle East in 2022 were men. However, a relatively large number of women also were processed through the criminal justice system for the crime. A small number of children were investigated and prosecuted while an even smaller number were convicted.

**Fig. 101** Persons investigated, prosecuted, convicted for trafficking in persons in North Africa and the Middle East, by sex and age group, 2022 (or most recent)\*

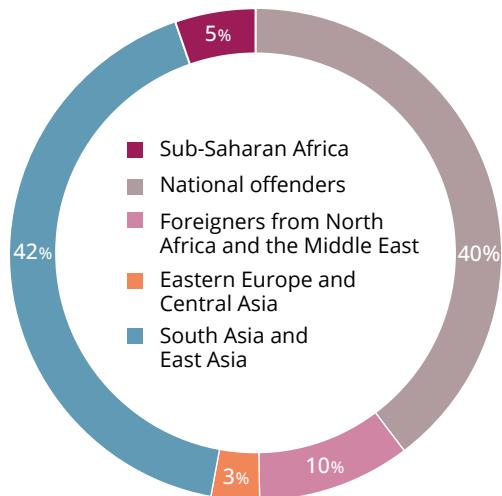


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 1,468 persons investigated in eight countries, 1,130 prosecuted in 11 countries and 306 convicted in 11 countries in North Africa and the Middle East where sex and age were recorded.

While a little under half of all offenders in 2022 were citizens of the countries in which they were convicted, North Africa and the Middle East recorded a large share of traffickers from other regions.

**Fig. 102** Traffickers convicted in North Africa and the Middle East, by region of citizenship, 2022 (or most recent)\*

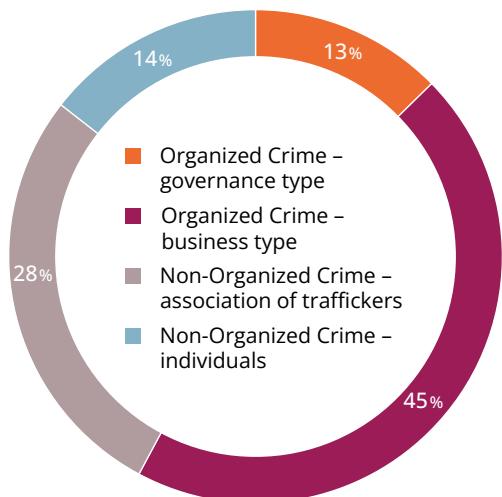


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 189 persons convicted in five countries where citizenship was recorded.

On the basis of the court cases collected, it appears trafficking is committed by a variety of actors, from individual traffickers to criminal organizations, more typically in small groups operating in a business-type of structure.

**Fig. 103** Share of traffickers reported in court case summaries in North Africa and the Middle East, by type of structure\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 189 persons convicted in five countries where citizenship was recorded.

## Criminal Justice Response

The number of convictions dropped by 24 per cent between 2019 and 2020 in connection with pandemic-related restrictions on the activities of law enforcement. However, between 2020 and 2021 the trend was reversed. As such, convictions have increased in comparison to 2019 prior to the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Fig. 104** Trend in the number of persons convicted in North Africa and the Middle East, base year 2019\*

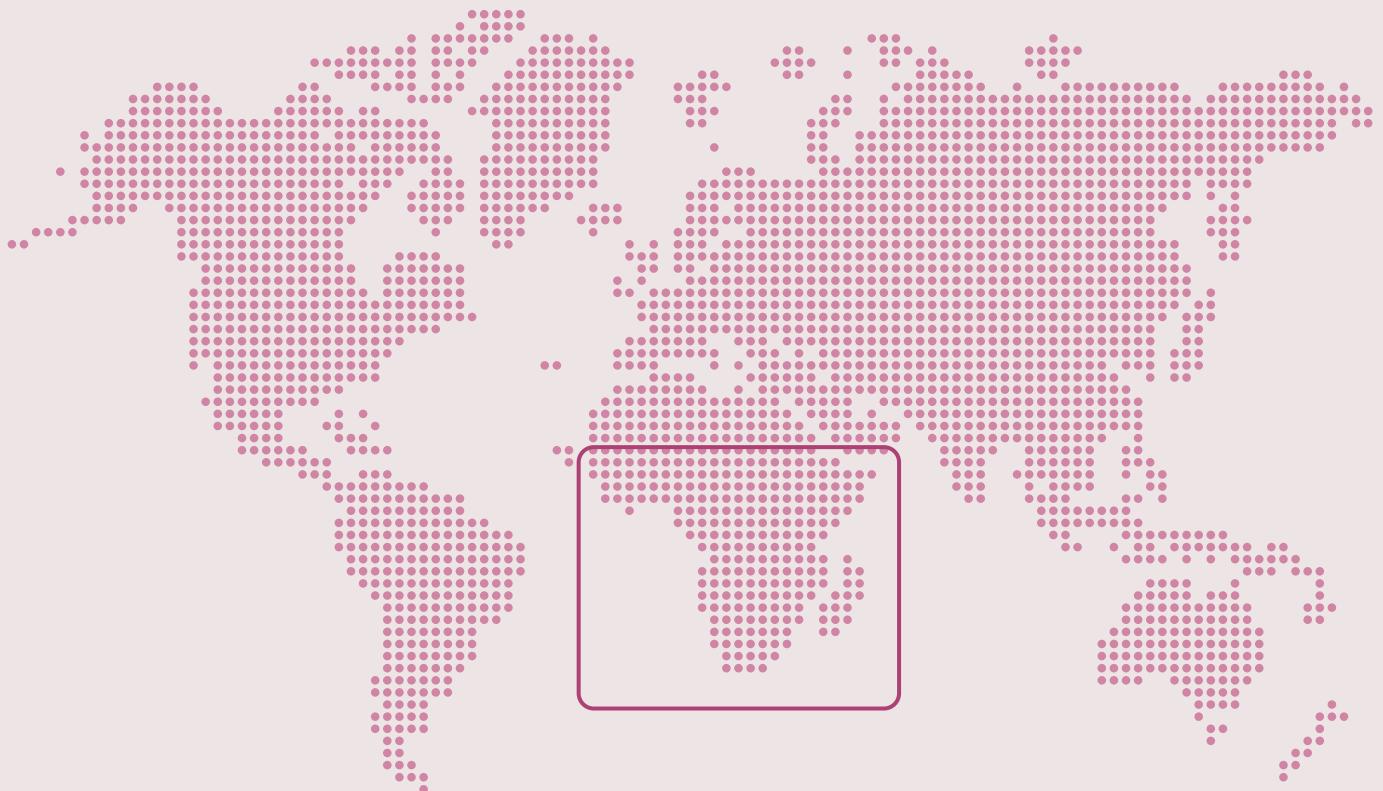


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on information provided by 10 countries in North Africa and the Middle East reporting about this indicator for the period considered.



# Sub-Saharan Africa\*



\* This region comprises of East Africa (Kenya, Mauritius, Somalia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania), Southern Africa (Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe) and West Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, the Central African Republic, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo).

## KEY FINDINGS FOR SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, 2022

Trends compared to 2019 (pre-Covid)

**+98%**



*in the detection  
of victims*

**+79%**



*in the number  
of convictions*

Main profile of the victims detected (2022 or most recent)

**61%**



*are children*

**42%**



*are girls*

**19%**



*are boys*

Main forms of exploitation detected (2022 or most recent)

**65%**



*of trafficking is  
for forced labour*

Main flows detected (2022 or most recent)



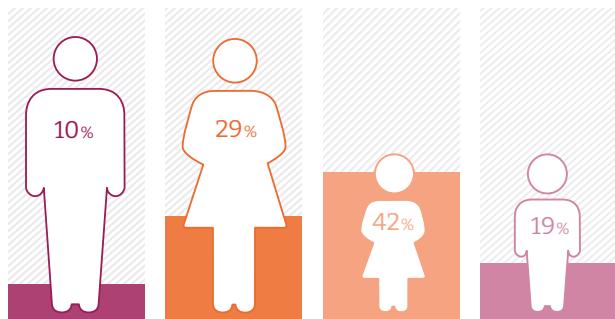
*As a region of destination, 98% of all victims detected in the region are trafficked from within Sub-Saharan Africa.*

*As origin, victims from Sub-Saharan Africa are trafficked to Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.*

## Victims

Unlike other regions of the world, the largest share of victims detected in 2022 were children (61 per cent total). In particular, 42 per cent of all victims detected were girls. Adults comprised 39 per cent of total detected victims, mostly women (29 per cent of the total).

**Fig. 105** Share of detected victims of trafficking in Sub-Saharan Africa, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*

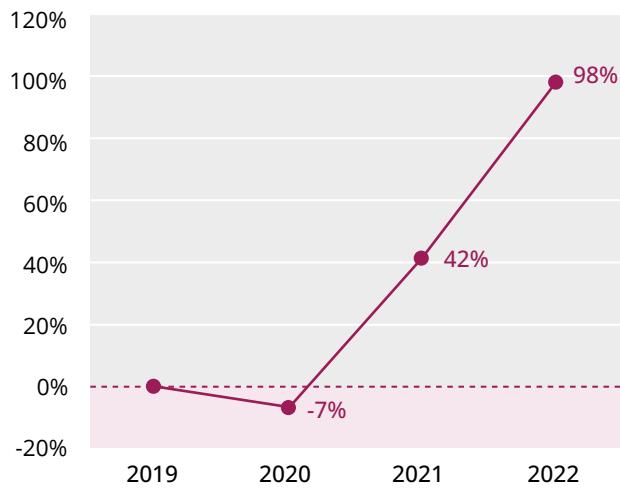


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on data on sex and age of 11,222 victims detected in 26 countries and territories in Sub-Saharan Africa.

After a limited decline in 2020, between 2020 and 2022, the number of victims detected almost doubled compared to 2019. Over the same period, there was an increase in the detection of all profiles.

**Fig. 106** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in Sub-Saharan Africa, base year 2019\*

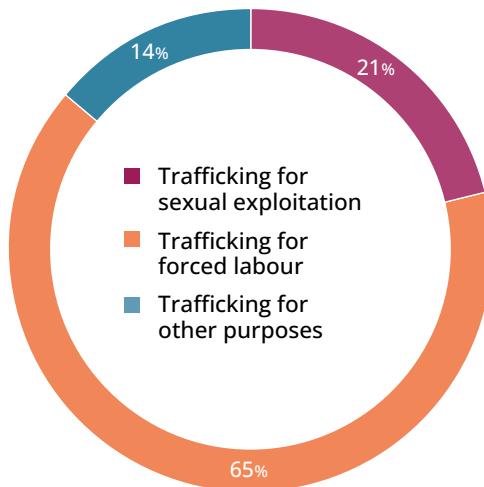


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* This result is based on victims detected in 20 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa reporting on this indicator over the entire period.

Victims detected as trafficked for forced labour comprised 65 per cent of the total. Slightly more victims were detected as trafficked for sexual exploitation (21 per cent) than for other purposes (14 per cent). However, between 2020 and 2022, trafficking for sexual exploitation and for other purposes was increasingly more detected.

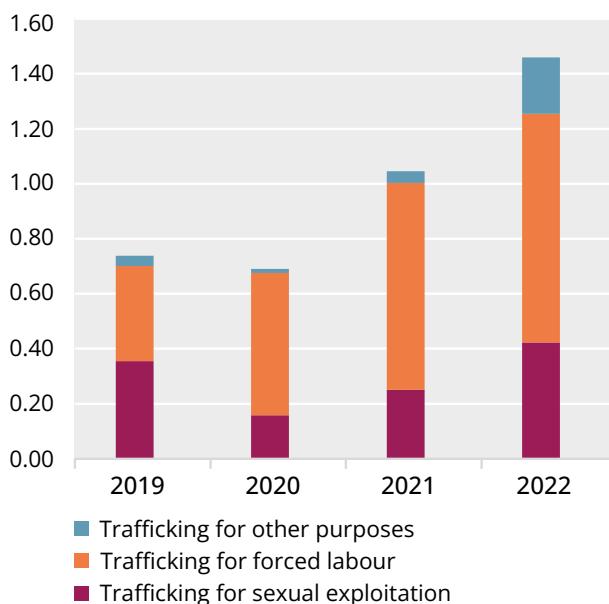
**Fig. 107** Share of detected victims of trafficking in Sub-Saharan Africa, by forms of exploitation, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on data on sex and age of 9,660 victims detected in 26 countries and territories in Sub-Saharan Africa.

**Fig. 108** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in Sub-Saharan Africa, by form of exploitation, 2019-2022\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

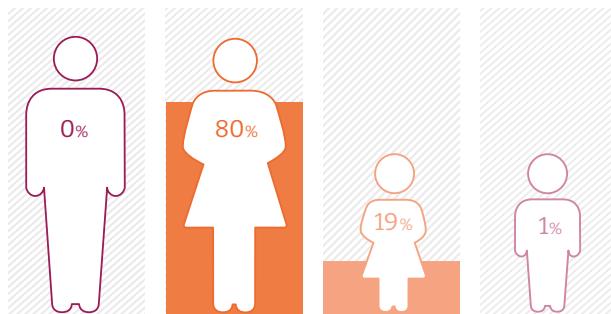
\* This result is based on victims detected in 20 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa reporting on this indicator over the entire period.

In terms of how different forms of exploitation impact specific profiles, trafficking for sexual exploitation was almost exclusively detected among women (80 per cent) and girls (19 per cent) with very few men and boys detected in 2022.

Trafficking for forced labour appears to impact a wider variety of profiles. However, children were particularly affected, with boys and girls comprising 41 per cent and 28 per cent, respectively, of those detected as trafficked for forced labour in 2022. More women (19 per cent) were detected than men (12 per cent).

Children made up a large proportion of victims detected for other purposes, with 94 per cent of the total – girls making up 59 per cent and boys, 35 per cent – in 2022. Other purposes reported by authorities include forced marriage (67 victims detected in 2022) and forced begging (59 victims detected in 2022).

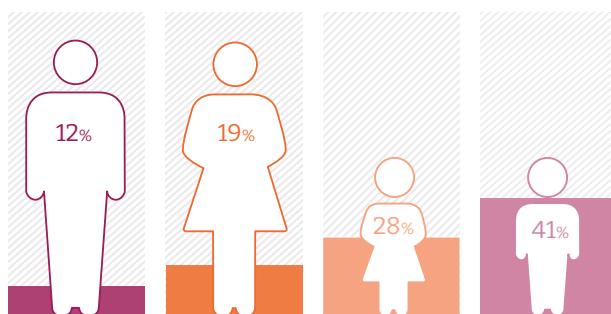
**Fig. 109** Share of detected victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Sub-Saharan Africa, by age and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 1,828 victims detected in 21 countries and territories in Sub-Saharan Africa.

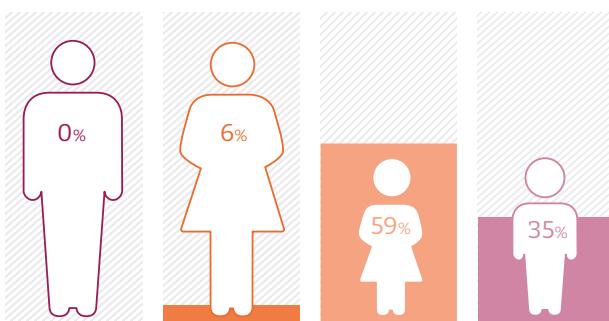
**Fig. 110** Share of detected victims of trafficking for forced labour in Sub-Saharan Africa, by age and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 5019 victims detected in 21 countries and territories in Sub-Saharan Africa.

**Fig. 111** Share of detected victims of trafficking for other purposes in Sub-Saharan Africa, by age and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

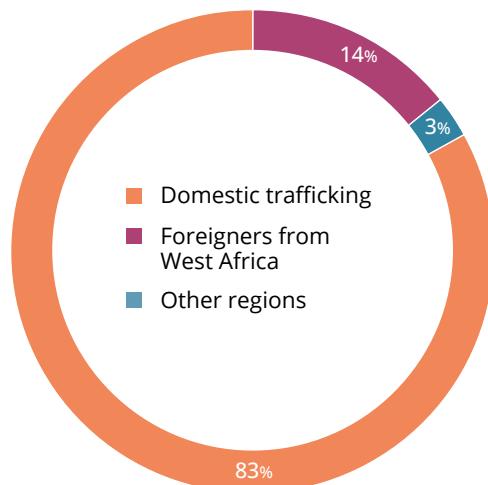
\* Based on data on sex and age of 776 victims detected in 20 countries and territories in Sub-Saharan Africa.

## Trafficking Flows

Countries in the region report mainly victims trafficked domestically. In Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, 83 per cent of all victims detected in 2022 were trafficked within national borders. While domestic trafficking made up the largest flow in all three subregions of Sub-Saharan Africa – West Africa, East Africa and Southern Africa – in 2022, there was some subregional variety in flow origin.

Victims detected in West Africa were primarily nationals of the country of detection (83 per cent), and secondarily, within the subregion (14 per cent). A small share of flows originated in other regions.

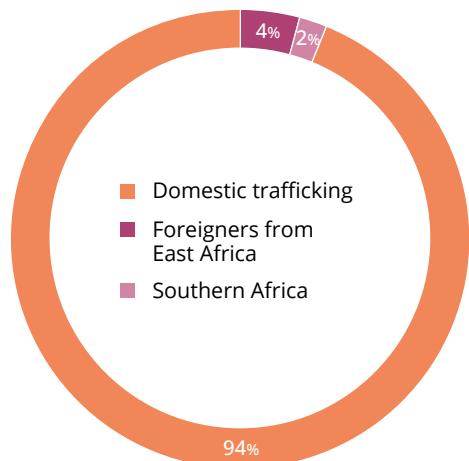
**Fig. 112** Share of detected victims in West Africa, by region of citizenship, 2022 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

Victims detected in East Africa were either internally trafficked or originated from other countries in East Africa (4 per cent) and in Southern Africa (2 per cent).

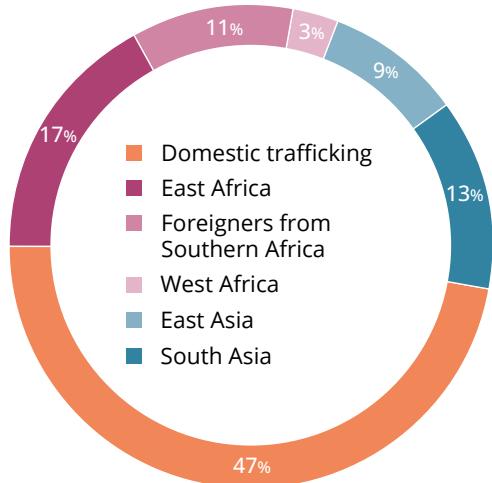
**Fig. 113** Share of detected victims in East Africa, by region of citizenship, 2022 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

Flows affecting Southern Africa in 2022 were more diverse than those of the other two subregions. The proportion of domestic trafficking was lower than the other subregions (47 per cent), while cross-border flows from other parts of Africa and other regions was larger. A total of 31 per cent of flows originated in other Southern African countries, West Africa and East Africa. Outside of Sub-Saharan Africa, 13 per cent of flows originated in South Asia and 9 per cent from East Asia.

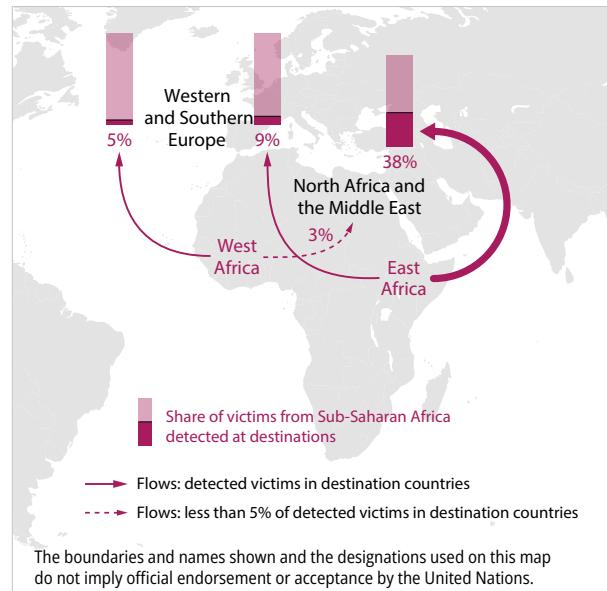
**Fig. 114** Share of detected victims in Southern Africa, by region of citizenship, 2022 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

In terms of region of origin, flows from Sub-Saharan Africa and repatriation data suggest that there was a significant flow to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in 2022. Victims from Sub-Saharan Africa were detected in Europe and North Africa and other parts of the Middle East.

**Map. 12** Trafficking flows from Sub-Saharan Africa to other regions, by share of the victims from the region detected at destination, 2022 (or most recent)

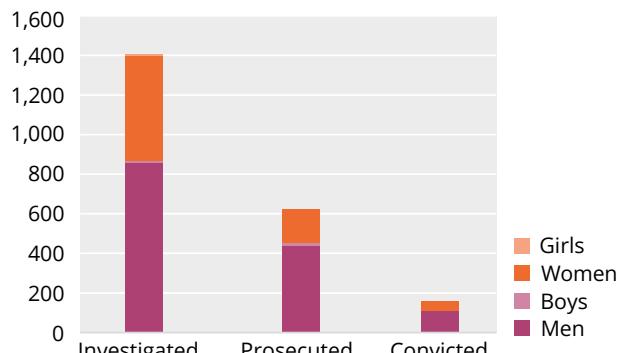


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

## Traffickers

Over twice as many men were convicted in 2022 as women. Similarly, the proportion of men was much higher in terms of persons investigated and/or prosecuted for trafficking in persons. Very few children were investigated or prosecuted and none were convicted.

**Fig. 115** Persons investigated, prosecuted, convicted for trafficking in persons in Sub-Saharan Africa, by sex and age group, 2022 (or most recent)\*

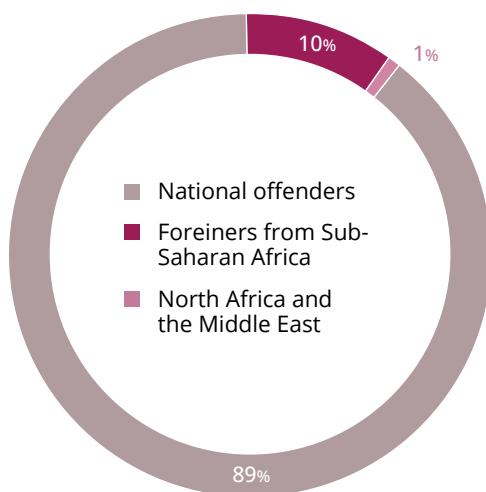


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 1,405 persons investigated in 13 countries; 622 prosecuted in 15 countries; and 161 convicted in 16 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Traffickers who are citizens of the country of conviction comprise the vast majority of traffickers convicted in 2022.

**Fig. 116** Traffickers convicted in Sub-Saharan Africa, by region of citizenship 2022 (or most recent)\*

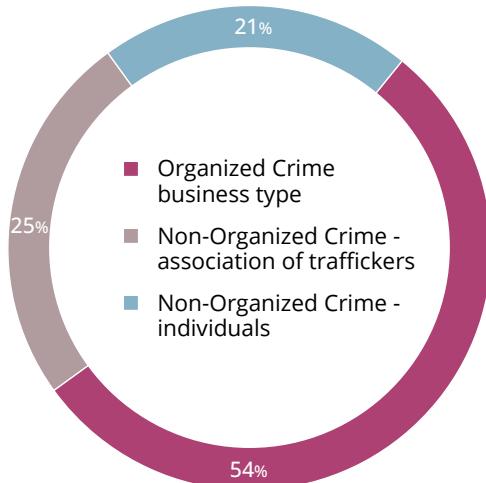


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 254 persons convicted in 6 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Case narratives reported by national authorities suggest traffickers tend to operate as small groups or non-organized crime associations. Unlike in other regions, no cases involving governance-type organized crime groups were reported from countries in these regions. However, countries from other regions reported relevant number of convictions for structured groups operating in Sub-Saharan Africa.

**Fig. 117** Share of traffickers reported in court case summaries in Sub-Saharan Africa, by type of structure \*



Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.

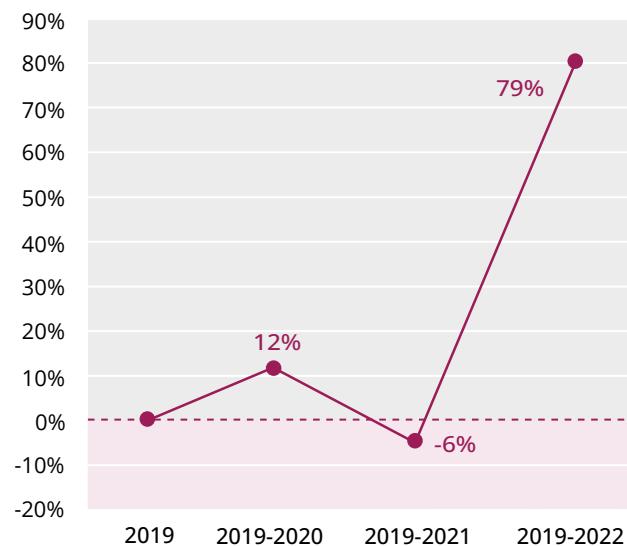
\* Based on information emerging from the narrative of 73 cases of trafficking in persons concluded with a conviction in Sub-Saharan Africa, for a total of 206 persons convicted.

## Criminal Justice Response

The criminal justice response in Sub-Saharan Africa continues to improve, albeit with some limiting features. While the total number of convictions continue to rise, it remains relatively low. Furthermore, the number of convictions in proportion to the total number of investigations was minimal in 2022.

Moreover, convictions appear to be isolated to a small number of countries in the region. Seven of the 21 countries reporting recorded no convictions while another five recorded between one and five convictions in at least one year over the period 2020-2022. Seven countries in the region recorded more than 10 convictions per year over the period 2020-2022.

**Fig. 118** Trend in the number of persons convicted in Sub-Saharan Africa, base year 2019\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on 13 countries reporting the number of convictions for the entire period considered.

# The Americas

## Central America and the Caribbean\*



\* This region comprises of the Bahamas, Belize, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago.

## KEY FINDINGS FOR CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, 2022

Trends compared to 2019 (pre-Covid)



Main profile of the victims detected (2022 or most recent)



Main forms of exploitation detected (2022 or most recent)



Main flows detected (2022 or most recent)



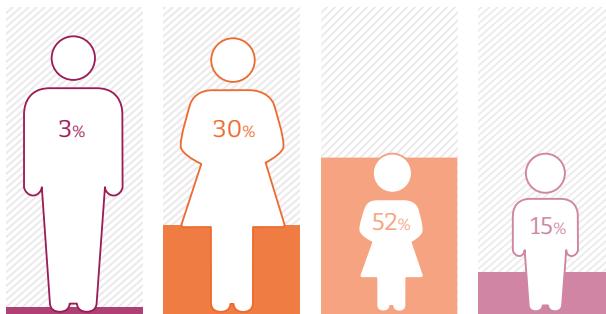
*As a region of destination, 80% of the victims detected in the region are trafficked from within the region and 20% are trafficked from South America.*

*As a region of origin, victims from the region are detected in North America and Europe.*

## Victims

Over half of all victims detected in Central America and the Caribbean in 2022 were girls (52 per cent). Indeed, over 80 per cent of all detected victims were female, with women comprising 30 per cent of the total.

**Fig. 119** Share of detected victims of trafficking in Central America and the Caribbean, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 777 victims detected in 12 countries and territories in Central America and the Caribbean.

Following a drop in the detection rate recorded in 2020, the number of victims detected has further decreased between 2021 and 2022.

**Fig. 120** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in Central America and the Caribbean, base year 2019

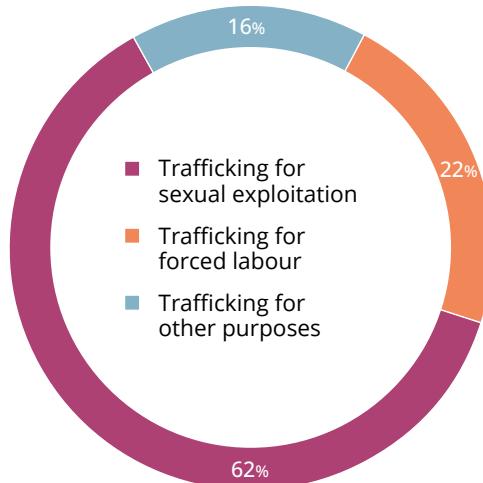


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on 14 countries in North Africa and the Middle East reporting on this indicator during the period considered.

The most detected form of trafficking in Central America and the Caribbean is for sexual exploitation (62 per cent).

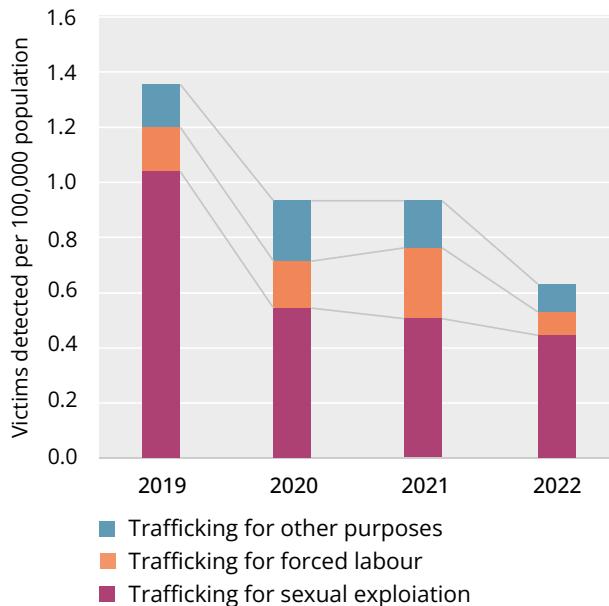
**Fig. 121** Share of detected victims of trafficking in Central America and the Caribbean, by forms of exploitation, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 531 victims detected in 12 countries and territories in Central America and the Caribbean.

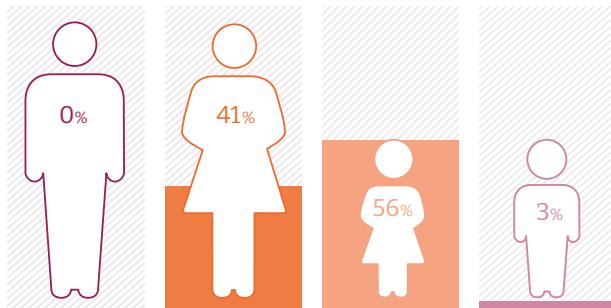
**Fig. 122** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in Central America and the Caribbean, by form of exploitation (2019–2022)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

Trafficking for sexual exploitation almost exclusively involves female victims – slightly more girls (56 per cent) than women (41 per cent).

**Fig. 123** Share of detected victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Central America and the Caribbean, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*

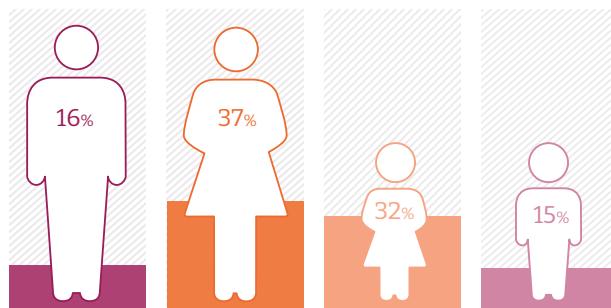


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 326 victims detected in 10 countries and territories in Central America and the Caribbean.

Women and girls also make up a large proportion of victims trafficked for forced labour. In 2022, female victims comprised 69 per cent of all those detected as trafficked for this purpose.

**Fig. 124** Share of detected victims of trafficking for forced labour in Central America and the Caribbean, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*



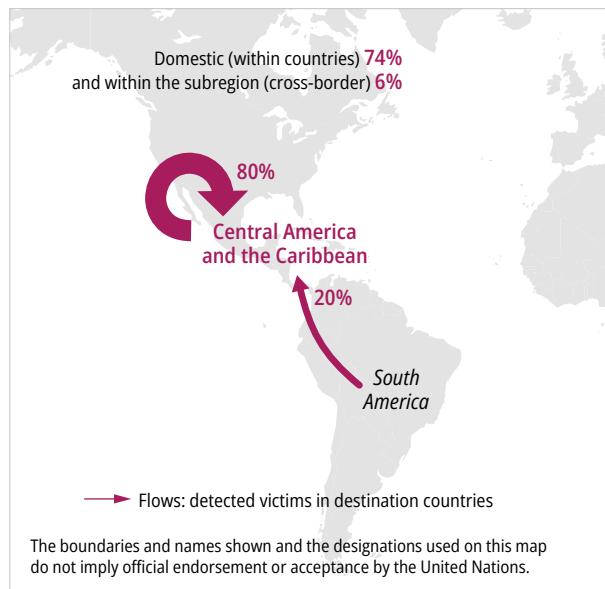
Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 115 victims detected in 10 countries and territories in Central America and the Caribbean.

## Trafficking Flows

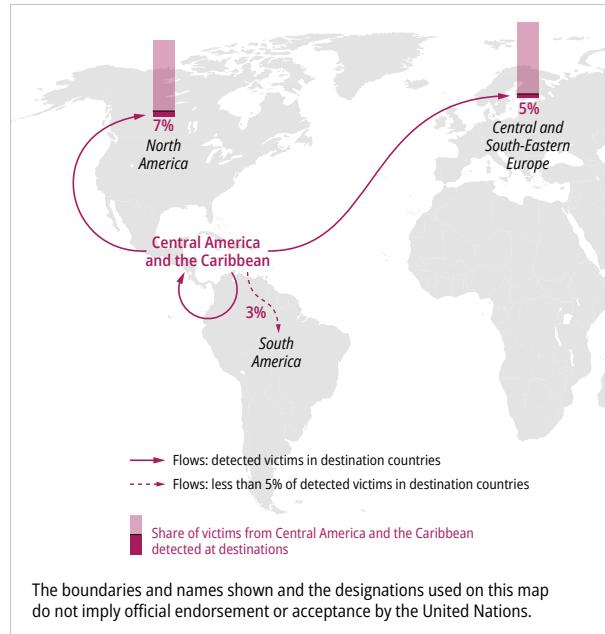
Most victims detected in Central America and the Caribbean in 2022 were either own nationals or from neighboring countries. A relevant number of victims are trafficked from South America. Victims from the region are detected in North America and South America, as well as in Europe.

**Map. 13** Share of detected victims of trafficking in Central America and the Caribbean, by region of citizenship, 2022 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

**Map. 14** Trafficking flows from Central America and the Caribbean to other regions, by share of the victims from the region detected at destination, 2022 (or most recent)

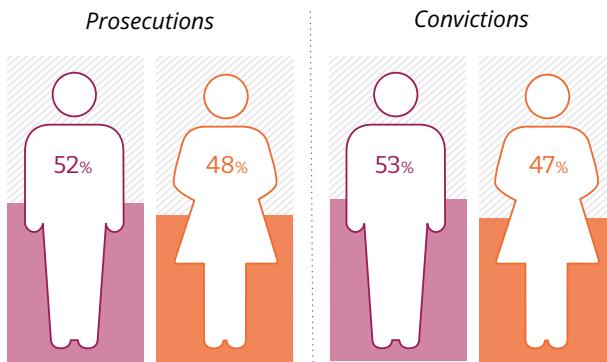


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

## Traffickers

While men and women were investigated, prosecuted and convicted in near equal-shares in Central America and the Caribbean in 2022. About 50 per cent of those investigated were women.

**Fig. 125** Persons prosecuted, convicted for trafficking in persons in Central America and the Caribbean, by sex and age group, 2022 (or most recent)\*

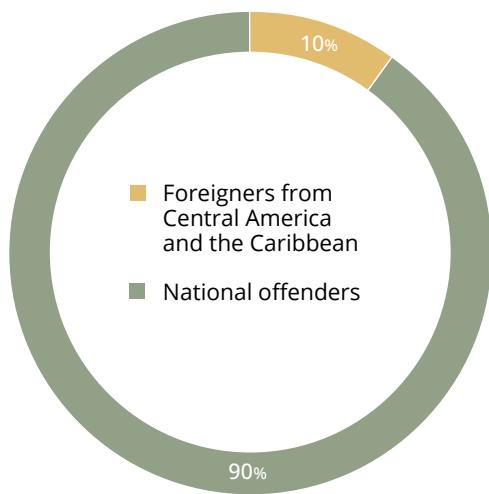


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 348 persons prosecuted in 9 countries; and 90 persons convicted in 11 countries in Central America and the Caribbean.

Much like in other regions of the world, the majority of those convicted were citizens of the country of conviction. The remaining 10 per cent convicted were citizens of other countries in the region.

**Fig. 126** Traffickers convicted in Central America and the Caribbean, by region of citizenship, 2022 (or most recent)\*

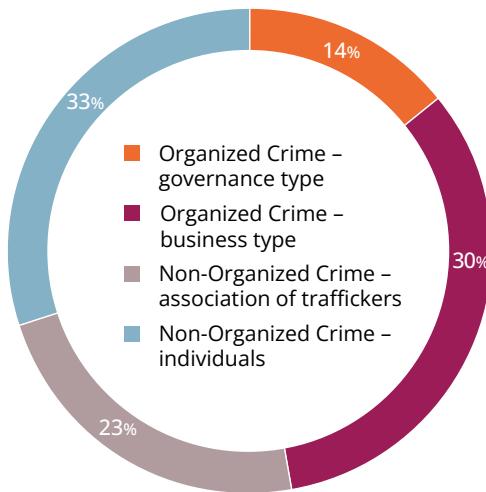


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 63 persons convicted in 5 countries in Central America and the Caribbean.

As regards the structure of traffickers in Central America and the Caribbean, based on a number of court cases reported by national authorities in the region, a wide range of actors operate in the region, from individual traffickers to people working in pairs and business-type organized crime groups.

**Fig. 127** Share of traffickers reported in court case summaries in Central America and the Caribbean, by type of structure \*



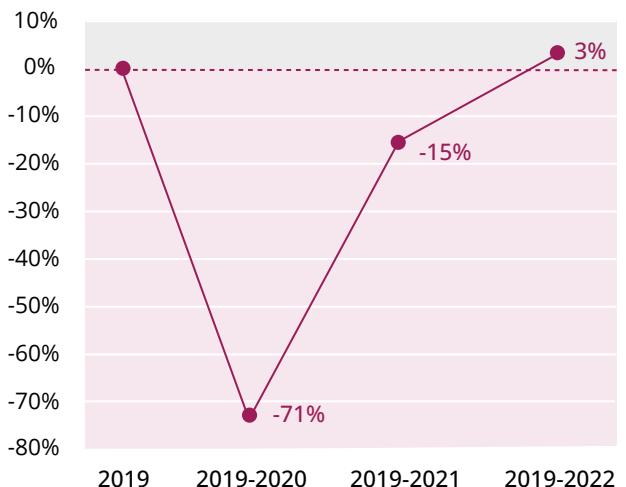
Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.

\* Based on information emerging from the narrative of 129 cases on trafficking in persons concluded with a conviction in Central America and the Caribbean, for a total of 235 persons convicted.

## Criminal Justice Response

The criminal justice response in Central America and the Caribbean has gone through many increases and decreases over the past few years. From 2019 to 2020, the number of convictions fell by 71 per cent before rising beyond the pre-Covid rate.

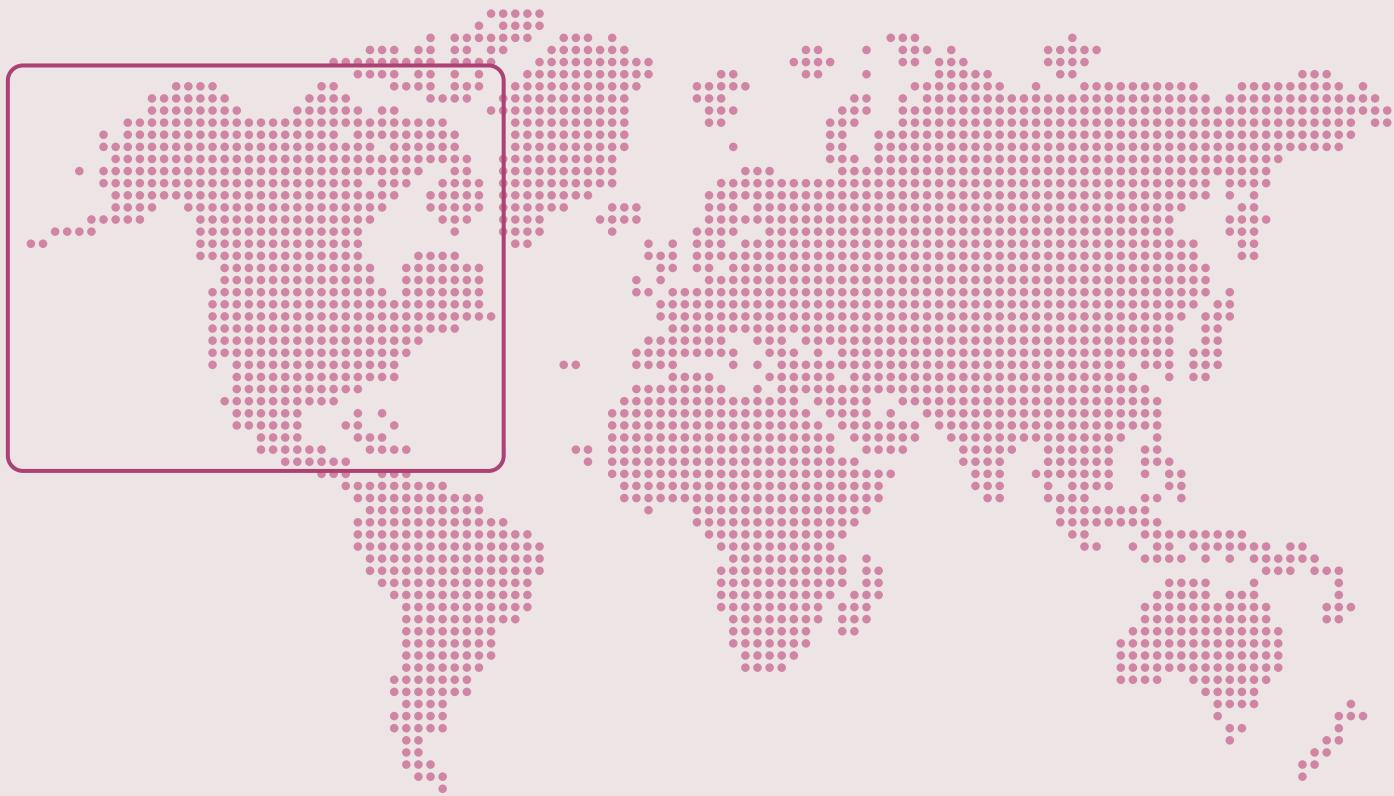
**Fig. 128** Trend in the number of persons convicted in Central America and the Caribbean, base year 2019



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.



# North America\*



\* This region comprises of Canada, Mexico and The United States of America.

## KEY FINDINGS FOR NORTH AMERICA, 2022

Trends compared to 2019 (pre-Covid)

**+78%**



*in the detection  
of victims*

**-28%**



*in the number  
of convictions*

Main profile of the victims detected (2022 or most recent)

**56%**



*of the detected victims  
are women*

**25%**



*of the detected victims  
are girls*

Main forms of exploitation detected (2022 or most recent)

**69%**



*of trafficking is for  
sexual exploitation*

Main flows detected (2022 or most recent)



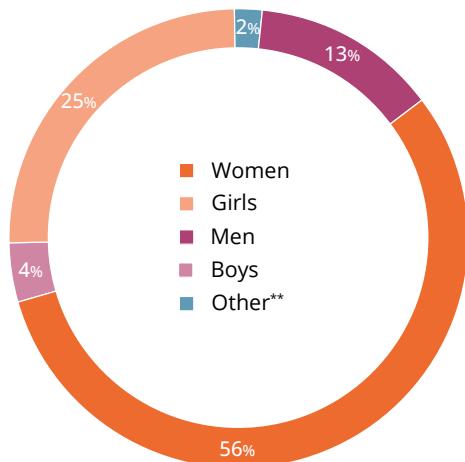
*75% of the victims detected in the region  
are trafficked domestically.*

*Cross-border flows detected in the region  
are mostly of relatively short distances.*

## Victims

In 2022, women continue to make up the largest share of victims detected in North America. The number of female victims – both women and girls – has increased substantially over the period considered.

**Fig. 129** Share of detected victims of trafficking in North America, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*

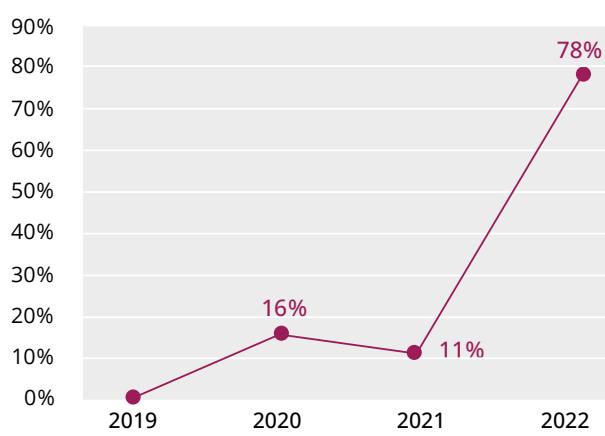


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 16,999 victims detected in 3 countries in North America.

\*\* In 2022 (or most recent), two countries in this region reported victims under "other" and provided additional identification data. See the individual country information of Canada and the United States of America.

**Fig. 130** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in North America, base year 2019



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

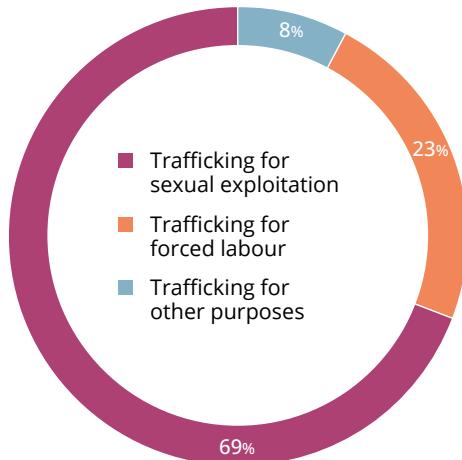
\* This result is based on victims detected in 20 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa reporting on this indicator over the entire period.

While women and girls were the most common detected victim profiles trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation in the region, the increase in victim detections was recorded in all forms of trafficking. In particular, a large share of women was

detected in 2022 as being trafficked for forced labour (38 per cent) and for mixed forms of exploitation (59 per cent), respectively. Detected victims of sexual exploitation were women (63 per cent) and increasingly girls (29 per cent).

It should be noted that in 2020, 72 per cent of detected victims of sexual exploitation were women and 22 per cent were girls, suggesting a reduction in the average age of the victims trafficked for sexual exploitation between 2020 and 2022.

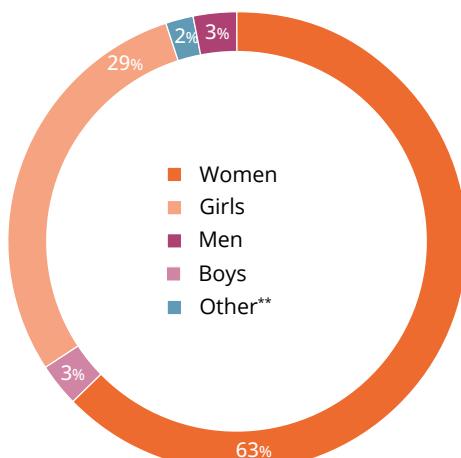
**Fig. 131** Share of detected victims of trafficking in North America, by form of exploitation, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 15,465 victims detected in 3 countries in North America.

**Fig. 132** Share of detected victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in North America, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*

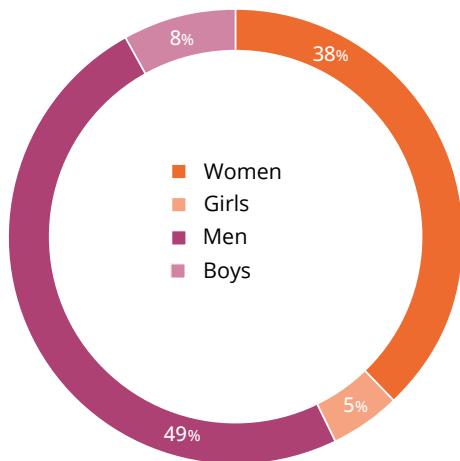


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 10,285 victims detected in 3 countries and territories in North America.

\*\* In 2022 (or most recent), two countries in this region reported victims under "other" and provided additional identification data. See the individual country information of Canada and the United States of America.

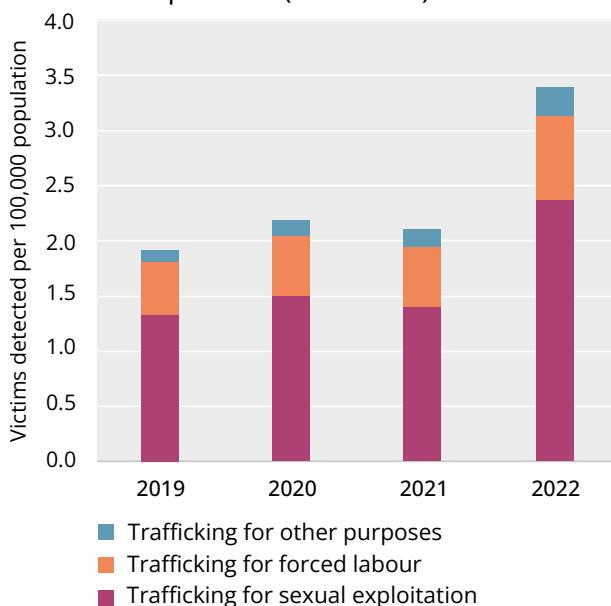
**Fig. 133** Share of detected victims of trafficking for forced labour in North America, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 3,411 victims detected in 3 countries and territories in North America.

**Fig. 134** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in North America, by form of exploitation (2019 – 2022)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

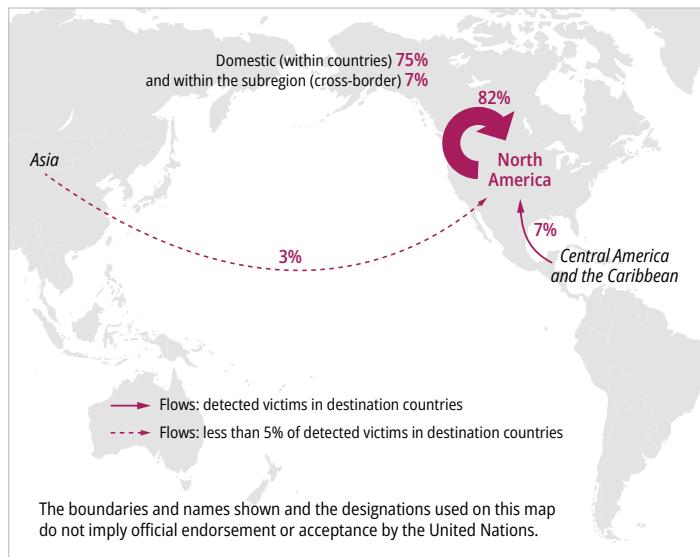
\* This result is based on victims detected in 20 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa reporting on this indicator over the entire period.

Court case summaries collected from the region suggest that while trafficking for forced labour involves a sizeable amount of cross-border trafficking, trafficking for sexual exploitation concerns largely those internally trafficked.<sup>1</sup>

## Trafficking Flows

As in previous years, the majority of trafficking in North America is increasingly of a domestic nature.

**Map. 15** Share of detected victims of trafficking in North America, by region of citizenship, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

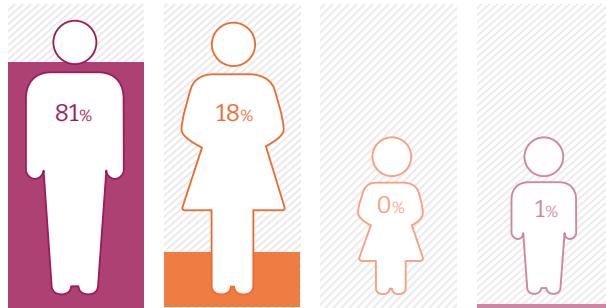
\* Based on data on sex and age of 14,097 victims detected in 3 countries and territories in North America.

However, in 2022 there was an increase in cross-border flows of a broader variety with victims trafficked from countries beyond the typical origins for detections in North America in previous years. For victims trafficked across borders into North American countries, the greatest share originated from relatively close origins – other countries in North America (7 per cent), Central America and the Caribbean (7 per cent) and South America (1 per cent) – comprising 15 per cent of all flows.

## Traffickers

The majority of those investigated, prosecuted and/or convicted in North America in 2022 were men.

**Fig. 135** Persons investigated for trafficking in persons in North America, by sex and age group, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

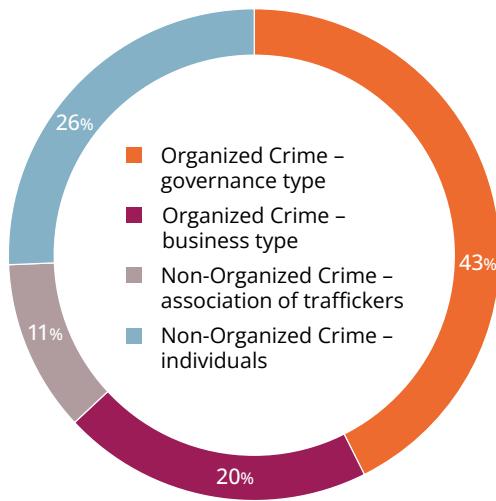
\* Based on data on sex and age of 343 persons investigated in Mexico and Canada.

Information concerning the nationality of those convicted is also limited. However, based on data from Mexico and a number of court cases from the United States of America and Canada, it appears that the majority of traffickers are citizens of the country in which they were convicted.

Given the many cases reported to UNODC concerning trafficking for sexual exploitation in the region, the means used by traffickers in North America to recruit, exploit and control victims for this particular form are well-documented. As a pattern emerging from the cases, traffickers seem to abuse their established relationships – familial or romantic – to gain victims' trust before using more violent means to exploit and control.<sup>2</sup> Cases where traffickers abuse victims' vulnerabilities, including drug use disorders, homelessness and extreme poverty, are also reported.<sup>3</sup>

Based on a selection of cases submitted by national authorities, trafficking in 2022 in North America appears to have been carried out by a variety of organized structured groups and less-organized opportunistic and individual traffickers.

**Fig. 136** Share of traffickers reported in court case summaries in North America, by type of structure\*



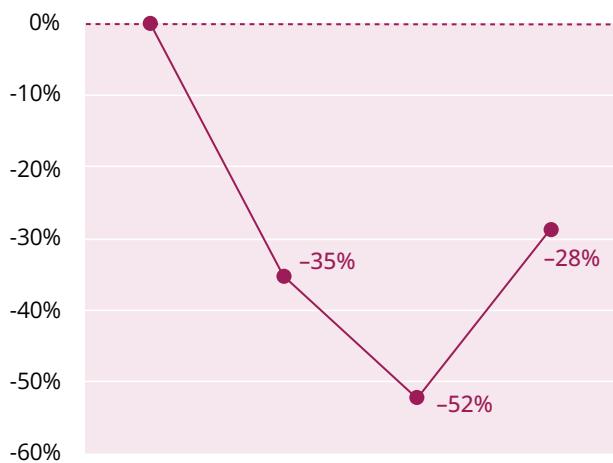
Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.

\* Based on information emerging from the narrative of 86 cases on trafficking in persons concluded with a conviction in North America, for a total of 230 persons convicted.

## Criminal Justice Response

All three countries in North America have enacted comprehensive legislation addressing trafficking in persons.

**Fig. 137** Trend in the number of persons convicted in North America, base year 2019

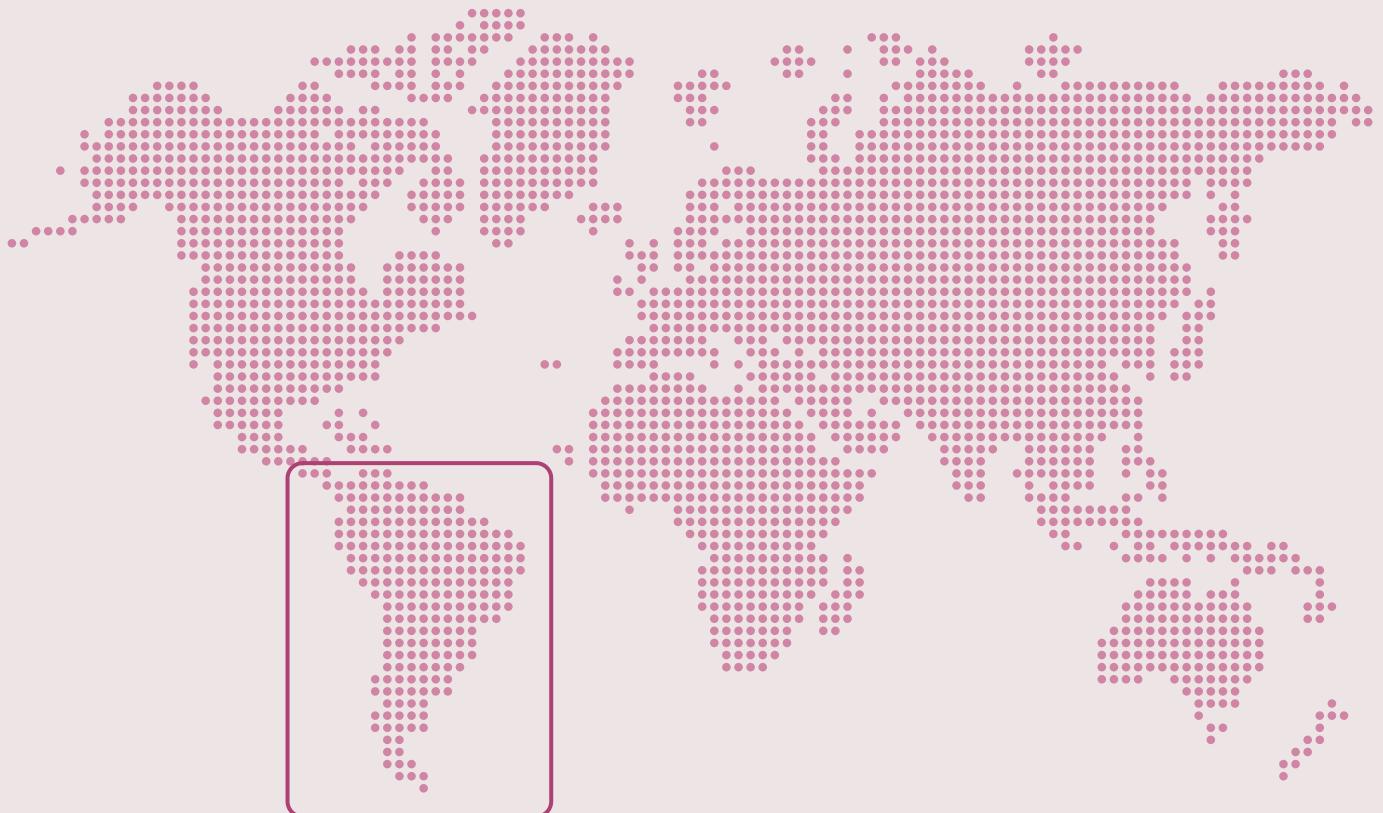


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

After a period of decline, in 2022 the number of convictions has increased. Preliminary data for 2023 seems to confirm a continued increase in the number of convictions.



# South America\*



\* This region comprises of Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

## KEY FINDINGS FOR SOUTH AMERICA, 2022

Trends compared to 2019 (pre-Covid)



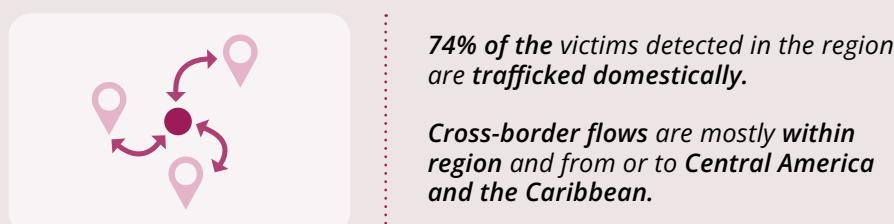
Main profile of the victims detected (2022 or most recent)



Main forms of exploitation detected (2022 or most recent)



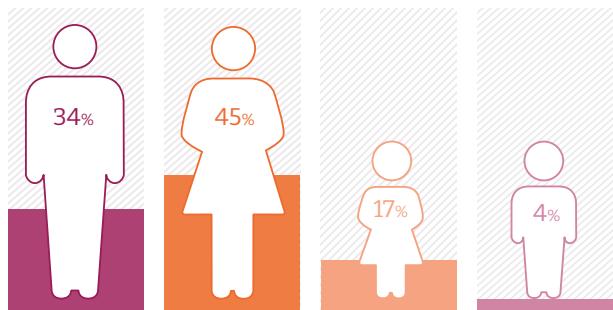
Main flows detected (2022 or most recent)



## Victims

Women and girls together comprised the largest victim profile in South America in 2022, making up 62 per cent of all detected victims.

**Fig. 138** Share of detected victims of trafficking in South America, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*

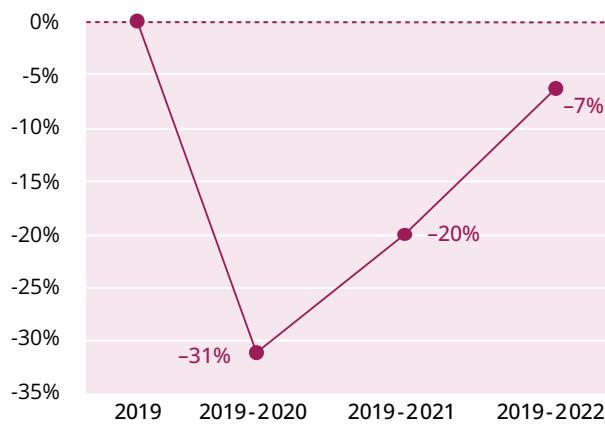


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on data on sex and age of 3,734 victims detected in 12 countries and territories in South America.

As in many countries, the rate of victim detection fell greatly in 2020 due to pandemic related restrictions on law enforcement and other anti-trafficking actors. The change in the detection rate compared to 2019 slightly increased from -31 per cent in 2020 to -20 per cent in 2021, up to -7 per cent in 2022.

**Fig. 139** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in South America, base year 2019

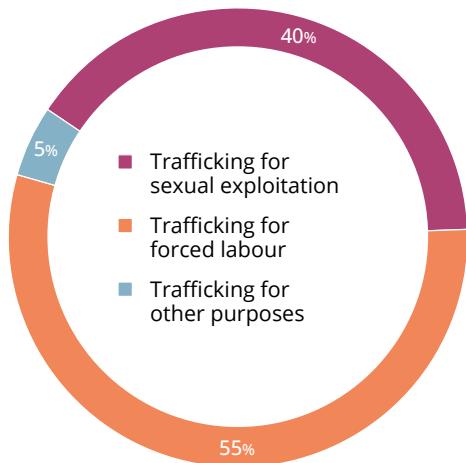


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on information from 11 countries reporting on this indicator for the entire period.

In 2022, the most commonly detected form of exploitation in South America was trafficking for forced labour (55 per cent).<sup>4</sup> Trafficking for sexual exploitation was detected in a slightly smaller share (40 per cent).

**Fig. 140** Share of detected victims of trafficking in South America, by forms of exploitation, 2022 (or most recent)\*

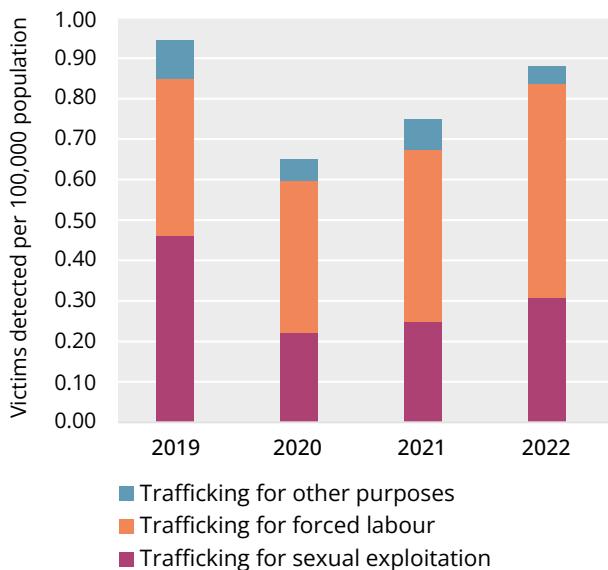


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 3,710 victims detected in 7 countries and territories in South America.

In 2020, as in other regions of the world, the significant decrease and subsequent stagnation in victim detections may be attributed to the decline in the detection of trafficking for sexual exploitation. In 2019, the majority of trafficking detected in South America was for sexual exploitation but had fallen below detections for forced labour. Trafficking for forced labour was detected in 2022 at levels higher than before the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Fig. 141** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in South America, by form of exploitation (2019–2022)

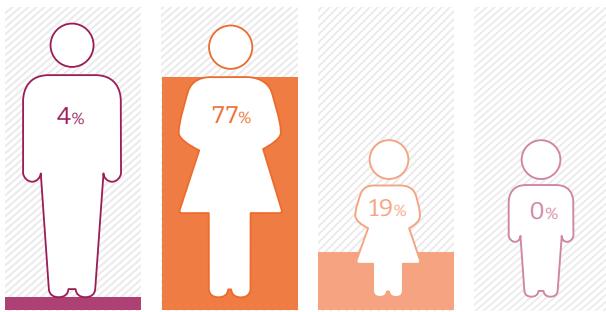


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on information from 11 countries reporting on this indicator for the entire period.

Men and boys were rarely detected as victims of sexual exploitation in 2022. Women were the predominate profile, making up 77 per cent of all victims detected for this purpose.

**Fig. 142** Share of detected victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in South America, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*

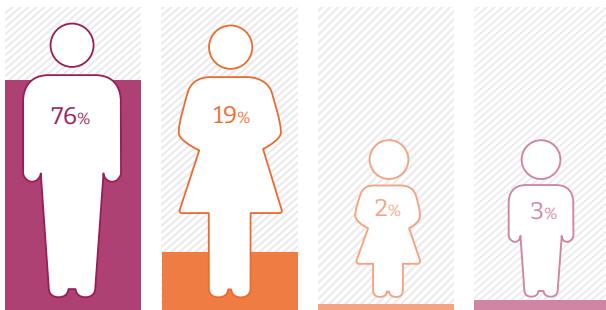


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on data on sex and age of 693 victims detected in 8 countries and territories in South America.

Conversely, men comprised most of all victims detected as trafficked for forced labour in South America in 2022. However, women (19 per cent) are also detected for this form of exploitation.

**Fig. 143** Share of detected victims of trafficking for forced labour in South America, by age and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*



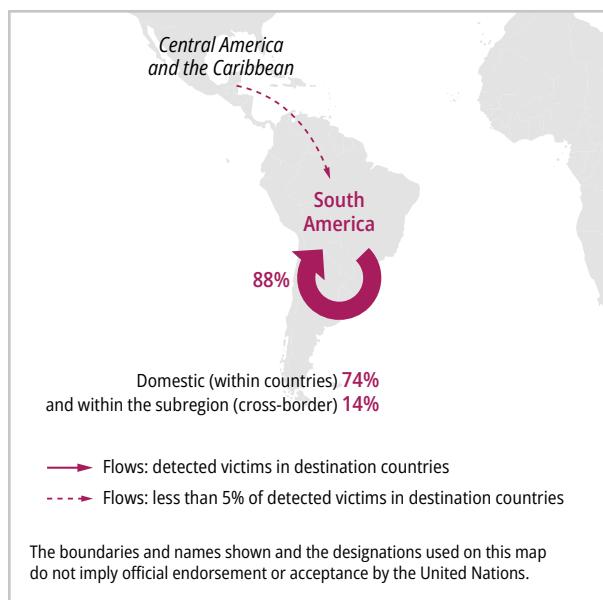
Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 1,603 victims detected in 8 countries and territories in South America.

## Trafficking Flows

Domestic trafficking comprised nearly three quarters of all flows detected in South America in 2022. Outside of this flow, victims were trafficked across relatively short distances, particularly from other countries in the region (14 per cent).<sup>5</sup> Victims from other regions, including Asia and Africa, were less commonly detected.

**Map. 16** Share of detected victims of trafficking in South America, by region of citizenship, 2022 (or most recent)\*

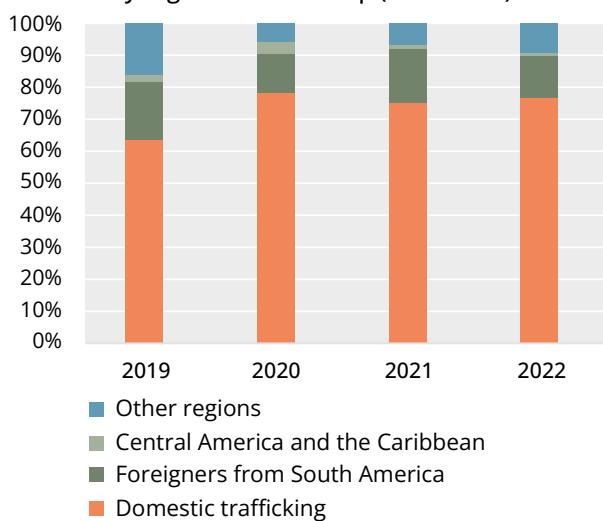


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on data on sex and age of 3,531 victims detected in 11 countries and territories in South America.

Between 2019 and 2020, there was a reduction in the detection of victims from other regions of the world. Since 2020, the share of foreign victims has largely not returned to pre-pandemic levels.

**Fig. 144** Trend in victims detected in South America, by region of citizenship (2019–2022)

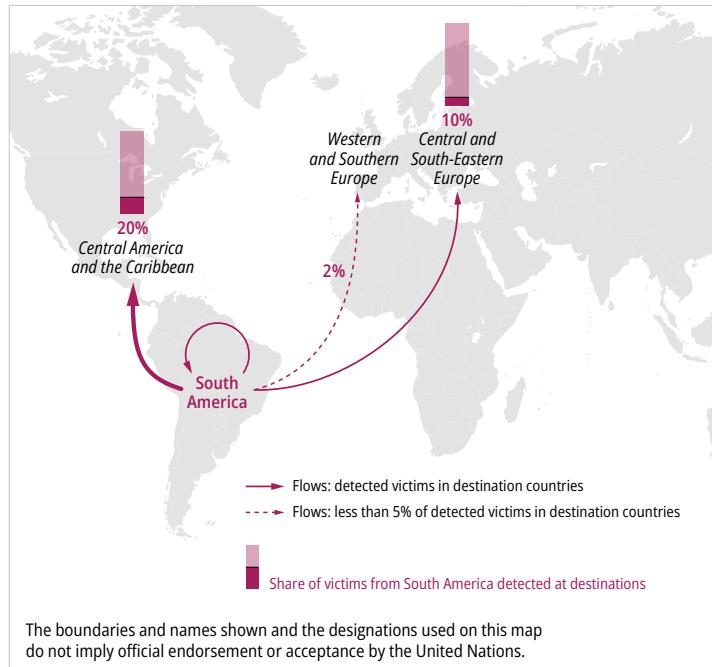


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

The majority of trafficking flows remain confined to the Americas. Aside from the flows within the region, a sizeable flow appears to exist from South America to Central America and the Caribbean. A fifth (20 per cent) of all flows to Central America

and the Caribbean originated in South America in 2022. Victims from South America were detected in various regions in Europe.

**Map. 17** Trafficking flows from South America to other regions, by share of the victims from the region detected at destination, 2022 (or most recent)

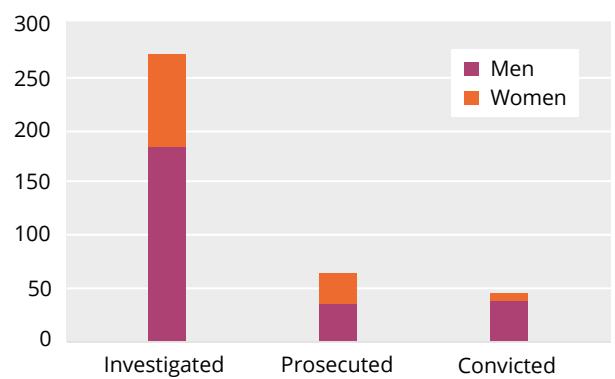


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

## Traffickers

In 2022, men made up the vast majority of those investigated and convicted in South America. Data regarding the citizenship of those convicted is limited, but appears to suggest most, if not all, were citizens of the country of conviction.

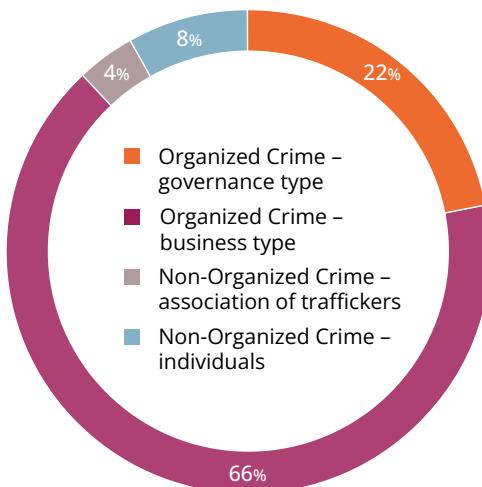
**Fig. 145** Persons investigated, prosecuted, convicted for trafficking in persons in South America, by sex and age group, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 336 persons investigated in three countries; 58 prosecuted in four countries; and 48 convicted in five countries in South America.

**Fig. 146** Share of traffickers reported in court case summaries in South America, by type of structure\*



Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.

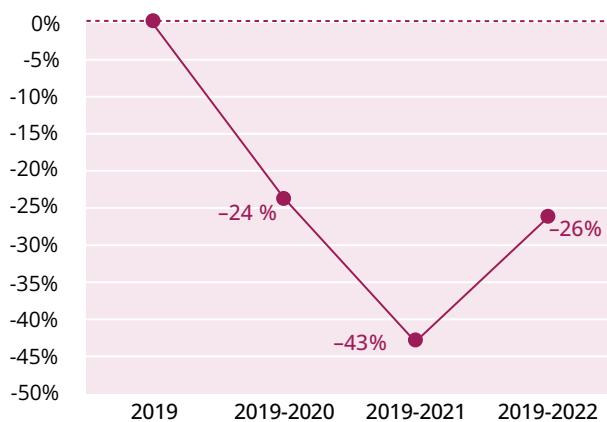
\* Based on information emerging from the narrative of 91 cases on trafficking in persons concluded with a conviction in South America, for a total of 248 persons convicted.

According to the court cases reported by countries in this region, traffickers seem to operate more frequently in an organized crime group, although it does not appear that members of structured criminal organizations are convicted for this crime.

## Criminal Justice Response

The convictions in South America registered a significant drop between 2019 to 2020, and decreased further between 2019 and 2021, before regaining some ground between 2021 and 2022. However, in 2022, the convictions recorded by countries in South America were still 26 per cent less than in the pre-pandemic period.

**Fig. 147** Trend in the number of persons convicted in South America, base year 2019\*



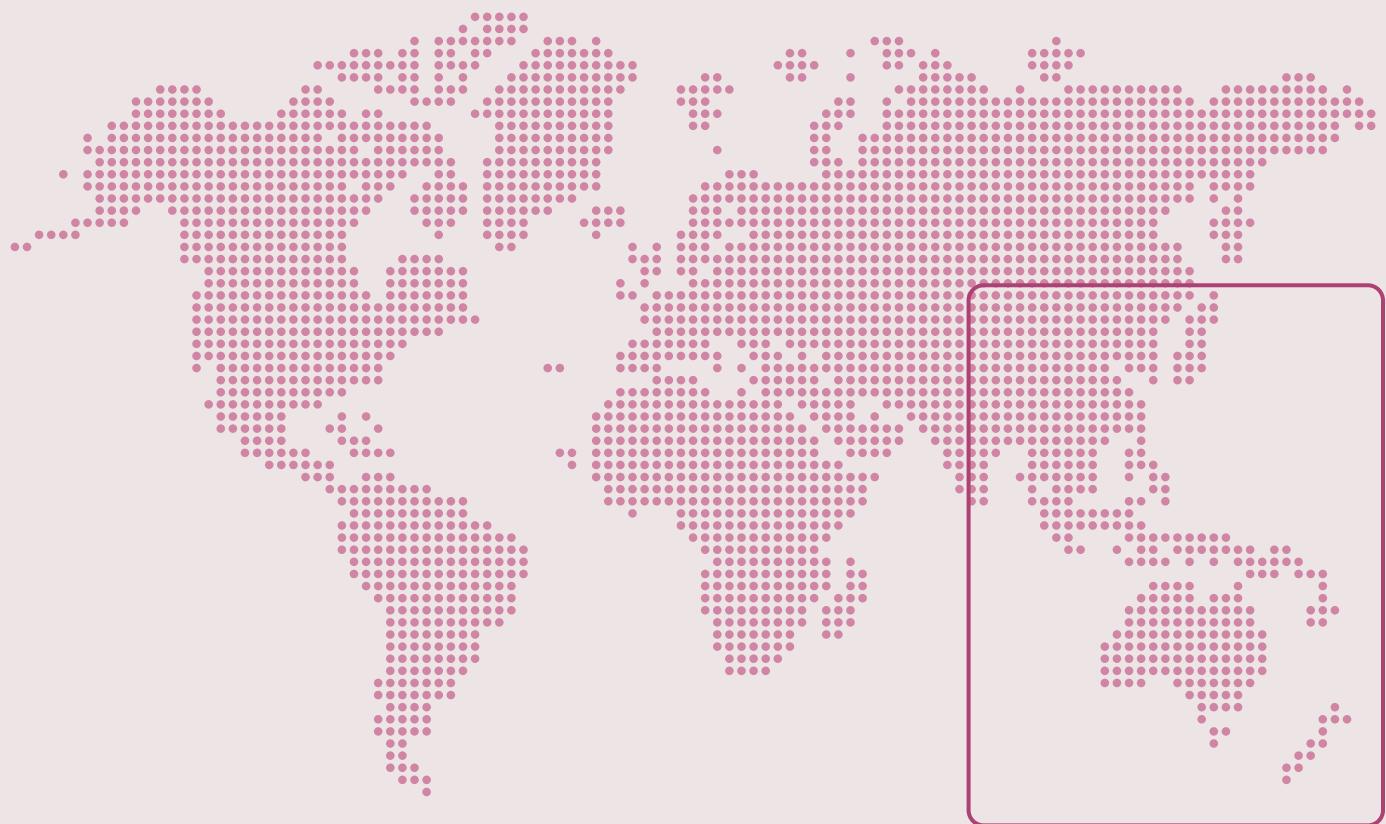
Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on information from 5 countries reporting on this indicator for the entire period.



# South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific

## East Asia and the Pacific\*



\* This region comprises of Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands (the), Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Marshall Islands (the), Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Palau, Philippines (the), Republic of Korea (the), Singapore, Thailand and Tonga.

## KEY FINDINGS FOR EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC, 2022

Trends compared to 2019 (pre-Covid)

**-46%**



**-31%**



Main profile of the victims detected (2022 or most recent)

**40%**



*of the detected victims are girls*

**39%**



*of the detected victims are women*

Main forms of exploitation detected (2022 or most recent)

**38%**



*of trafficking is for forced labour*

**32%**



*of trafficking is for sexual exploitation*

**30%**



*of trafficking is for other forms of exploitation*

Main flows detected (2022 or most recent)



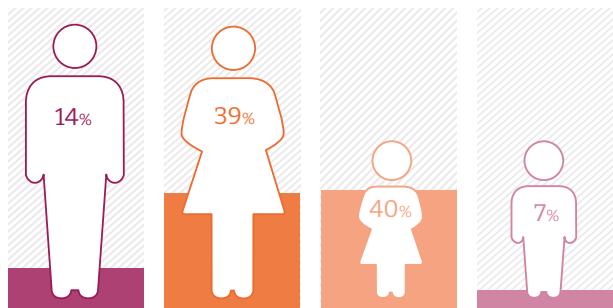
*60% of the victims detected in the region are trafficked domestically.*

*As a region of origin, victims are detected in all continents.*

## Victims

Females made up about 80 per cent of detected victims in East Asia and the Pacific in 2022. **Women and girls were detected in near-equal shares.** More men were detected than boys, who accounted for 7 per cent of the total.

**Fig. 148** Share of detected victims of trafficking in East Asia and the Pacific, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on data on sex and age of 3,170 victims detected in 24 countries and territories in East Asia and the Pacific.

The number of victims detected dropped drastically in 2020. The detection rate has remained overall stable in 2021 and 2022.

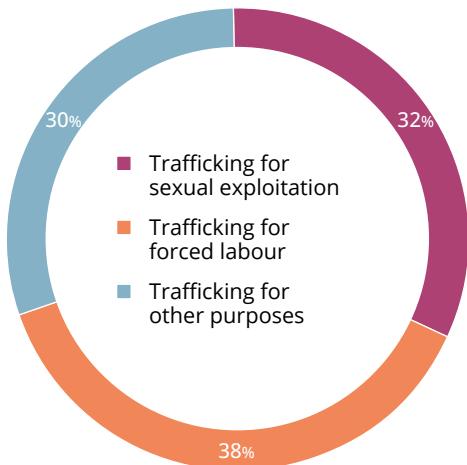
**Fig. 149** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in East Asia and the Pacific, base year 2019



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

The different forms of exploitation are nearly equally detected in the region, with trafficking for forced labour representing 38 per cent of the total victims detected in 2022, sexual exploitation 32 per cent and other forms of exploitation 30 per cent.

**Fig. 150** Share of victims detected in East Asia and the Pacific, by forms of exploitation, 2022 (or most recent)\*

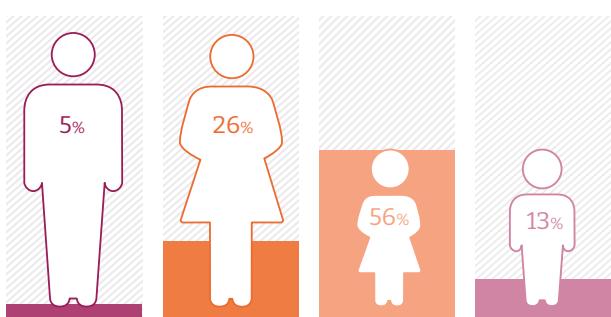


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on data on sex and age of 2,891 victims detected in 19 countries and territories in East Asia and the Pacific.

As is the case in many regions, women and girls made up a large proportion of victims trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation (82 per cent). Nevertheless, a relatively significant share of detections in 2022 were boys trafficked for this purpose, comprising 13 per cent of the total.

**Fig. 151** Share of detected victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in East Asia and the Pacific, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*

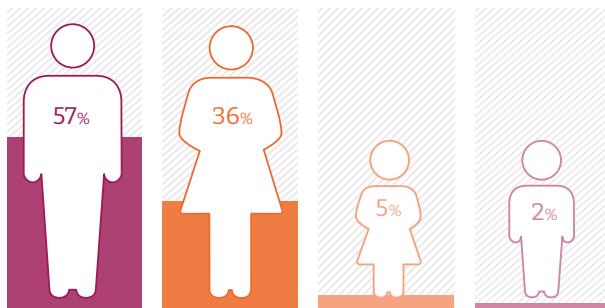


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 326 victims detected in 16 countries and territories in East Asia and the Pacific.

While men made up just over half of all detected victims for trafficking for forced labour in 2022, women made up a significant share (36 per cent). Children in general were much less commonly detected.

**Fig. 152** Share of detected victims of trafficking for forced labour in East Asia and the Pacific, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

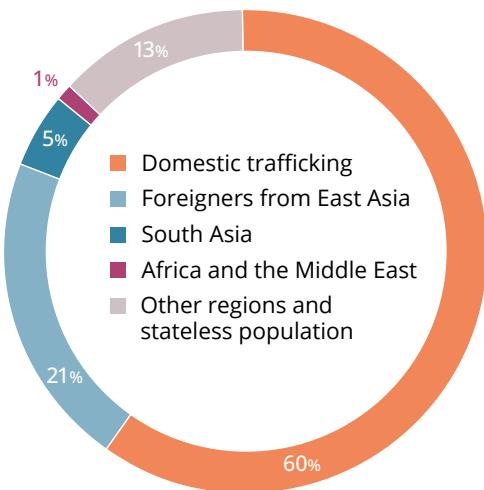
\* Based on data on sex and age of 206 victims detected in 16 countries and territories in East Asia and the Pacific.

As far as trafficking for other purposes, victims were primarily trafficked for the production of child sexual abuse material (350 victims detected in 2022), for forced marriage (25 victims detected in 2022) along with some other exploitation types. More recently, trafficking for forced criminality into online scams has been reported (see box *Trafficking in persons for the purpose of forced criminality to commit online scams in Southeast Asia* in Chapter 2, page 95).

## Trafficking Flows

While a little over half (60 per cent) of all trafficking detected in East Asia and the Pacific in 2022 was domestically trafficked, the region also recorded a relatively significant amount of cross-border trafficking between countries in the region.<sup>6</sup>

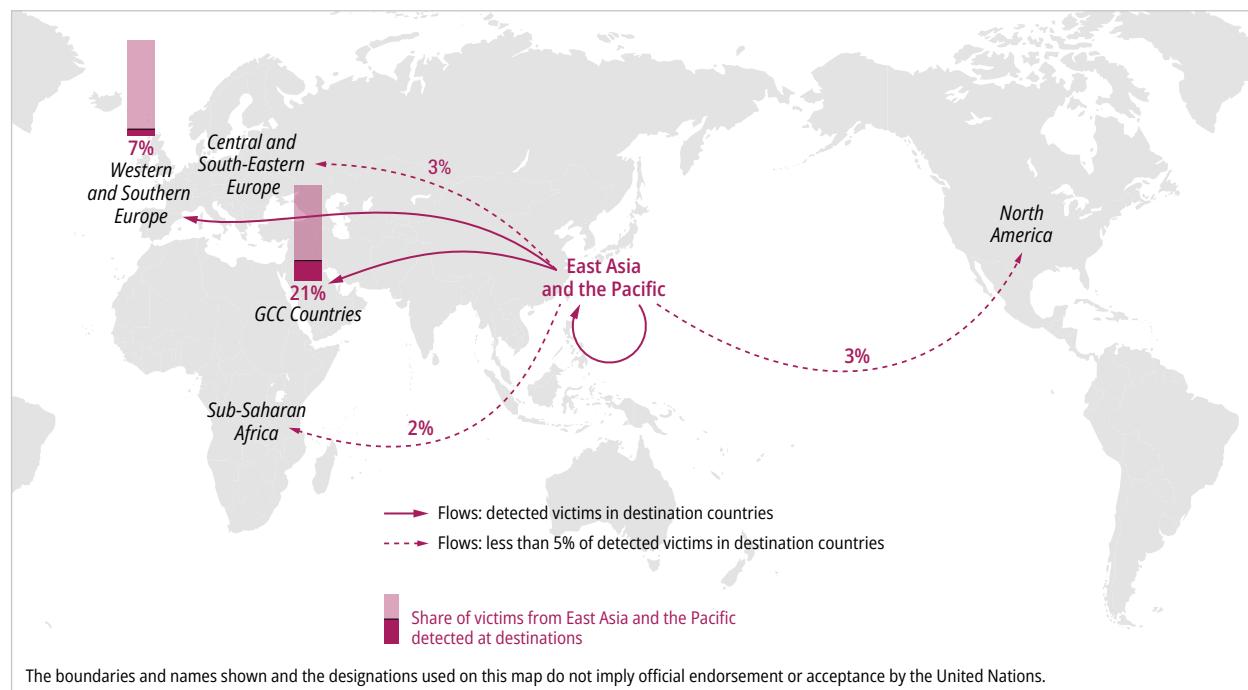
**Fig. 153** Share of detected victims of trafficking in East Asia and the Pacific, by region of citizenship, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on information 895 victims detected in 11 country and territories in East Asia and the Pacific.

**Map. 18** Trafficking flows from East Asia and the Pacific to other regions, as share of the victims from the region detected at destination, 2022 (or more recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

Flows from outside the region were more limited with 5 per cent originating from South Asia.<sup>7</sup>

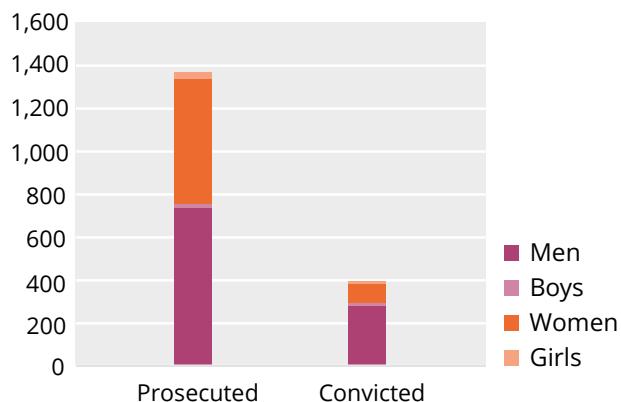
While cross-border trafficking stagnated in 2020 due to pandemic-related travel restrictions, in 2021 and 2022, it has increased, particularly within the region itself.

Outside the region, victims from East Asia and the Pacific are detected in a wide variety of regions across the world. In Western and Southern Europe, victims from the region make up 7 per cent of the total victims detected in that region, and in the GCC countries, East Asian victims make up 21 per cent of the victims detected.

## Traffickers

Women and men were both prosecuted and convicted in similar proportions in 2022 in the region.

**Fig. 154** Persons prosecuted, convicted for trafficking in persons in East Asia and the Pacific, by sex and age group, 2022 (or most recent)\*

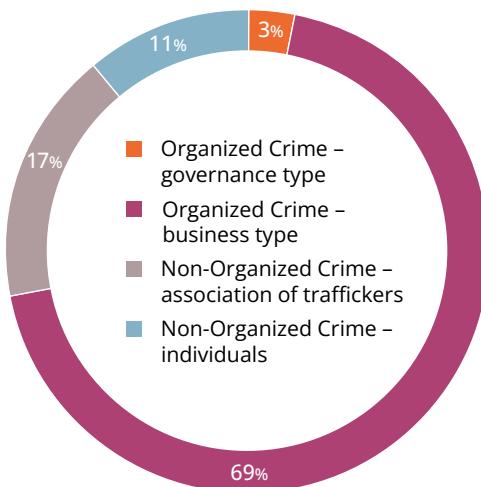


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 1,351 prosecuted persons in 11 countries and territories and 409 convicted in 15 countries and territories in East Asia and the Pacific.

According to the court cases collected, it appears traffickers convicted in East Asia and the Pacific typically operate as organized crime groups.

**Fig. 155** Share of traffickers reported in court case summaries in East Asia and the Pacific, by type of structure\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on information emerging from the narrative of 149 cases on trafficking in persons concluded with a conviction in East Asia and the Pacific, for a total of 479 persons convicted.

## Criminal Justice Response

Between 2019 and 2021, the number of convictions in East Asia and the Pacific significantly fell, by 58 per cent in 2021. In 2022, the rate increased but still, the number of convictions remain 30 per cent below the levels recorded in 2019.

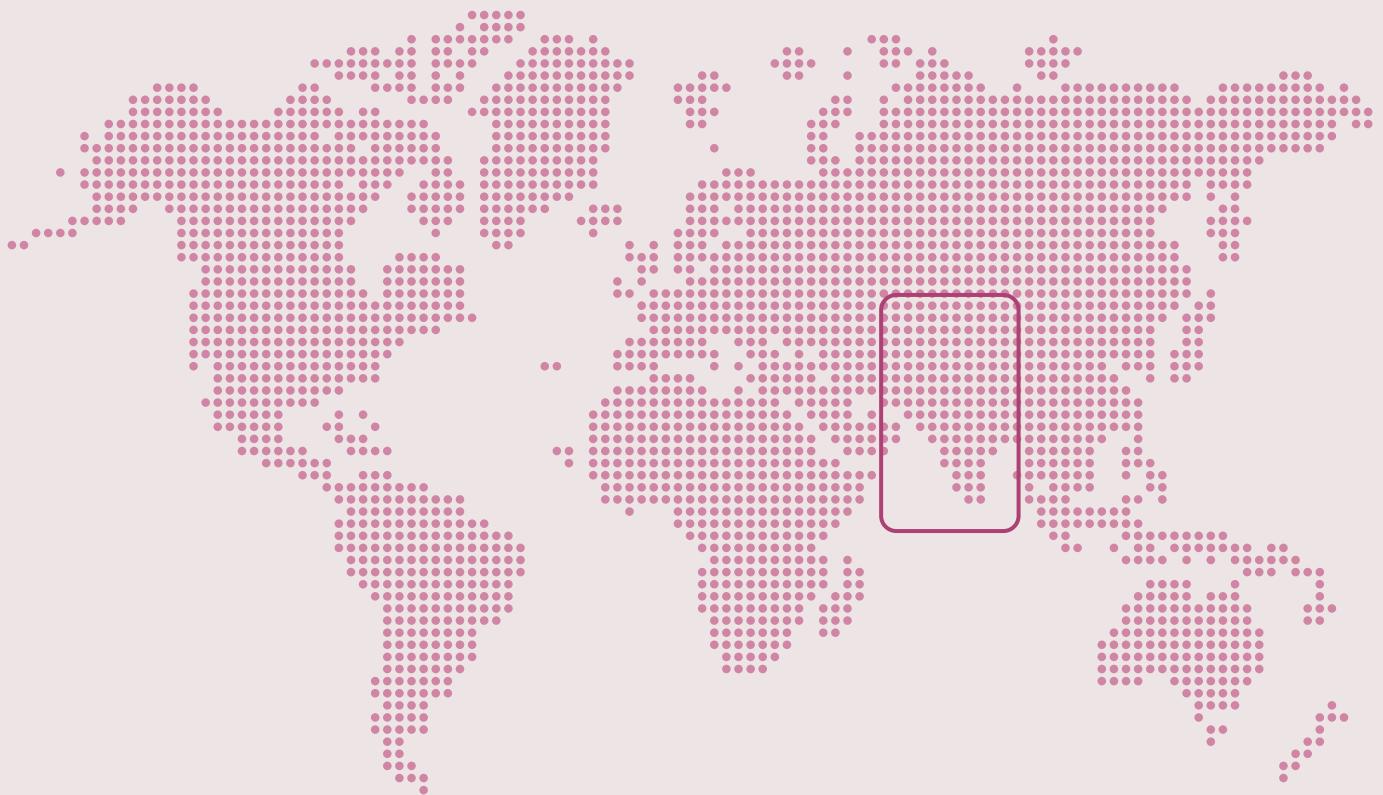
**Fig. 156** Trend in the number of persons convicted in East Asia and the Pacific, base year 2019



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.



# South Asia\*



\* This region comprises of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

## KEY FINDINGS FOR SOUTH ASIA, 2022

Trends compared to 2019 (pre-Covid)

**-7%**



**+7%**



Main profile of the victims detected (2022 or most recent)

**44%**



*of the detected victims are women*

**24%**



*of the detected victims are boys*

Main forms of exploitation detected (2022 or most recent)

**55%**



*of trafficking is for forced labour*

**30%**



*of trafficking is for sexual exploitation*

Main flows detected (2022 or most recent)

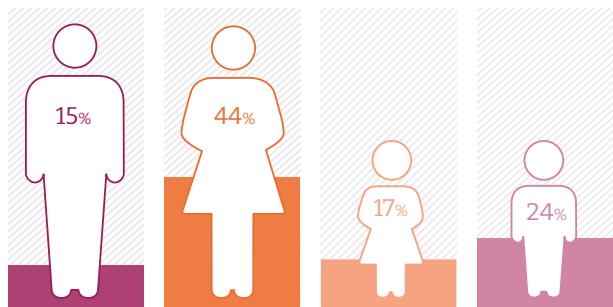


*As a region of destination, victims detected in the region are either trafficked domestically or within the region.*

*As a region of origin, victims are detected in a significant number of destinations in many regions of the world.*

## Victims

**Fig. 157** Share of detected victims of trafficking in South Asia, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*



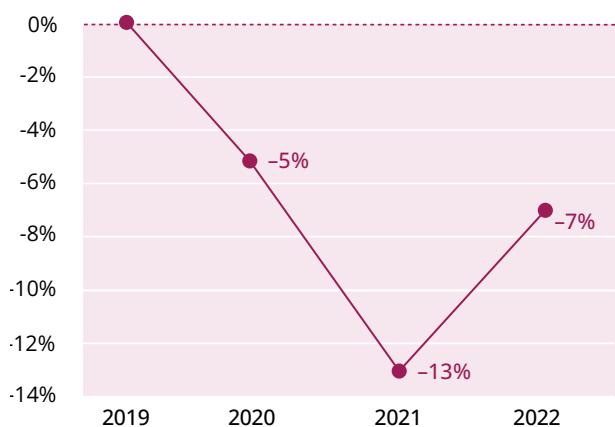
Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on data on sex and age of 8,059 victims detected in 5 countries in South Asia.

The majority of victims detected in 2022 were women. Boys comprised a quarter of all detected victims while men and girls were detected in near-equal shares (15 and 17 per cent, respectively).

The rate of detections of victims of trafficking in the region recorded a reduction in 2020 and 2021, before increasing again in 2022.

**Fig. 158** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in South Asia, base year 2019\*

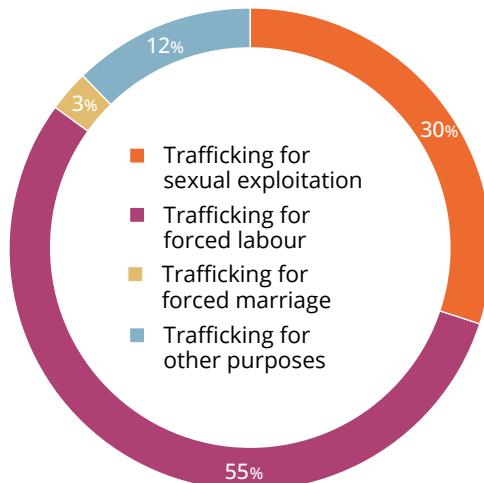


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data from 5 countries reporting on the indicator for the entire period.

The majority of all victims detected in 2022 were trafficked for forced labour and about a third were trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. In addition, a relatively significant share of victims were trafficked for other purposes (12 per cent) or for forced marriage (3 per cent).

**Fig. 159** Share of detected victims in South Asia, by forms of exploitation, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on data on sex and age of 7,738 victims detected in 7 countries and territories in South Asia.

## Trafficking Flows

In 2022, countries in South Asia mainly reported victims trafficked within the national borders. Besides being trafficked domestically, victims from South Asia were found in a diverse number of countries globally. In 2022, victims from South Asia were detected in 36 countries in Western and Southern Europe, Central and South-Eastern Europe, East Asia and the Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and in other countries in South Asia. In Western and Southern Europe in particular, victims from this region comprised 8 per cent of the total of all victims detected in 2022.

**Map. 19** Trafficking flows from South Asia and to other regions, by share of victims from the region detected at destination, 2022 (or most recent)

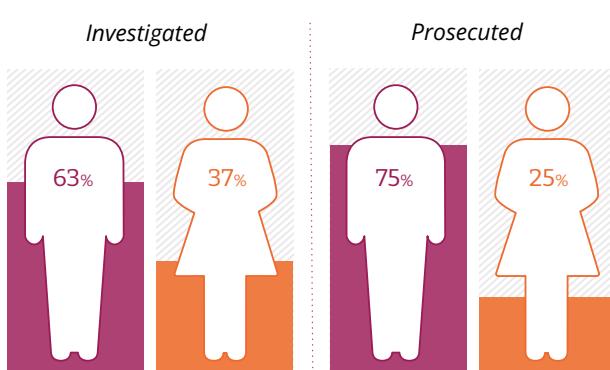


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

## Traffickers

Data and information regarding the profile, structure and modus operandi of traffickers in the region is limited. However, based on data from three countries from 2020, it appears that males are more frequently investigated (63 per cent) and prosecuted (75 per cent) for trafficking in persons.

**Fig. 160** Persons investigated, prosecuted for trafficking in persons in South Asia, by sex and age group, 2022 (or most recent)\*



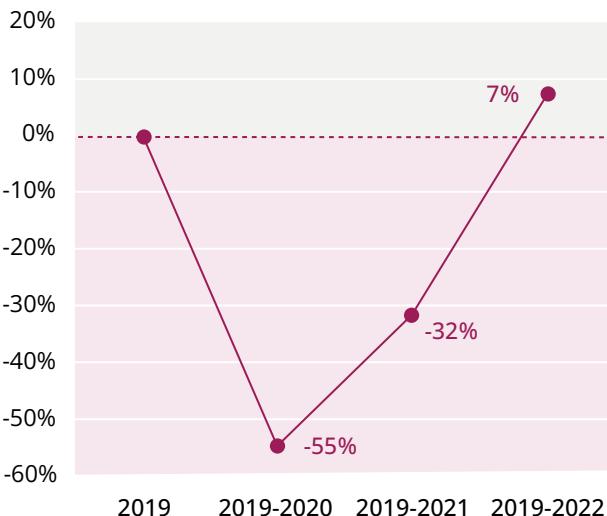
Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 228 persons investigated in 3 countries and territories where sex was recorded; 327 prosecuted in 3 countries and territories where sex was recorded in South Asia.

## Criminal Justice Response

As in many regions, the rate of conviction in South Asia significantly decreased during the pandemic due to related restrictions affecting law enforcement and the criminal justice system. However, within two years, the conviction rate reversed to that of pre-2020.

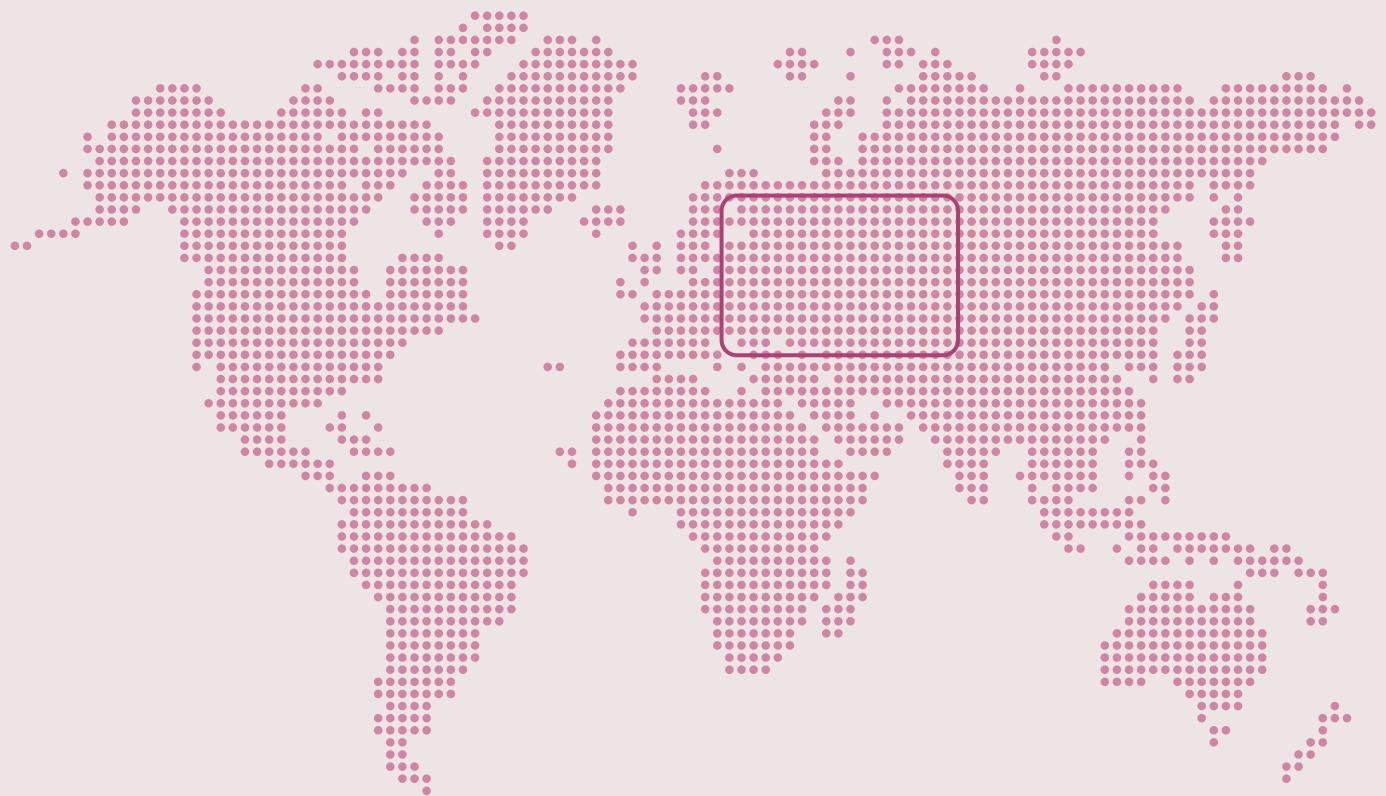
**Fig. 161** Trend in the number of persons convicted in South Asia, base year 2019



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

# Europe and Central Asia

## Eastern Europe and Central Asia\*



\* This region comprises of Eastern Europe (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine) and countries in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan).

## KEY FINDINGS FOR EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA, 2022

Trends compared to 2019 (pre-Covid)

**+4%**



*in the detection  
of victims*

**-23%**



*in the number  
of convictions*

Main profile of the victims detected (2022 or most recent)

**61%**



*are women and girls  
in Central Asia*

**82%**



*are women and girls  
in Eastern Europe*

Main forms of exploitation detected (2022 or most recent)

**59%**



*of trafficking is for  
sexual exploitation  
in Central Asia*

**84%**



*of trafficking is for  
sexual exploitation  
in Eastern Europe*

Main flows detected (2022 or most recent)



*As a region of destination, most  
of the victims detected in the region  
are internally trafficked.*

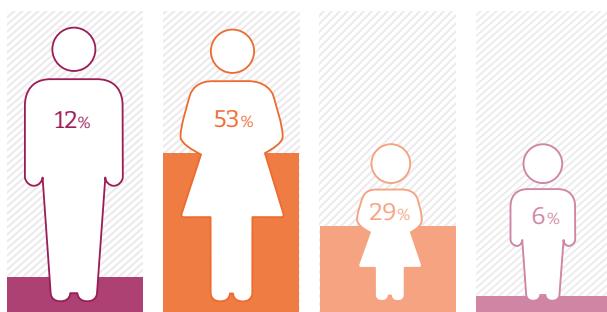
*As a region of origin of cross-border  
trafficking, victims are detected in the  
Middle East, Western and Central Europe.*

## Victims

In Eastern Europe and Central Asia as a whole, more than 50 per cent of detected victims in 2022 were women, with countries in Central Asia reporting 61 per cent of victims being either women or girls, and countries in Eastern Europe reporting 82 per cent of victims being women or girls. Countries in Central Asia detected a much greater share of men than those in Eastern Europe.

**Fig. 162** Share of detected victims of trafficking in Eastern Europe, by age group and sex 2022 (or most recent)\*

### Eastern Europe

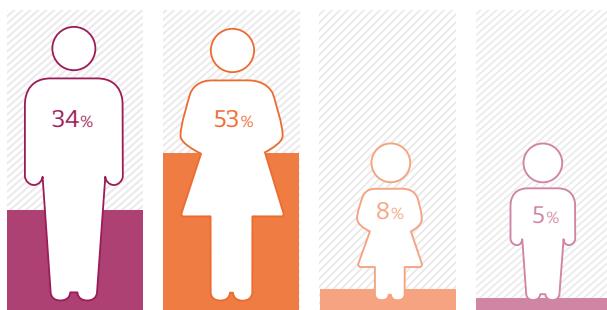


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 430 victims detected in 6 countries in Eastern Europe.

**Fig. 163** Share of detected victims of trafficking in Central Asia, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*

### Central Asia



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 347 victims detected in 4 countries in Central Asia.

The victim detection rate increased rapidly by 45 per cent between 2020 and 2022 after a significant drop recorded in 2020.

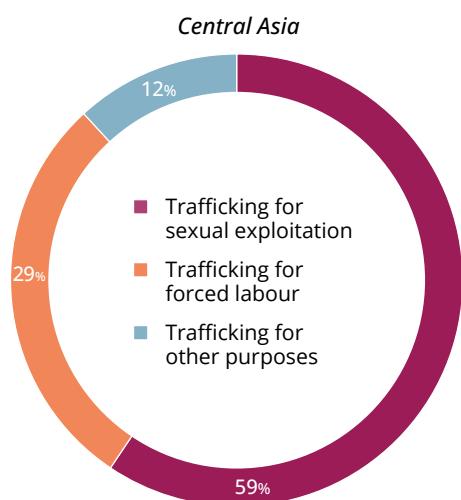
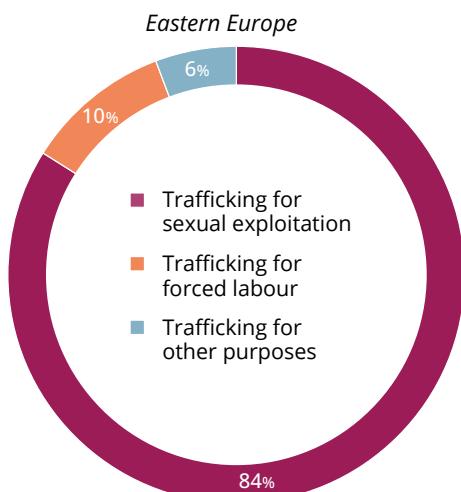
**Fig. 164** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, base year 2019\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on information on 11 countries reporting on this indicator for the entire period.

**Fig. 165** Share of detected victims of trafficking in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, by form of exploitation, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on data on sex and age of 436 victims detected in 5 countries in Eastern Europe and of 313 in 4 countries in Central Asia.

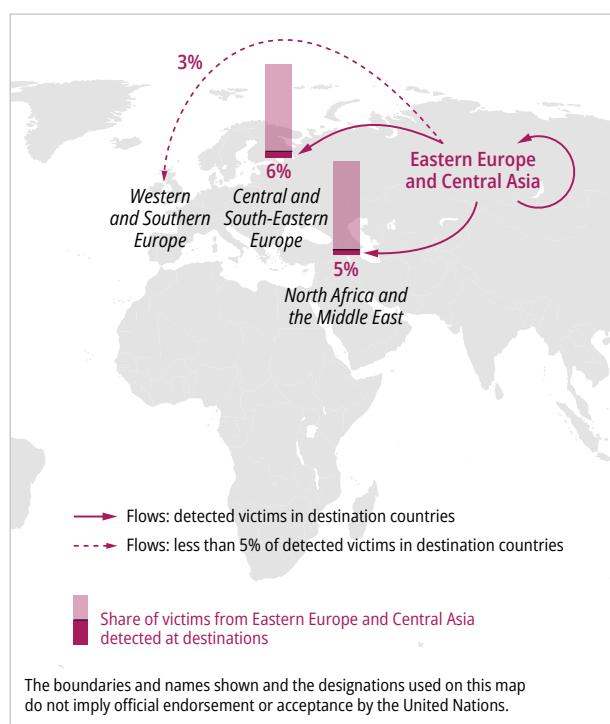
Forms of exploitation were roughly similar between Eastern Europe and Central Asia. In 2022, trafficking for sexual exploitation was the most commonly detected form in Eastern Europe and Central Asia as a whole. Countries in Central Asia, however, reported a significant share of victims trafficked for forced labour.

## Trafficking Flows

As region of destination, most victims detected in the countries of the region were trafficked within the region, mostly domestically.

Data provided by other regions suggests that flows from this region are more diverse. In 2022, victims from Eastern Europe and Central Asia made up 5 per cent of the total victims detected in North Africa and the Middle East, 6 per cent in Central and South-Eastern Europe and a little over 3 per cent in Western and Southern Europe.

**Map. 20** Trafficking flows from Eastern Europe and Central Asia to other regions, by share of the victims from the region detected at destination, 2022 (or most recent)

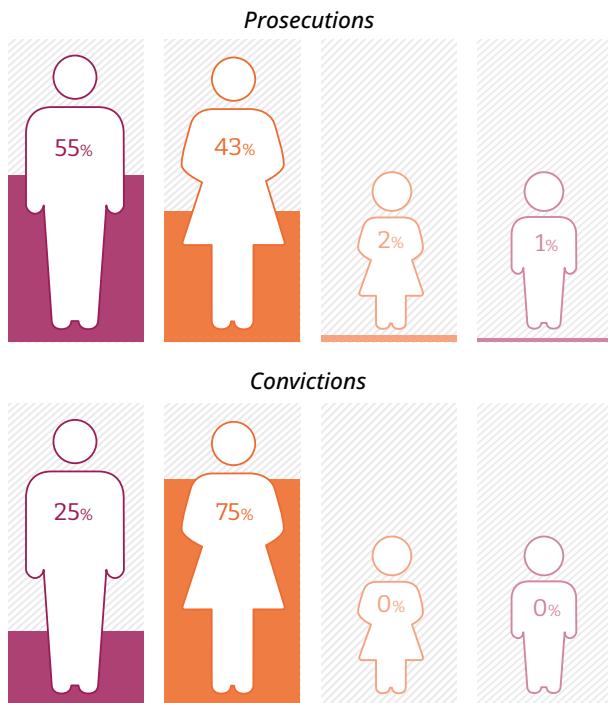


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

## Traffickers

Unlike in other regions, nearly three times as many women than men were convicted of trafficking in persons in Eastern Europe and Central Asia in 2022. However, men and women were prosecuted in similar shares.

**Fig. 166** Persons prosecuted, convicted for trafficking in persons in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, by sex and age group, 2022 (or most recent)\*

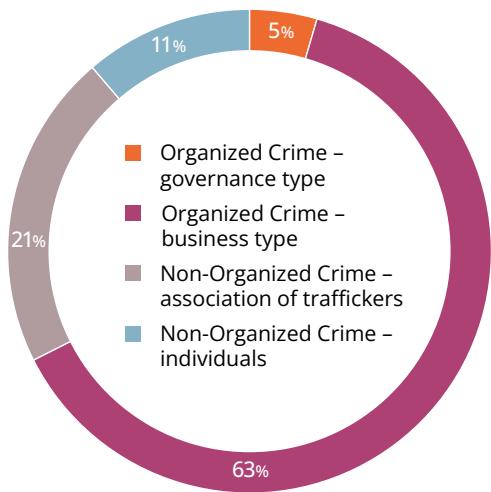


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 159 prosecuted in 7 countries; and 276 convicted in 8 countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

On the basis of the court cases collected from the region, most traffickers convicted seem to operate in organized crime groups.

**Fig. 167** Share of traffickers reported in court case summaries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, by type of structure \*



Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.

\* Based on information emerging from the narrative of 78 cases on trafficking in persons concluded with a conviction in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, for a total of 222 persons convicted.

## Criminal Justice Response

The number of convictions in Eastern Europe and Central Asia fluctuated between 2020 and 2022 but overall fewer convictions were recorded compared to 2019.

**Fig. 168** Trend in the number of persons convicted in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, base year 2019

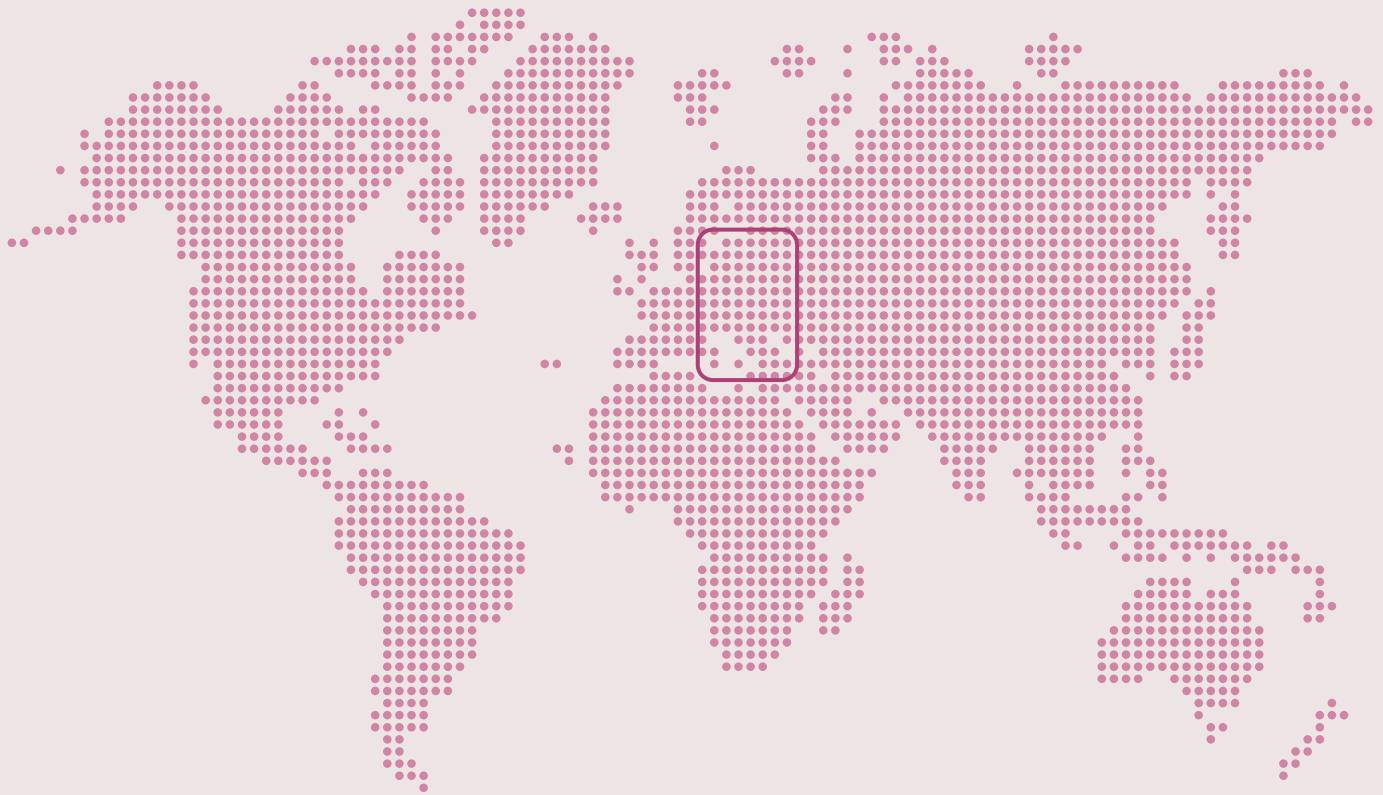


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on information on 5 countries reporting on this indicator for the entire period.



# Central and South-Eastern Europe\*



\* This region comprises of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia.

## KEY FINDINGS FOR CENTRAL AND SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE, 2022

Trends compared to 2019 (pre-Covid)

**-5 %**



*in the detection  
of victims*

**+29 %**



*in the number  
of convictions*

Main profile of the victims detected (2022 or most recent)

**46 %**



*of the detected victims  
are women*

**28 %**



*of the detected victims  
are girls*

Main forms of exploitation detected (2022 or most recent)

**50 %**



*of trafficking is for  
sexual exploitation in Central  
and South-Eastern Europe*

Main flows detected (2022 or most recent)



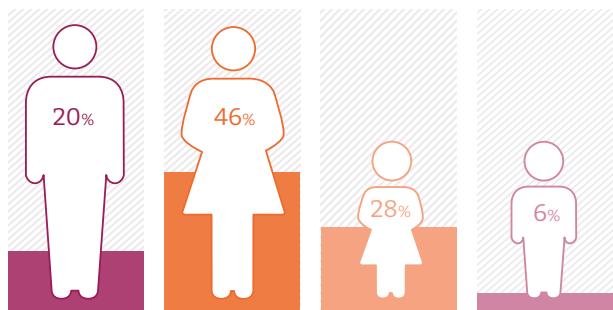
*As a region of destination, 73 % of  
the victims detected in this region  
are trafficked from within the region.*

*As origin to other regions, victims  
from the region are mainly trafficked  
to Western and Southern Europe.*

## Victims

Nearly half of all victims detected in 2022 were women. More girls (28 per cent) were detected than men (20 per cent) while boys were far less detected.

**Fig. 169** Share of detected victims of trafficking in Central and South-Eastern Europe, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*

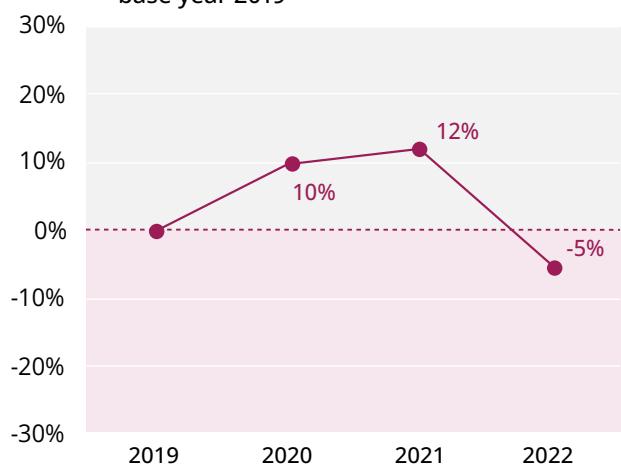


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on data on sex and age of 1,498 victims detected in 16 countries in Central and South-Eastern Europe.

Unlike some other regions, the rate of detection of victims has remained overall similar to 2019, with slight variations between 2020 and 2022.

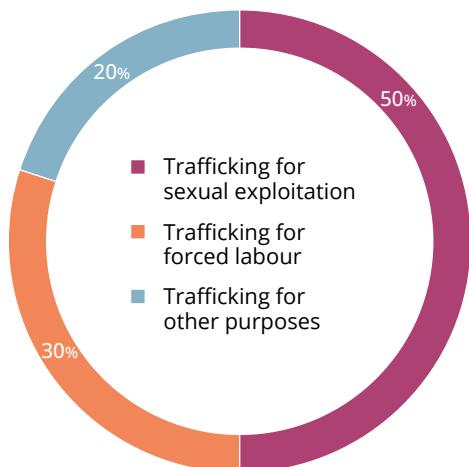
**Fig. 170** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in Central and South-Eastern Europe, base year 2019



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

While trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation accounted for nearly half of all detected cases in Central and South-Eastern Europe in 2022, its detection decreased greatly between 2021 and 2022. At the same time, a significant number of victims were detected as trafficked for forced begging (7 per cent), mixed exploitation (7 per cent) and forced criminality (3 per cent), respectively.

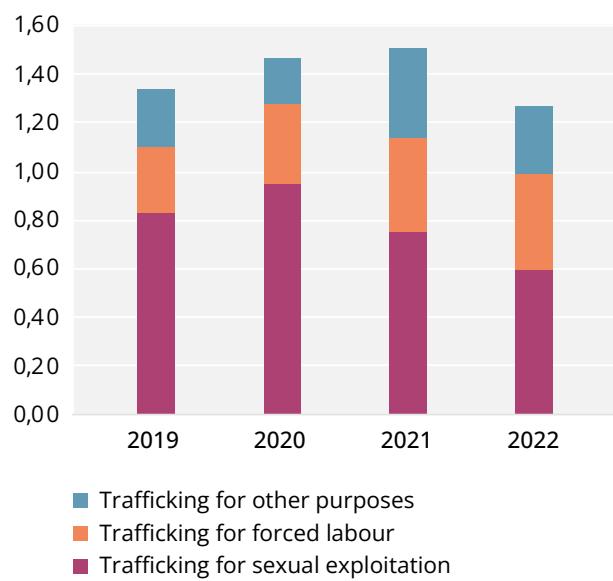
**Fig. 171** Share of victims detected in Central and South-Eastern Europe, by form of exploitation, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on data on sex and age of 1,375 victims detected in 16 countries and territories in Central and South-Eastern Europe.

**Fig. 172** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in Central and South-Eastern Europe, by form of exploitation (2019–2022)\*



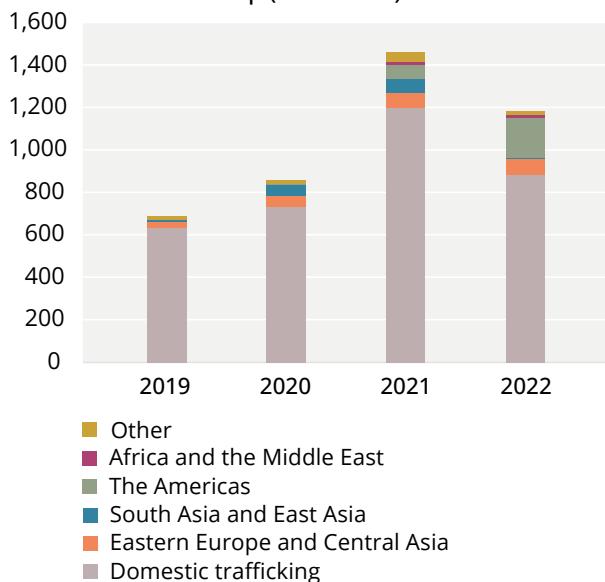
Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on information from 16 countries reporting on this indicator over the period considered.

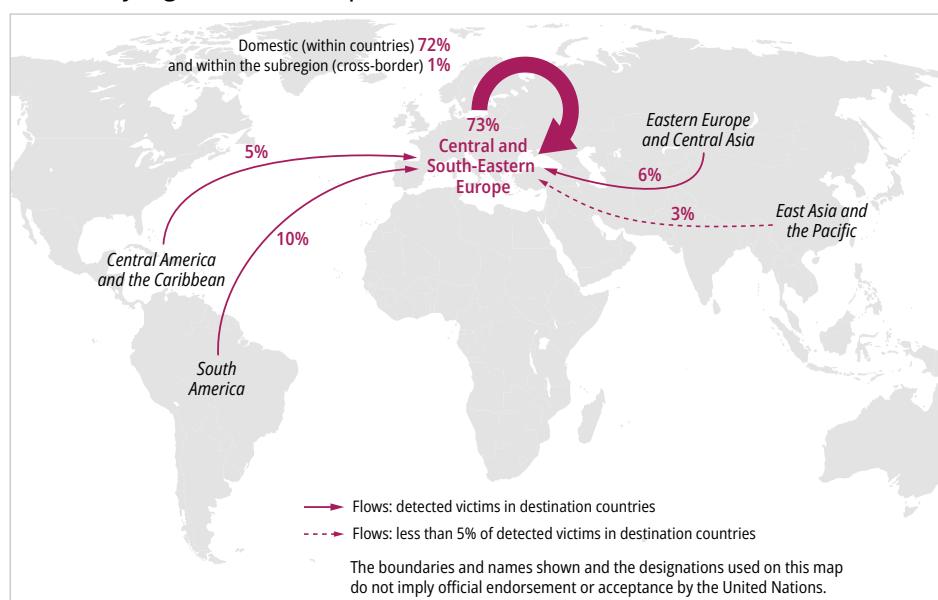
## Trafficking Flows

While domestic trafficking remains the largest flow in Central and South-Eastern Europe, over the past few years there has been an increase in cross-border trafficking into the region from a broader variety of origins. In particular, victims from the Americas, East and South Asia and Eastern Europe and Central Asia were increasingly detected in 2021 and 2022.

**Fig. 173** Number of victims detected in Central and South-Eastern Europe, by region of citizenship (2019–2022)



**Map. 21** Detected victims of trafficking in Central and South-Eastern Europe, by region of citizenship, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

In addition to domestic trafficking, there was a significant flow of victims from Central and South-Eastern Europe trafficked to Western and Southern Europe. As such, the majority of flows from this region were confined within Europe in 2022.

## Traffickers

In 2022, most of those investigated, prosecuted and convicted in Central and South-Eastern Europe were men, by a significant margin. In addition, a small number of children – more boys than girls – were investigated, prosecuted and convicted in the region.

**Fig. 174** Persons investigated, prosecuted, convicted for trafficking in persons in Central and South-Eastern Europe, by sex and age group, 2022 (or most recent)\*

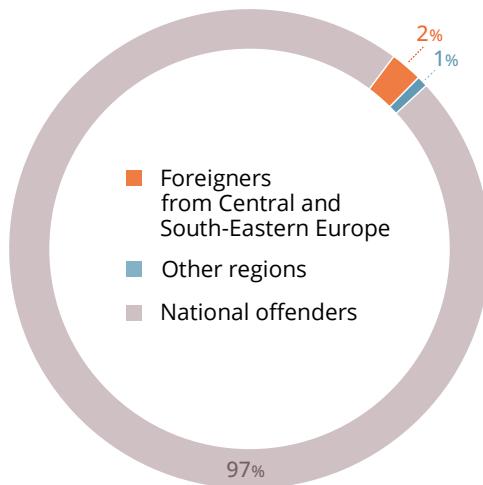


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on sex and age of 1,227 persons investigated in 13 countries; 1,299 prosecuted in 14 countries; and 341 convicted in 16 countries in Central and South-Eastern Europe.

The vast majority (97 per cent) of traffickers convicted in Central and South-Eastern Europe were citizens of the countries in which they were convicted, with a small share (2 per cent) foreigners from other countries in the region. Other nationalities were convicted in far smaller percentages.

**Fig. 175** Traffickers convicted in Central and South-Eastern Europe, by region of citizenship, 2022 (or most recent)\*

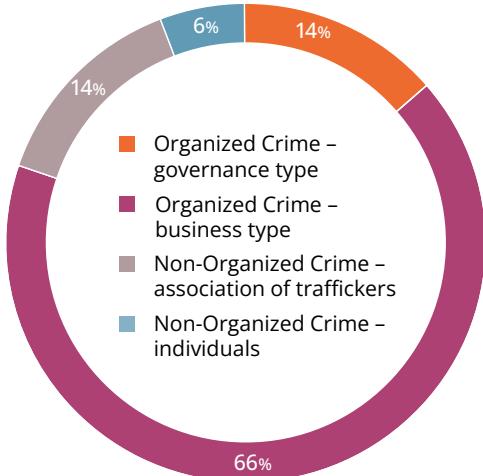


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data on the citizenship of 341 convicted in 14 countries in Central and South-Eastern Europe.

Case narratives reported by national authorities suggest that the traffickers largely operate as organized crime groups. Some court cases referring to large structured criminal organizations are reported.

**Fig. 176** Share of traffickers reported in court case summaries in Central and South-Eastern Europe, by type of structure\*



Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.

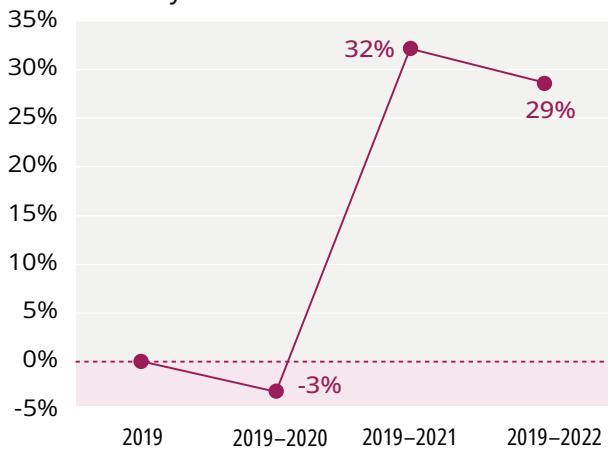
\* Based on information emerging from the narrative of 74 cases on trafficking in persons concluded with a conviction in Central and South-Eastern Europe, for a total of 941 persons convicted.

## Criminal Justice Response

All countries in Central and South-Eastern Europe have dedicated legislation criminalizing trafficking in persons.

Between 2019 and 2022, the conviction rate first fell by 3 per cent then rose by above 30 per cent compared to its 2019 baseline, reflecting the lifting of pandemic-related restrictions.

**Fig. 177** Trend in the number of persons convicted in Central and South-Eastern Europe base year 2019\*

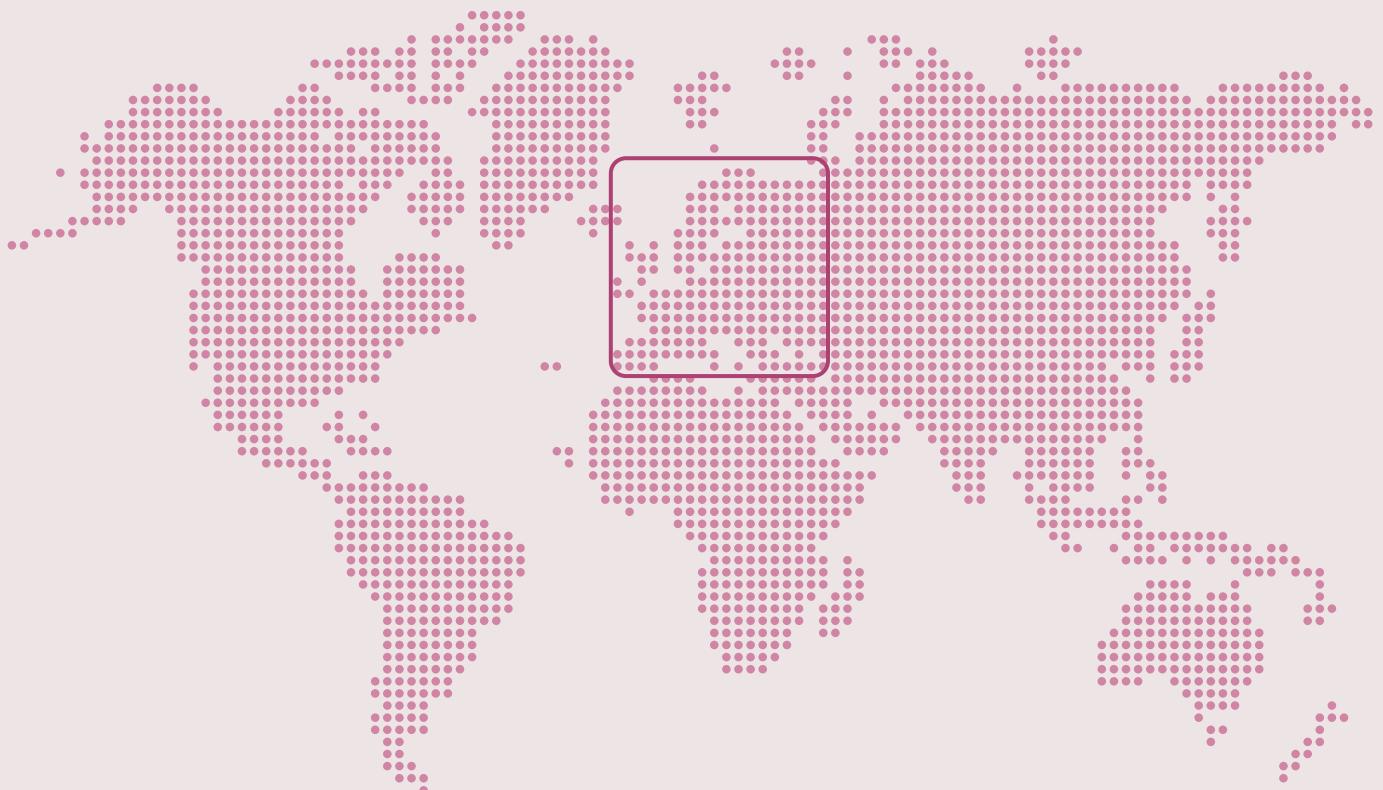


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on information from 14 countries reporting on this indicator over the period considered.



# Western and Southern Europe\*



\* This region comprises of Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lichtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Türkiye and the Holy See.

## KEY FINDINGS FOR WESTERN AND SOUTHERN EUROPE, 2022

Trends compared to 2019 (pre-Covid)

**+45%**

*in the detection of victims*

*+40% boys, +82% men*

**+89%** *victims detected for other purposes*

**+72%** *victims detected for forced labour*

**+33%**



*in the number of convictions*

Main profile of the victims detected (2022 or most recent)

**39%**



*of total detected victims are men*

**28%**



*of total detected victims are women*

**24%**



*of total detected victims are boys*

Main forms of exploitation detected (2022 or most recent)

**39%**



*of total detected victims are trafficked for forced labour*

**22%**



*of total detected victims are trafficked for sexual exploitation*

**22%**



*of total detected victims are trafficked for forced criminality*

Main flows detected (2022 or most recent)

**28%**

*of all victims detected in the region originate in Central and South-Eastern Europe*

**15%**

*of all victims detected in Sub-Saharan Africa*

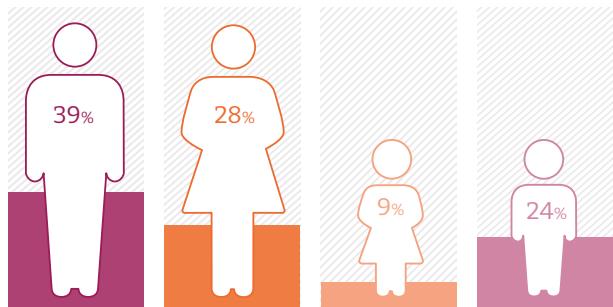
**15%**

*of all victims detected in South Asia and East Asia*

## Victims

As in 2020 and 2021, most victims detected in Western and Southern Europe in 2022 were adults, with a higher share of men than women detected. Of the children detected, boys were detected in a much larger share than girls.

**Fig. 178** Share of detected victims of trafficking in Western and Southern Europe, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*

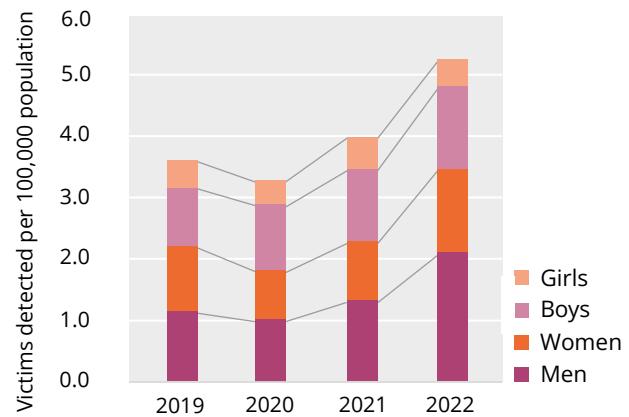


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Extrapolation based on 24,834 victims detected in 23 countries in Western and Southern Europe where information on the sex and age profile of the victims was reported.

The decline in victim detection in 2020 can be attributed to the sharp decrease in the detection of women trafficked in sexual exploitation in connection with pandemic-related restrictions. During the pandemic, traffickers moved victims in sexual exploitation to more private locations, making them more difficult to detect. Since pandemic-related restrictions have lifted, the level of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation has largely returned to that of 2019. At the same time, however, the number of detected victims trafficked in forced labour greatly increased (from 1.2 per 100,000 population to 2.1 per 100,000 population). Similar trends are to be found for trafficking for other purposes, mainly for forced criminality (from 1.1 per 100,000 population to 2.1 per 100,000 population), determining the total increase in the victims detected in 2022.

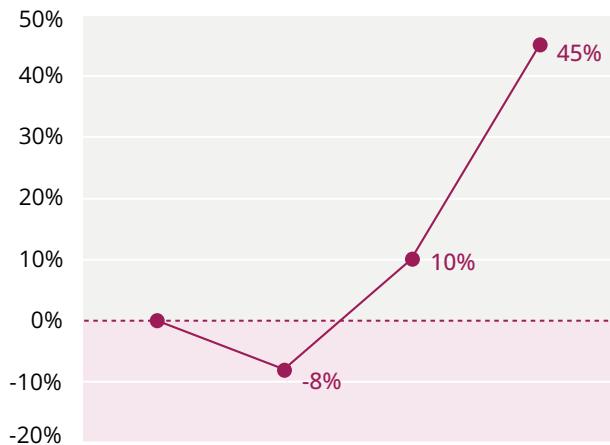
**Fig. 179** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in Western and Southern Europe, by age group and sex (2019–2022)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on information from 22 countries reporting on this indicator for the entire period.

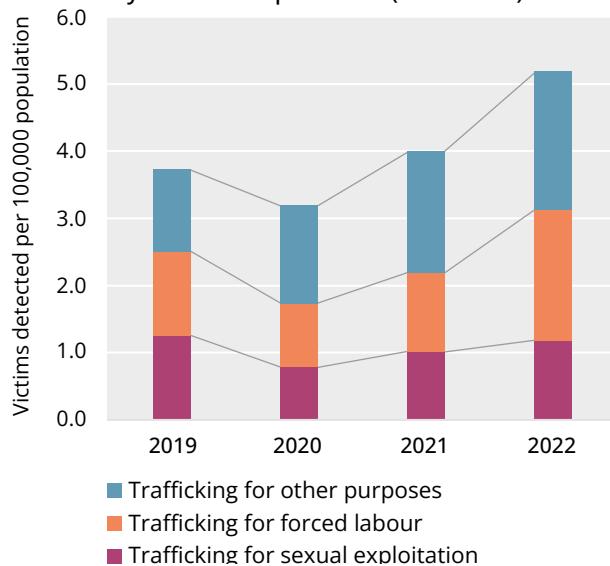
**Fig. 180** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in Western and Southern Europe, base year 2019



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on information from 22 countries reporting on this indicator for the entire period.

**Fig. 181** Trend in victims detected per 100,000 population in Western and Southern Europe, by forms of exploitation (2019–2022)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on information from 22 countries reporting on this indicator for the entire period.

**Fig. 182** Share of detected victims of trafficking in Western and Southern Europe, by forms of exploitation, 2022 (or most recent)\*



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

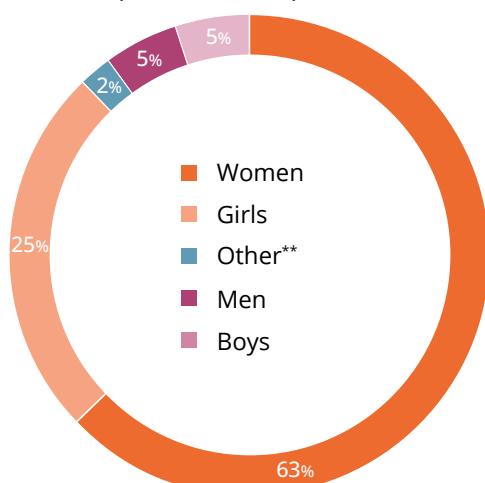
\* Based on 22,718 victims detected in 23 countries in Western and Southern Europe where information on forms of exploitation was reported.

Victims trafficked for forced labour account for the majority victims detected in this region. Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation and for forced criminality were detected in similar shares. A relatively small number of cases of trafficking for the purposes of forced begging, forced marriage, and organ removal were recorded along with other forms of exploitation.

Men victims made up 64 per cent of all victims in forced labour detected, while women and boys were detected in near equal shares (16 and 18 per cent, respectively).

From the analysis of the court cases from the region it appears that victims are cross-border trafficked into the agriculture, restaurant and cleaning/domestic work sectors.<sup>8</sup>

**Fig. 183** Share of detected victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)\*

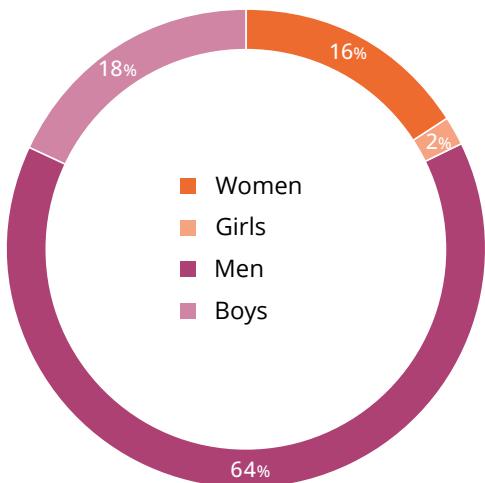


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data of 4,959 victims detected in 22 countries and territories in Western and Southern Europe.

\*\* In 2022 (or most recent), five countries in this region reported victims under "other" and three provided additional identification data. See the individual country profiles of Denmark, Greece and Italy.

**Fig. 184** Share of detected victims of trafficking for forced labour, by age group and sex, 2022 (or most recent)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on data of 7,974 victims detected in 22 countries and territories in Western and Southern Europe.

A large number of victims detected in Western and Southern Europe who were trafficked for sexual exploitation in 2022 were women (63 per cent) and to a lesser extent girls (25 per cent).

Trafficking for forced criminality in the region, which amounted to a little under a quarter of all detected cases, appears to largely impact children, particularly boys, more than adults.<sup>9</sup>

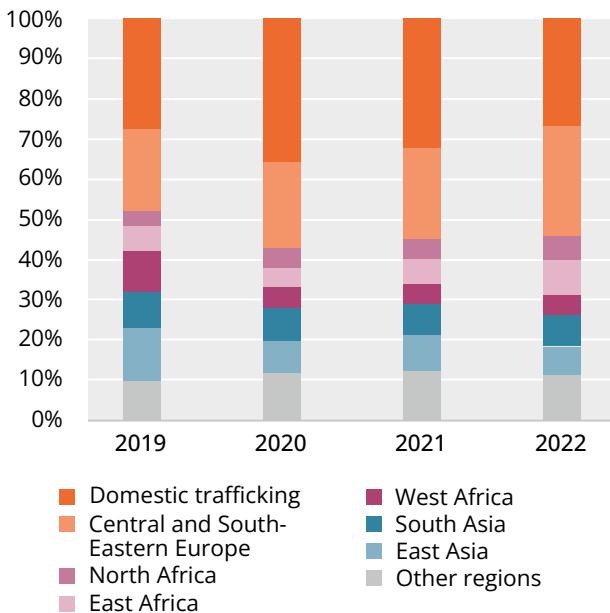
## Trafficking Flows

In Western and Southern Europe in 2022, there was an increase in incoming cross-border trafficking when compared to 2020. With pandemic-related travel restrictions and border closings lifted, the level of cross-border trafficking largely returned to that of 2019.

In 2022, more than half (56 per cent) of all flows detected in the region were domestic or directed from South-Eastern Europe in near-equal shares or from other parts of Europe. Compared to previous years, more detected victims were trafficked across relatively long distances to Western and

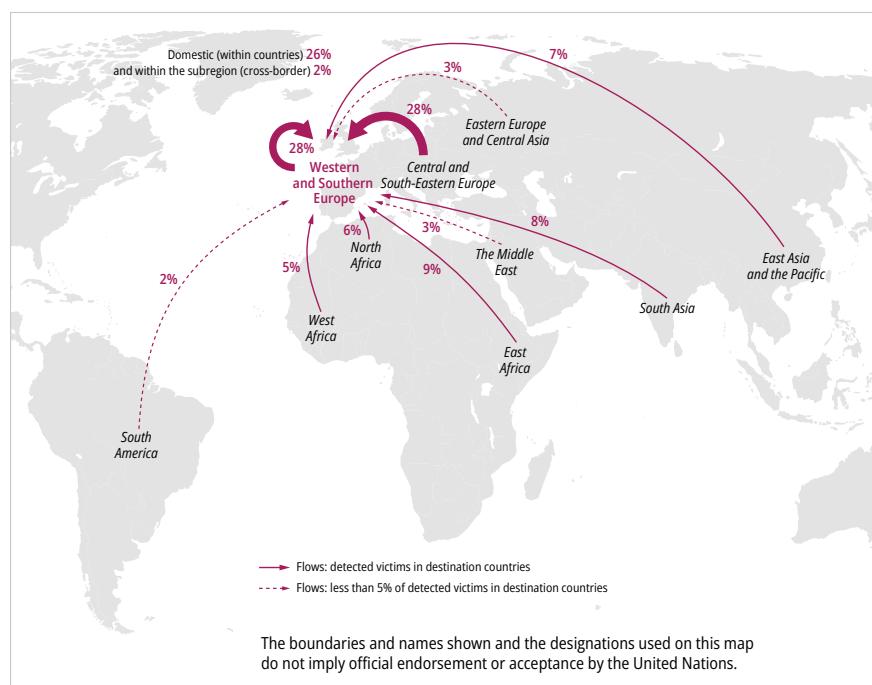
Southern European countries. Other significant shares of detected victims were trafficked from Sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa, South Asia and East Asia. Over the last few years, an increasing share of victims from East Africa and fewer from West Africa were detected.

**Fig. 185** Share of victims detected in Western and Southern Europe, by region of citizenship (2019, 2020, 2021, 2022)



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

**Map. 22** Share of detected victims of trafficking in Western and Southern Europe, by region of citizenship, 2022 (or most recent)

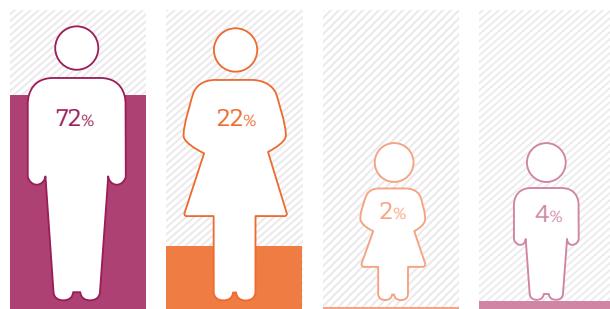


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

## Traffickers

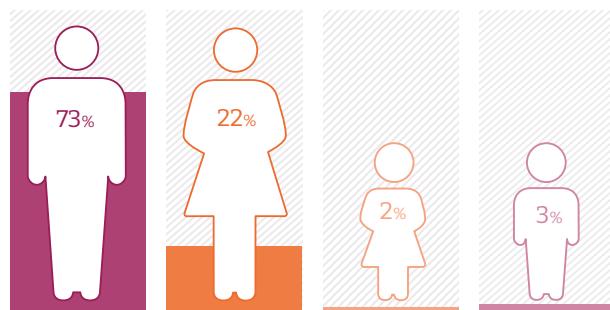
Men comprised over 70 per cent of those investigated, prosecuted, and convicted of trafficking in persons in Western and Southern Europe in 2022. Women made up 19 per cent of those convicted. Children were also convicted in small shares, with slightly more boys than girls.

**Fig. 186** Persons investigated for trafficking in persons in Western and Southern Europe, by sex and age group, 2022 (or most recent)\*



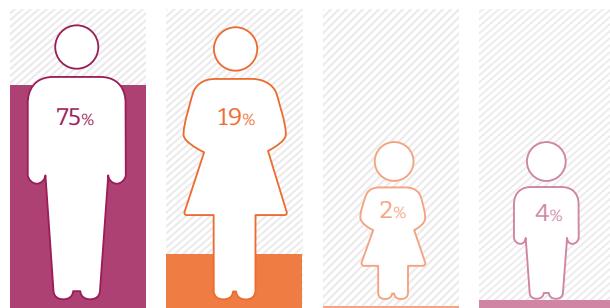
\* Based on data on sex and age of 7,181 persons investigated in 21 countries and territories in Western and Southern Europe.

**Fig. 187** Persons prosecuted for trafficking in persons in Western and Southern Europe, by sex and age group, 2022 (or most recent)\*



\* Based on data on sex and age of 3,701 persons prosecuted in 18 countries in Western and Southern Europe.

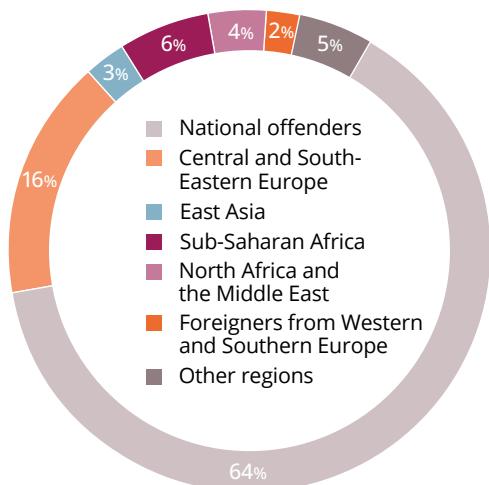
**Fig. 188** Persons convicted for trafficking in persons in Western and Southern Europe, by sex and age group, 2022 (or most recent)\*



\* Based on 2,249 persons convicted in 22 countries in Western and Southern Europe.

In terms of nationality of those convicted, over 60 per cent were citizens of the countries in which they were convicted in 2022. Smaller shares of convicted traffickers came from South-Eastern Europe (16 per cent) and Sub-Saharan Africa (6 per cent).

**Fig. 189** Traffickers convicted in Western and Southern Europe, by region of citizenship, 2022 (or most recent)\*

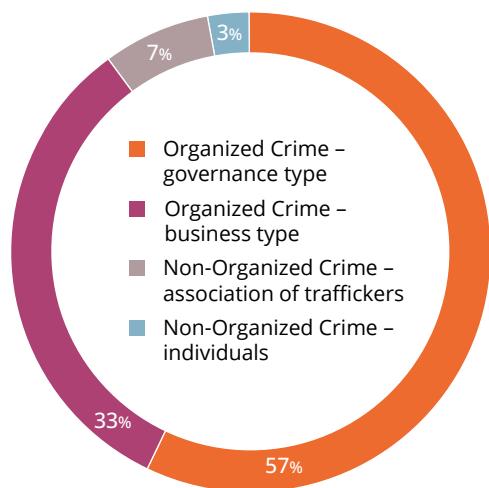


Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.

\* Based on 1,810 persons convicted in 16 countries in Western and Southern Europe where information on citizenship of persons convicted was available.

Based on information provided by national authorities in court case narratives, traffickers appear to primarily operate in organized crime groups. In particular, many court case summaries report structured transnational criminal organizations. The narrative of the cases reported by authorities suggest many of these groups operating in the region also engage in multiple types of crime in addition to trafficking in persons, including but not limited to, money laundering,<sup>10</sup> financial fraud<sup>11</sup> and smuggling of migrants.<sup>12</sup>

**Fig. 190** Share of traffickers reported in court case summaries in Western and Southern Europe, by type of structure\*



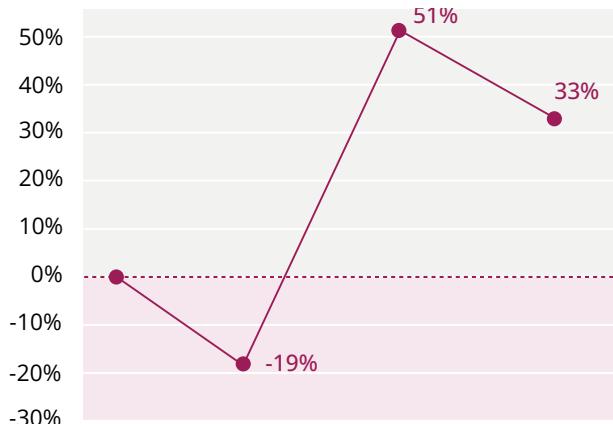
Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries.

\* Based on information emerging from the narrative of 180 cases on trafficking in persons concluded with a conviction in Western and Southern Europe, for a total of 945 persons convicted.

## Criminal Justice Response

All countries in Western and Southern Europe have dedicated legislation criminalizing trafficking in persons.

**Fig. 191** Trend in the number of persons convicted in Western and Southern Europe, base year 2019



Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

\* Based on information on 14 countries reporting on this indicator for the entire period.

After a period of decline due to restrictions connected to the pandemic restrictions, the number of convictions in the region increased in 2021 and stabilized in 2022.

## Endnotes

- 1 See UNODC, GLOTIP Court Case Summaries, Case 442, Canada; Case 443, Canada; Case 444, Canada; Case 445, Canada; Case 710, Canada; Case 711, Canada; Case 712, Canada; Case 440, Mexico; Case 748, Mexico; Case 749, Mexico; Case 751, Mexico; Case 640, United States of America (the); Case 880, United States of America (the); Case 882, United States of America (the).
- 2 See UNODC, GLOTIP Court Case Summaries, Case 711, Canada; Case 748, Mexico.
- 3 See UNODC, GLOTIP Court Case Summaries, Case 880, United States of America (the); Case 796, Canada.
- 4 In this region, some cases of trafficking for forced labour may not appear in criminal records because they are handled solely at the administrative level. This can happen when the case does not meet the threshold for criminal prosecution, or when the authorities decide to address the matter through administrative procedures, such as labour inspections or regulatory sanctions. As a result, although the exploitation may be identified and addressed, it may not be formally prosecuted as a crime, leaving gaps in the criminal justice system's ability to fully reflect the extent of trafficking for forced labour in the region.
- 5 See UNODC, GLOTIP Court Case Summaries, Case 774, Paraguay; Case 699, Argentina; Case 869, Venezuela; Case 533, Chile.
- 6 See UNODC, GLOTIP Court Case Summaries, Case 753, Myanmar; Case 754, Myanmar; Case 756, Myanmar; Case 786, Thailand; Case 854, New Zealand.
- 7 See UNODC, GLOTIP Court Case Summaries, Case 793, Australia; Case 864, Thailand.
- 8 See UNODC, Sherloc Case Law Database, Case ITx023; UNODC, GLOTIP Court Case Summaries, Case 506, Finland; Case 161, Portugal; Case 307, Netherlands (Kingdom of the); See UNODC, GLOTIP Court Case Summaries, Case 235, Belgium; Case 510, Finland; Case 433, Norway; UNODC, Sherloc Case Law Database, Case FIN010; See also UNODC, GLOTIP Court Case Summaries, Case 189, Austria; See also UNODC, GLOTIP Court Case Summaries, Case 93, Belgium; Case 236, Belgium.
- 9 See UNODC, GLOTIP Court Case Summaries, Case 60, Norway; Case 61, Norway; Case 311, Norway; Case 267, France; Case 404, Austria. See the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland – National Referral Mechanism Statistics on the sex and age group profile of the victims trafficked for forced criminality.
- 10 See UNODC, GLOTIP Court Case Summaries, Case 237, Belgium; Case 514, France.
- 11 See UNODC, GLOTIP Court Case Summaries, Case 238, Belgium.
- 12 See UNODC, GLOTIP Court Case Summaries, Case 235, Belgium; Case 625, Spain.