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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

Statistics and trends in trafficking in human beings in the European Union in 2023-2024

Accompanying the document

**Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the
European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions**

**on the progress made in the European Union in combating trafficking in human beings
(Sixth Report) and setting out a renewed EU strategy**

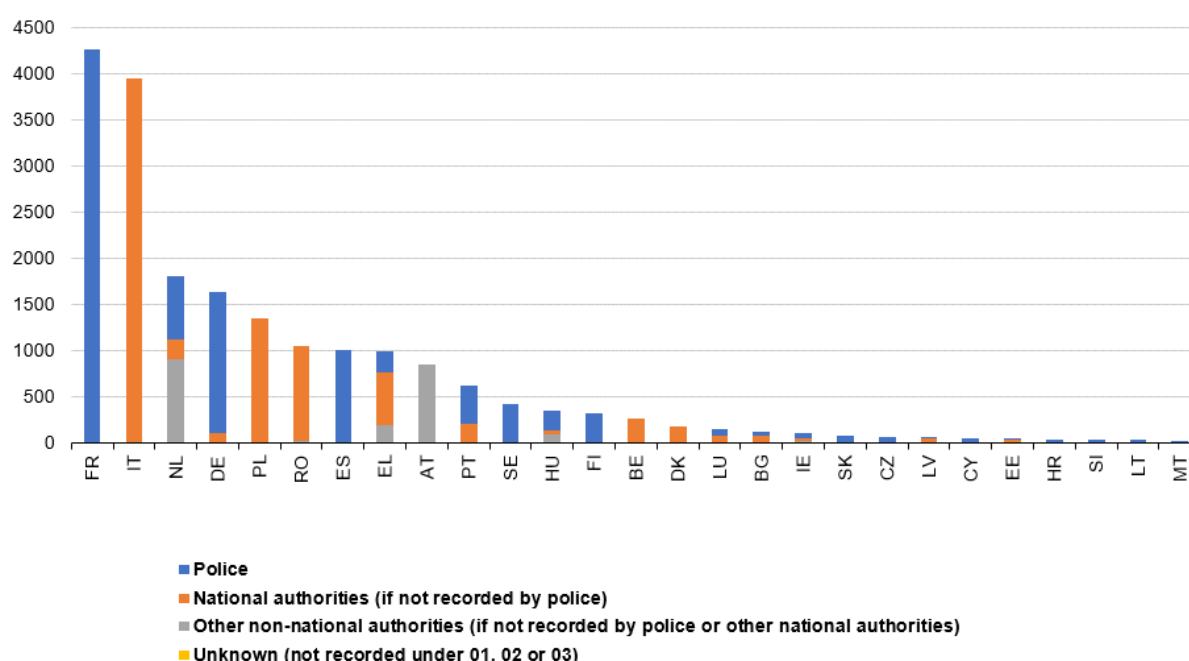
{COM(2026) 557 final}

0.1. Total number of victims: current situation and trends¹

The total number of victims registered in the EU27 increased by 16.1% between 2021-2022 (17 248) and 2023-2024 (20 022) with 10 556 registered victims in 2023 and 9 466 in 2024, with an average of 22 registered victims in the EU per million inhabitants in 2024. The actual number of victims is likely significantly higher than the reported data suggests, as these statistics only include victims that become known to one of the registering entities and many victims remain undetected.

In 2023-2024, most victims were registered in France (4 270), Italy (3 955), the Netherlands (1 812), Germany (1 647) and Poland (1 359).

Figure 1. Victims of trafficking by registering organisation

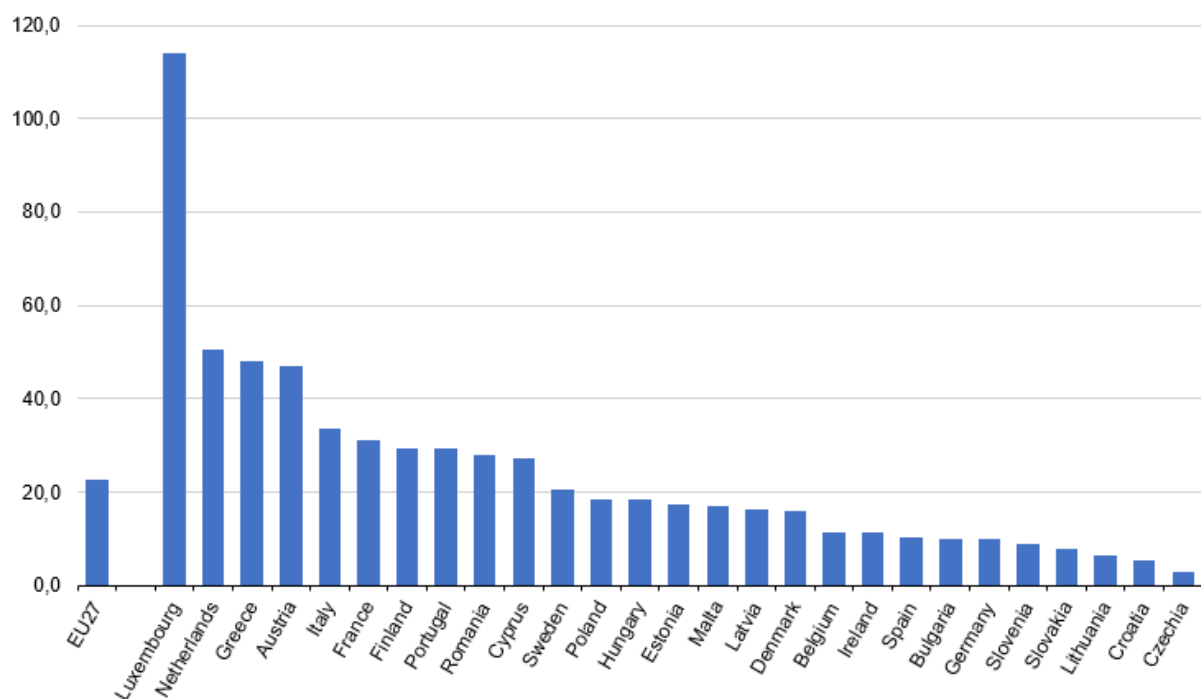


Source: Eurostat (extraction based on special request from [THB annual data](#))

If one considers the number of victims proportionate to the population size, rather than the absolute number of victims, in 2023-2024 Member States with the most victims registered per million inhabitants were in Luxembourg (114), the Netherlands (51), Greece (48) and Austria (47).

¹ Note: The figures have been adjusted to reflect only the known values in the dataset, excluding estimates or unknowns. This adjustment ensures the accuracy and reliability of the data presented. Any discrepancies between previous reports and the current figures are due to this refinement process.

Figure 2. Trafficking victims per million inhabitants of the registering Member State



Source: Eurostat (online data code, [crim_thb_sex](#))

1. Trends in the forms of exploitation

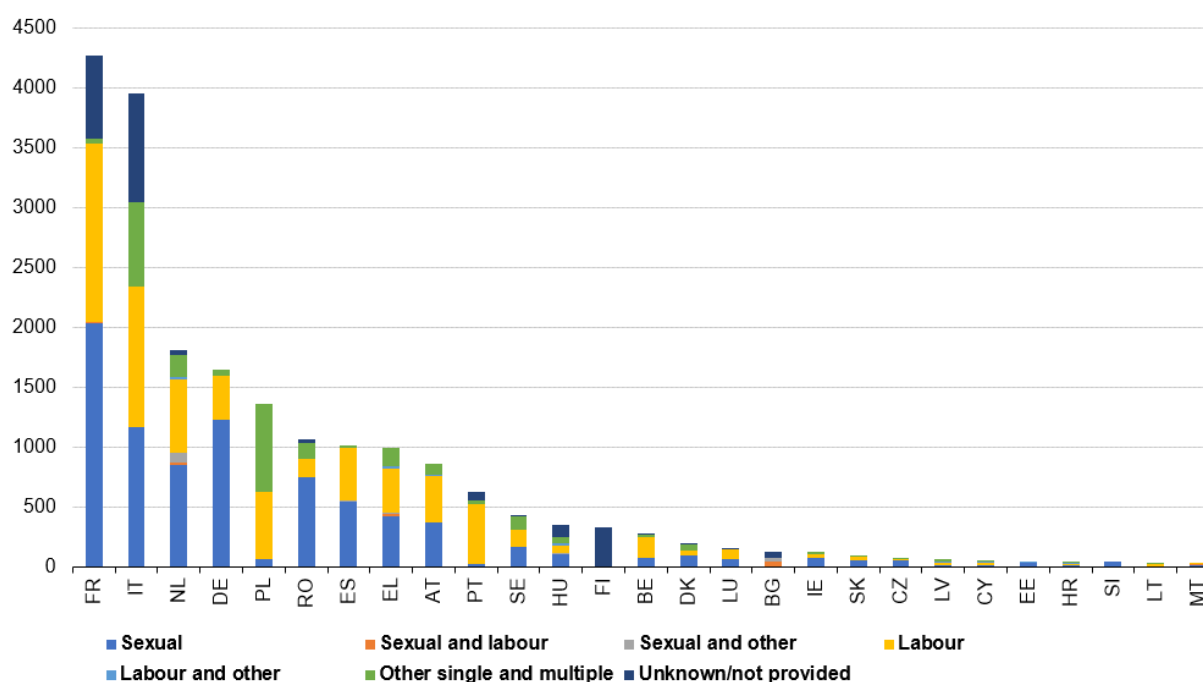
1. Overview of trends

The main forms of exploitation in 2023-2024 in the EU were sexual exploitation and labour exploitation. **During the reporting period 2023-2024, sexual exploitation² (combined with other forms of exploitation) made up 48% of trafficking cases, followed by labour exploitation (made up 38%).³** This was a slight decrease in the share of sexual exploitation since the previous reporting period (2021-2022), during which sexual exploitation was (made up 49%) of trafficking cases and labour exploitation made up 37% of trafficking cases. **Trafficking for other form of exploitation amounted to 15% during 2023-2024 compared to 17% in the previous reporting period.**

² The figure includes trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation alone and combined with trafficking for other forms of exploitation.

³ In Finland, all trafficking cases were registered by the police which did not register the form of exploitation.

Figure 3. Victims of trafficking by aggregated form of exploitation



Source: Eurostat (online data code, [crim_thb_expsxa](#))

2. Sexual exploitation

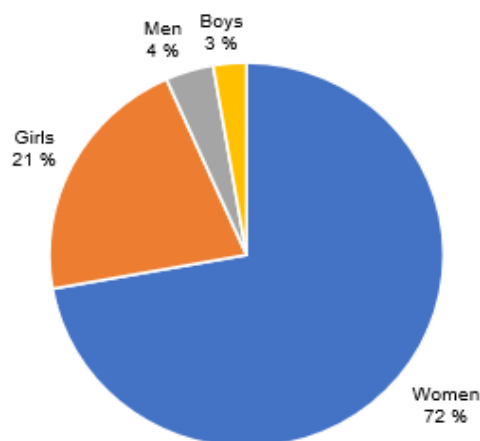
The number of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in the EU overall increased from 2023 (4 201) to 2024 (4 296)⁴. **In 2023-2024, the victims of sexual exploitation were primarily female (93%), as 72% were women and 21% girls.** In 2021-2022, 68% of victims of sexual exploitation were women and 24% were girls.

In 2023-2024, in all Member States where the sex of the victim was registered, female victims accounted for more than three in four victims of sexual exploitation. The Member States registering the most adult female victims of sexual exploitation were France (1 331), Italy (992), the Netherlands (736) and Germany (728).

In 2023-2024, children accounted for 24% of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, compared to 27% in 2021-2022. Concerning the reporting period, in 2024, the share of child victims of sexual exploitation increased from 22% in 2023 to 26% in 2024. The Member States registering the highest number of female child victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in 2023-2024 were France (638), Romania (401), Germany (330) and the Netherlands (57). The citizenships most represented among registered victims for sexual exploitation in 2023-2024 were France (1 250), Romania (968), Nigeria (935), Colombia (555), Germany (520), Brazil (278) and China (238).

⁴ A breakdown by sex and age was not available for Poland or for most victims in Austria. As noted before, Finland did not report the breakdown by form of exploitation.

Figure 4. Victims of trafficking of sexual exploitation as at least one form by sex and age



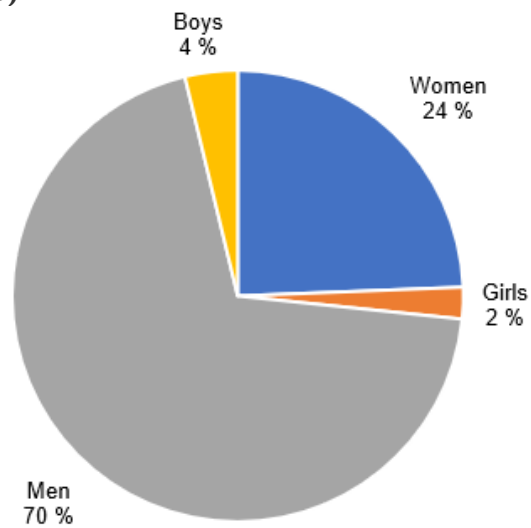
Source: Eurostat (online data code, [crim_thb_expsxa](#))

3. *Labour exploitation*

The number of reported victims of labour exploitation indicates a 17.3% increase in absolute numbers, rising from 5 940 victims in 2021–2022 to 6 965 in 2023–2024. Over the reporting period, the number of labour exploitation victims in the EU was 3 457 in 2023 and 3 508 in 2024. In line with the preceding sections, **in 2023–2024, trafficking for labour exploitation or forced labour remained the second main form of exploitation in the EU (38%), slightly higher than in 2021–2022 (37%).** Labour exploitation includes domestic work, care activities and cleaning services. The Member States registering the highest numbers of victims of trafficking for labour exploitation were France (1 504), Italy (1 181), the Netherlands (655), Poland (560) and Portugal (503). The citizenships most represented among registered victims for labour exploitation in 2023–2024 were France (512), Morocco (502) Romania (396), Colombia (343), India (318) and Pakistan (293).

In 2023–2024, the victims of trafficking for labour exploitation were mainly male (74%), while females accounted for 26%. In 2021–2022, the victims of trafficking for labour exploitation were 70% male and 30% female. The share of child victims of trafficking for labour exploitation decreased from 7% in 2021–2022 to 6% in 2023–2024.

Figure 5. Victims of trafficking of labour exploitation as at least one form by sex and age (%)

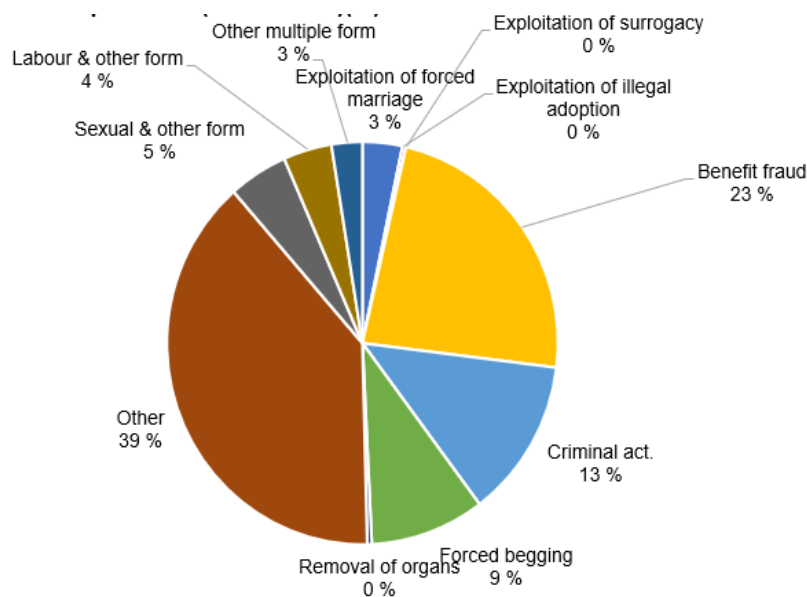


Source: Eurostat (online data code, [crim_thb_expsxa](#))

4. *Other forms of exploitation*

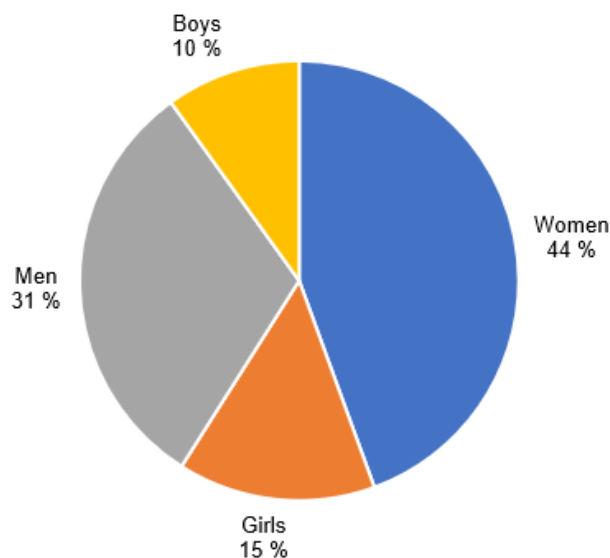
Forms of exploitation falling under the umbrella term ‘other’ include criminal activities (13% of victims of other forms of exploitation during 2023-2024), forced begging (9%), benefit fraud (23%), and removal of organs (0.3%). Cases of benefit fraud increased significantly from 1% to 23% since the last reporting period due to an increase in Poland. Cases marked as ‘other’ (i.e., not indicating any of the aforementioned forms) account for 39% of cases of other forms of exploitation during 2023-2024. In that same period, the victims of trafficking for other forms of exploitation were mainly women (44%), while men accounted for 31% and children 25%. These proportions were roughly the same as in the last reporting period.

Figure 6. Victims of trafficking for other form of exploitation (%)



Source: Eurostat (extraction based on special request from [THB annual data](#))

Figure 7. Victims of trafficking for other form of exploitation as at least one form by sex and age



Source: Source: Eurostat (online data code, [crim_thb_expsxa](#))

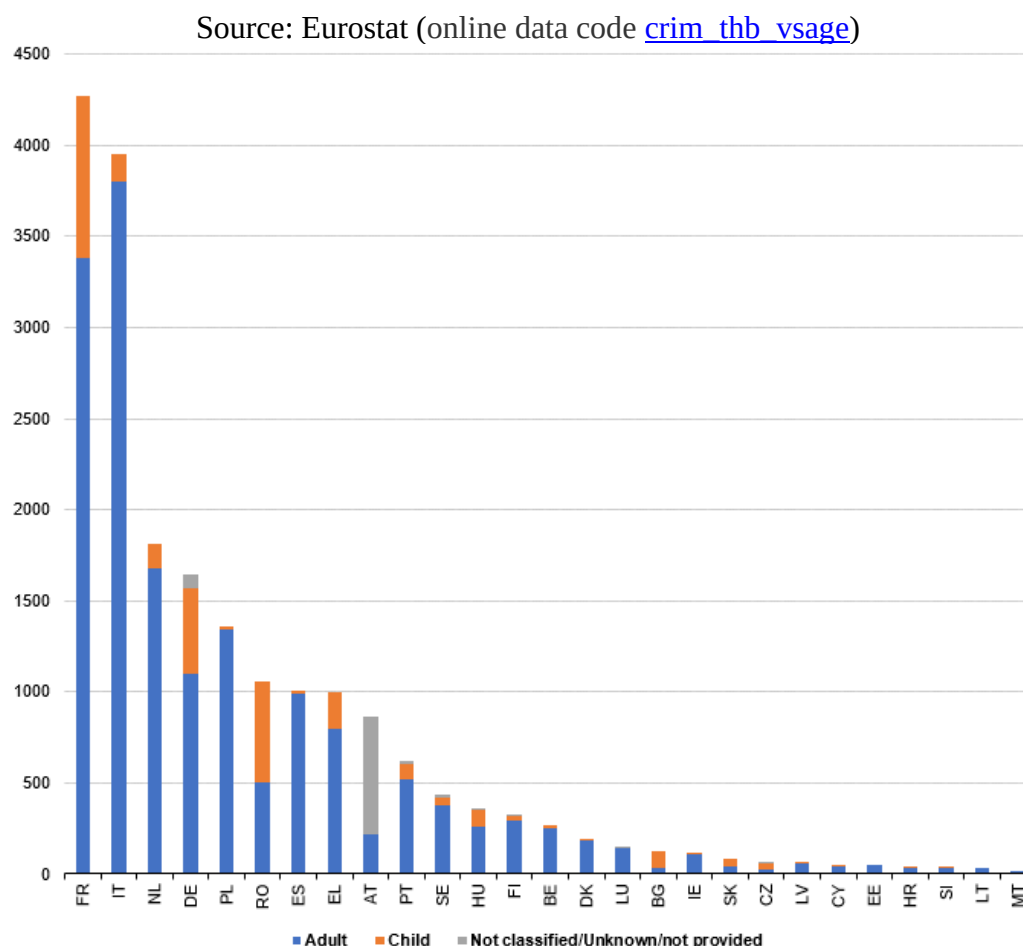
2. Trends in the types of people who are trafficked

1. Victims by age – child victims of trafficking in human beings

In 2023-2024, child victims constituted 15% of registered victims in the EU where the victim's age group was known, representing a decrease since 2021-2022 (19%). The citizenship of the registered child victims in 2023-2024 where the age group was known were France (698), Romania (606), Germany (349), Bulgaria (108) and the Netherlands (93).

Member States registering the highest number of child victims were France (887), Romania (554), Germany (471), Greece (199) and Italy (156).

Figure 8. Victims of trafficking by age



2. Victims by sex

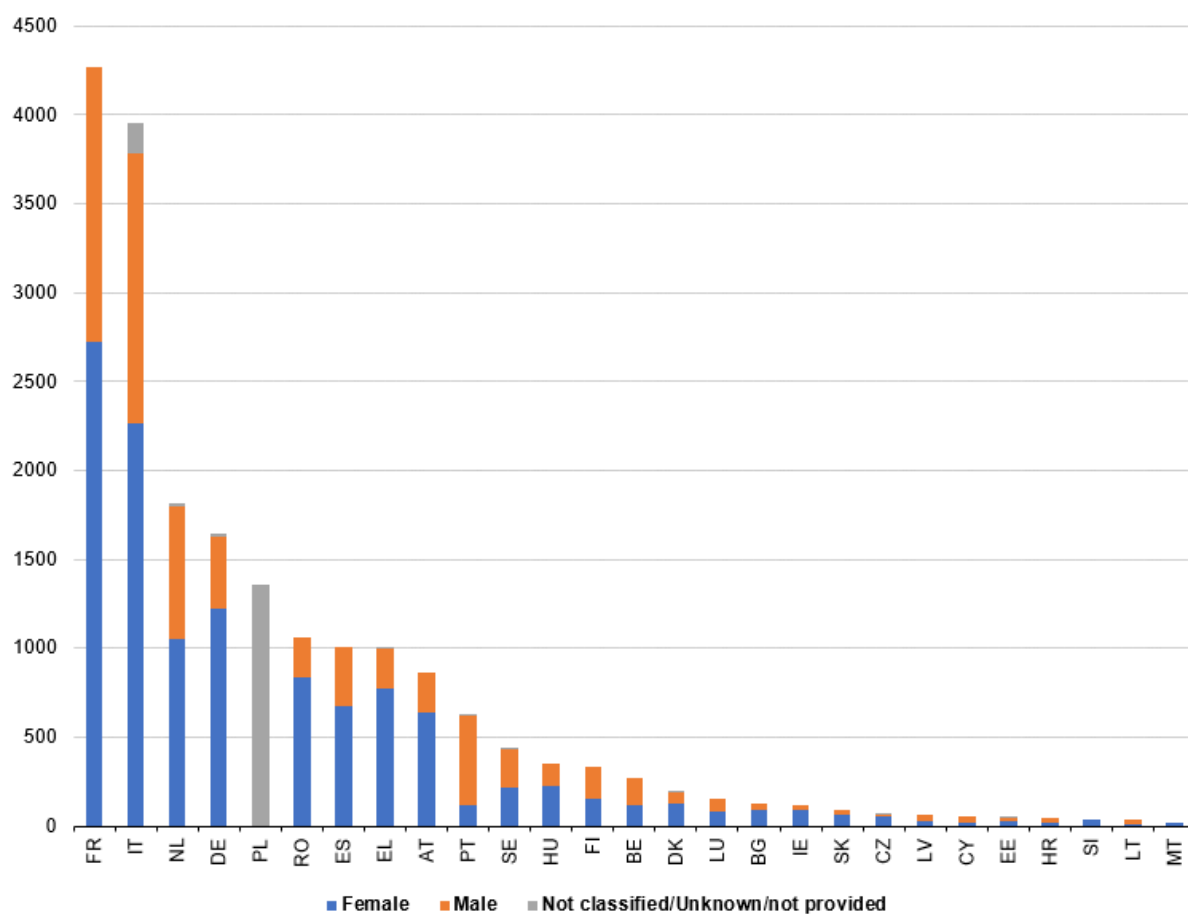
In 2023-2024, 63% of all the victims in the EU were female (50% women and 12% girls) and 37% were male (34% men and 4% boys), ranging from 14% in Lithuania to 100% in Malta and Slovenia. This represents a 3% decrease since 2021-2022 (65%)⁵.

The Member States with the highest percentage of female victims were Malta and Slovenia (100% each) and Czechia (85%). The Member States with the highest percentage of male victims (men and boys) during the registering period were Lithuania (86%), Portugal (81%), and Cyprus (69%).

The Member States registering the most female victims were France (2 719), Italy (2 260), Germany (1 218), and the Netherlands (1 049). The Member States registering the most male victims were France (1 551), Italy (1 524), Netherlands (749), and Portugal (498).

⁵ The breakdown of victims by sex was not available for Poland for the whole period 2023-2024.

Figure 9. Victims of trafficking by sex



Source: Eurostat (online data code [crim_thb_vsage](#))

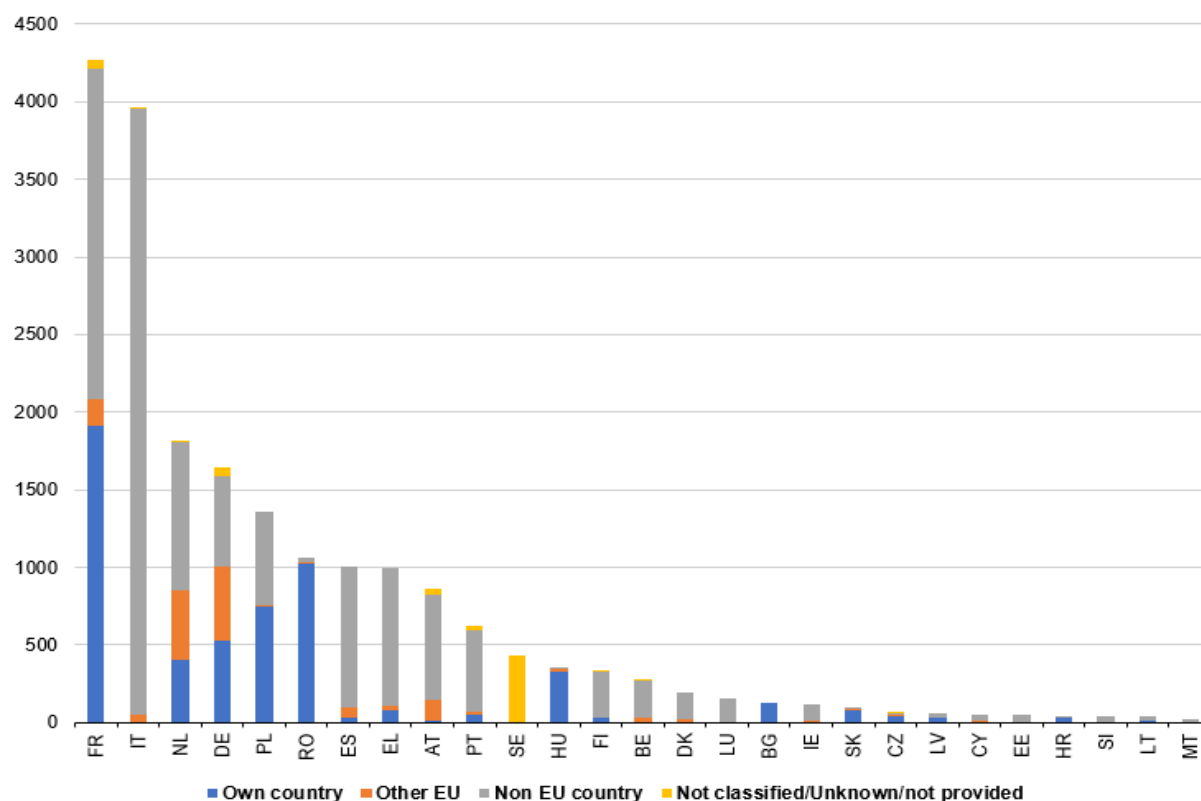
3. Victims by citizenship

In 2023-2024, 36% of the registered victims with known citizenship were EU citizens (7 023) and 64% were non-EU nationals (12 369)⁶. This represents a 7.7% decrease in the number of registered EU citizen victims since the last reporting period. The majority of registered victims with known citizenship were therefore from non-EU nationals, this is in line with the trend between 2019-2020 (45% non-EU nationals) and 2021-2022 (54% non-EU nationals) where the majority of victims had no EU citizenship.

Within the reporting period, the share of non-EU victims was 64% in 2023 and 62% in 2024, decreasing in absolute terms by 11.36 %, from 6 557 in 2023 to 5 812 in 2024.

⁶ The breakdown of victims by citizenship was not available for Sweden for the whole period.

Figure 10. Victims of trafficking by citizenship

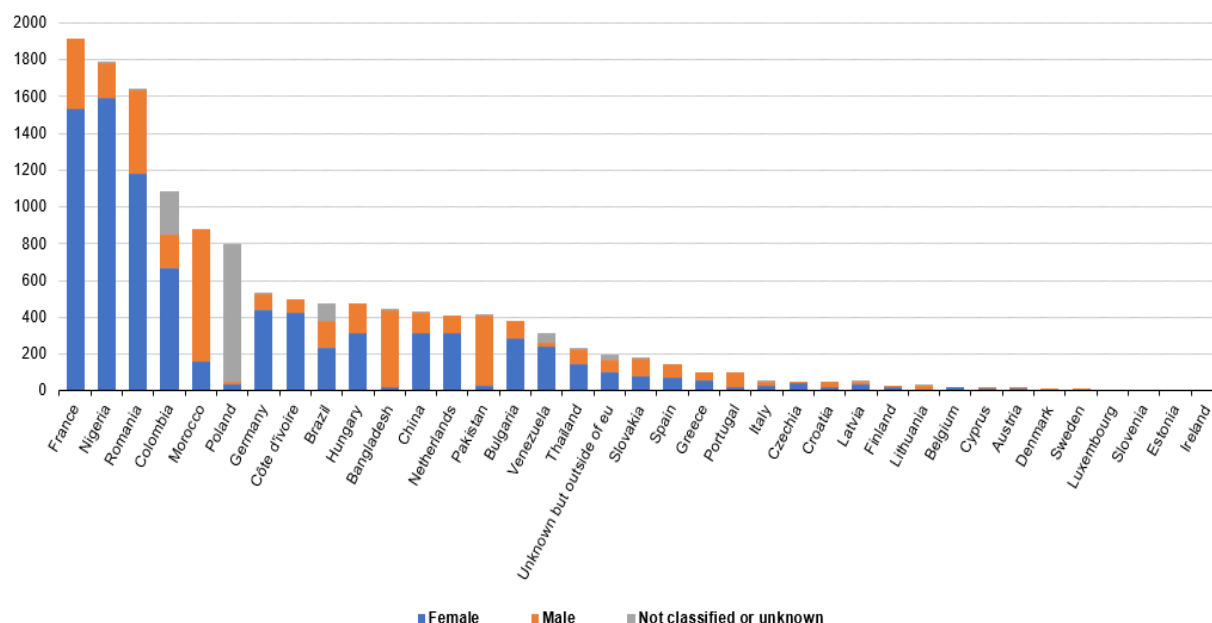


Source: Eurostat (online data code, [crim_thb_vctz](#))

Among EU victims the citizenships most represented in 2023-2024 were French (1 918), Romanian (1 637), Polish (799), German (530) and Hungarian (473). If one considers the number of victims proportion to the population size, rather than the absolute number of victims, Romanian (43 per million inhabitants), Bulgarian (29), Hungarian (25), Slovakian (16) and French (14) were the EU citizenships most represented in 2023-2024.

The main countries of citizenship of non-EU victims in the EU in 2023-2024 were Nigerian (1 747), Colombian (1 083), Moroccan (864), Brazilian (477), Ivorian (464) and Bangladeshi (430).

Figure 11. Number of victims of trafficking per citizenship of EU27 and top 10 non-EU nationals and sex



Source: Eurostat (extraction based on special request from [THB annual data](#))

Across the EU in 2023-2024, approximately 28% of all registered victims were citizens of the country in which they were registered, compared to 33% in 2021-2022.

Member States with the highest rates of registering their own citizens were Bulgaria (100%), Romania (97%), Hungary (94%), Slovakia (93%) and Croatia (71%).

3. Trends in criminal justice system indicators that are related to trafficking offences

Eurostat collects data on different aspects relating to suspected individuals, prosecuted individuals, convicted individuals, final decisions of prosecutions and Court judgements.

1. Individuals suspected of crime of trafficking in human beings

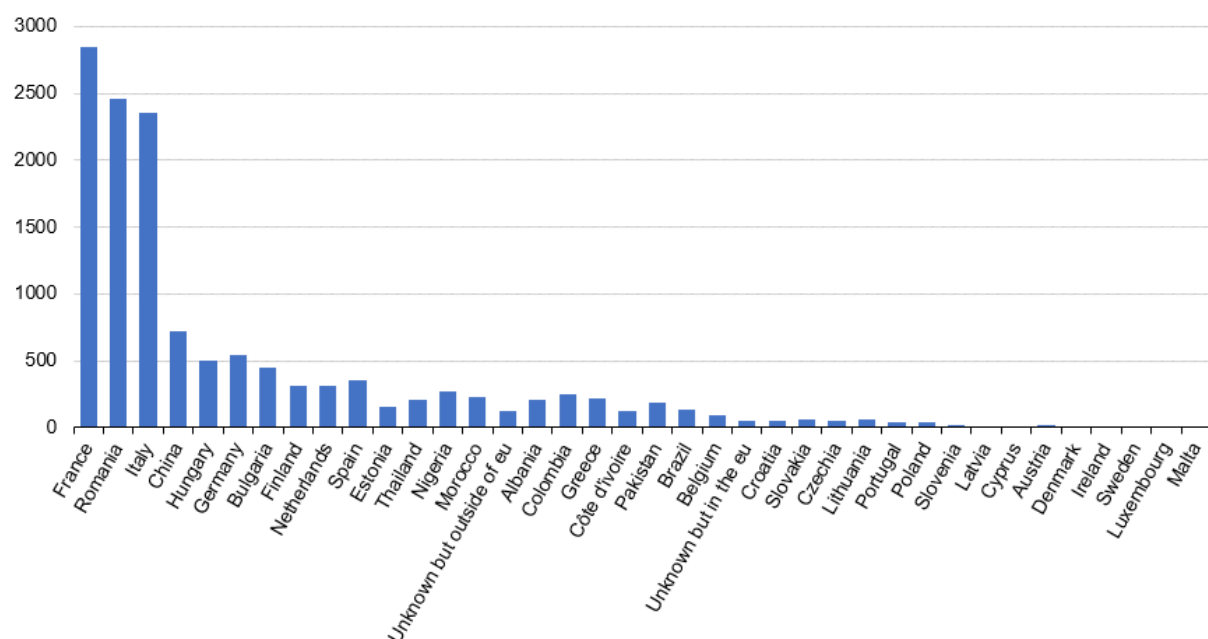
The total number of individuals suspected of trafficking crimes (both EU and non-EU citizenships) decreased by 7% between 2021-2022 (17 711) and 2023-2024 (16 437).⁷ EU citizens accounted for 73% (11 065) of all suspects in 2023-2024.

The Member States with most nationals among those suspected of trafficking crimes in 2023-2024 were France (2 850), Romania (2 462), and Italy (2 356).

The most frequent non-EU nationalities among suspects were Chinese (720), Nigerian (269), Colombian (246) and Moroccan (228).

⁷ Almost all countries reported positive numbers of suspects in both 2023 and 2024, with the exception of Malta in 2023. For Estonia, the number of suspects was not available for both 2021 and 2022. For Belgium, the number of suspects was not available for 2021.

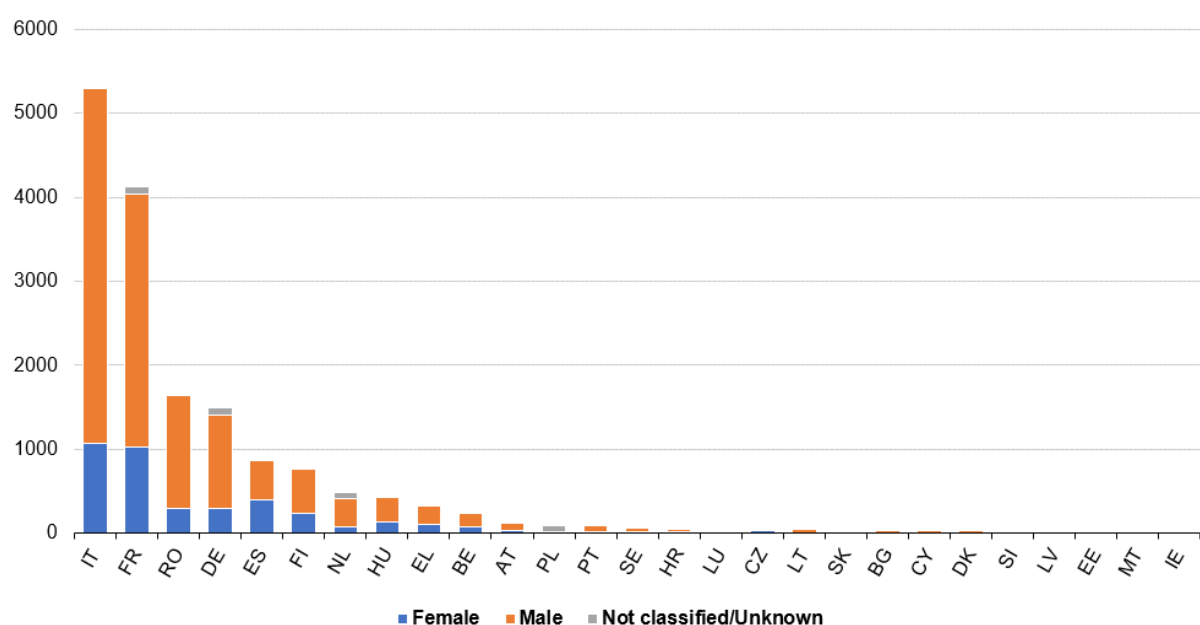
Figure 12. Number of suspects per EU citizenship and top 10 non-EU nationals



Source: Eurostat (extraction based on special request from [THB annual data](#))

Where information on sex is recorded, 76% of individuals suspected of trafficking crimes were male (12 055) in 2023-2024. Men accounted for the majority of individuals suspected of trafficking crimes in almost all EU Member States in 2023-2024. The exceptions were Czechia and Poland, where the proportion of female suspects of trafficking crimes were 51% and 50%, respectively. In Spain and Slovakia, the proportions of women among suspects of known sex was also relatively high, at 45% each.

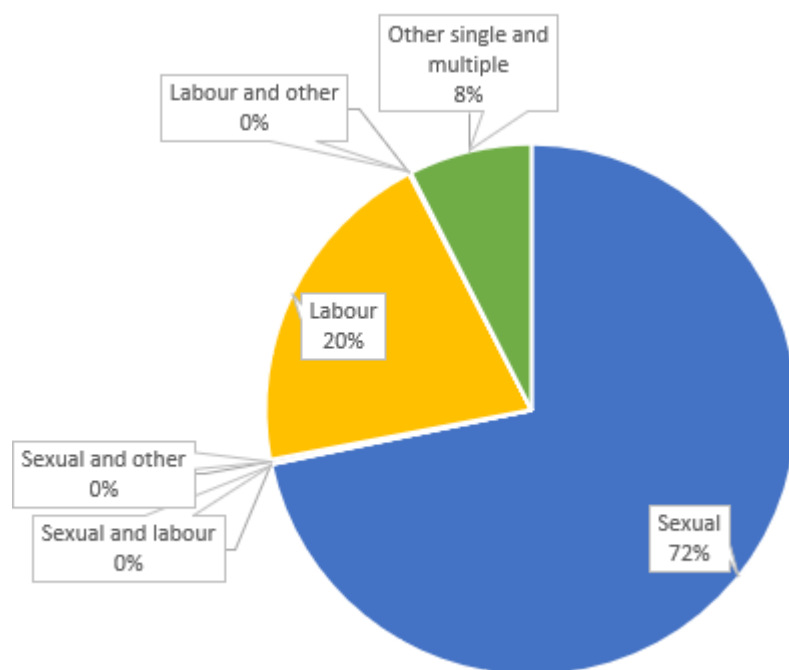
Figure 13. Suspected for trafficking crimes by sex



Source: Eurostat (online data code, [crim_thb_sex](#))

With respect to various aggregated types of exploitation, in 2023-2024 individuals were most frequently suspected in relation to sexual exploitation (72%), followed by labour exploitation (21%), and other forms of exploitation (8%). In 2021-2022, individuals were also most frequently suspected in relation to sexual exploitation (75%), followed by labour exploitation (14%) and other forms of exploitation (11%).

Figure 14. Suspects for trafficking by aggregated form of exploitation



Source: Eurostat (extraction based on special request from [THB annual data](#))

2. Individuals prosecuted for trafficking offences

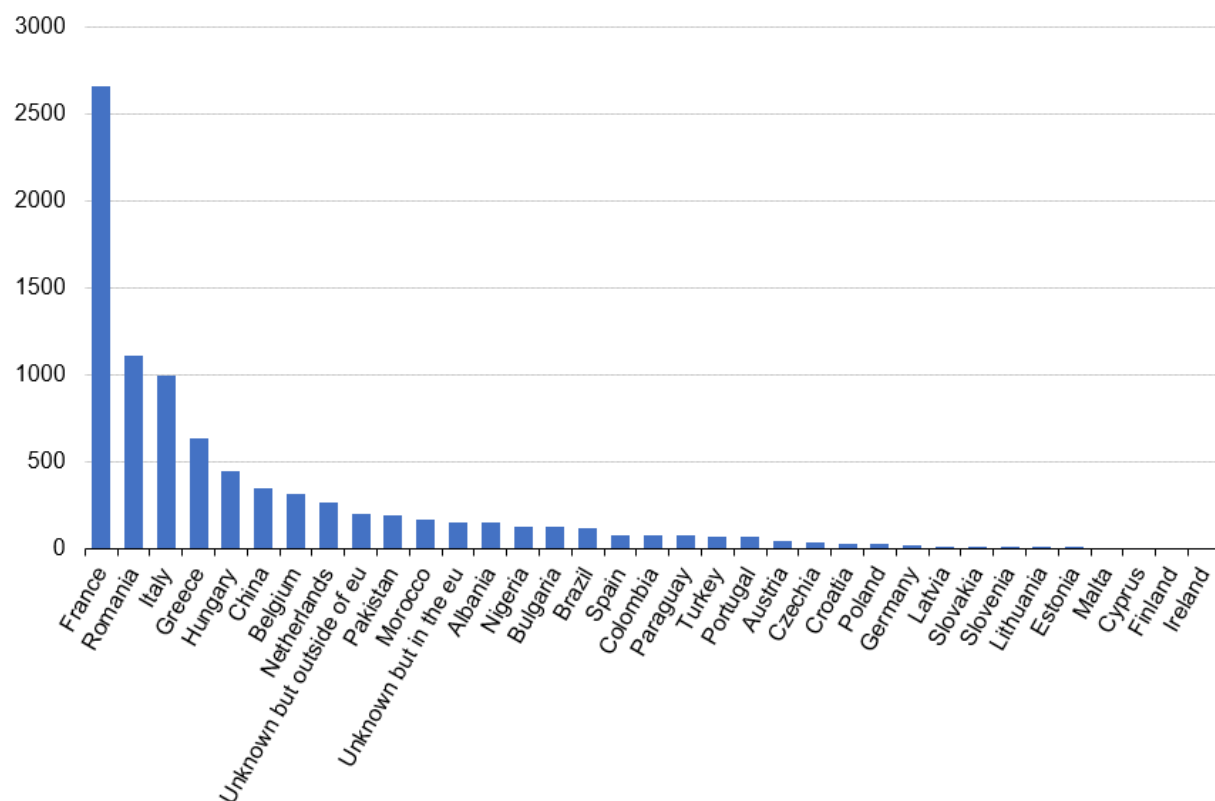
The total number of individuals prosecuted for crimes of trafficking in human beings (both EU and non-EU citizenships) increased by 49% (8 804 in 2021-2022 and 13 126 in 2023-2024).⁸ EU citizens accounted for 67% of all prosecuted individuals in 2023-2024.

The Member States with most nationals among those prosecuted for trafficking crimes in 2023-2024 were France (2 660.), Romania (1 111), Italy (993) and Greece (633).

The most frequent known non-EU nationalities among the prosecuted individuals were Chinese (351), Pakistani (192), Moroccan (166) and Albanian (148).

⁸ No data on individuals prosecuted for THB crimes were reported in Germany. And no 2024 data on prosecuted for Finland and Belgium.

Figure 15. Number of prosecuted individuals per citizenship of EU and top 10 non-EU nationals

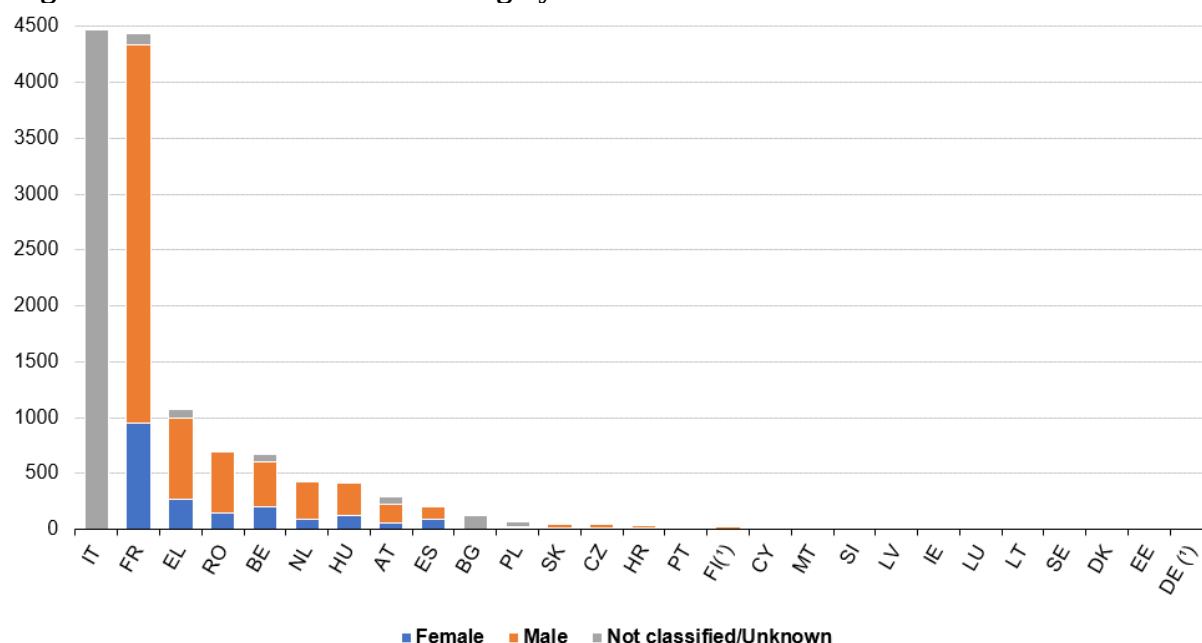


Source: Eurostat (extraction based on special request from [THB annual data](#))

Where information on the sex of prosecuted individuals was recorded⁹, 75% of individuals prosecuted for trafficking crimes were male in 2023-2024 (6 153). The Member States with the highest shares of women among those prosecuted in 2023-2024 were Lithuania (50%) and Spain (46%).

⁹ Germany did not report the number of prosecuted individuals for 2023-2024. Bulgaria and Italy reported this number but not by sex. Belgium, Denmark and Finland values are missing for 2024.

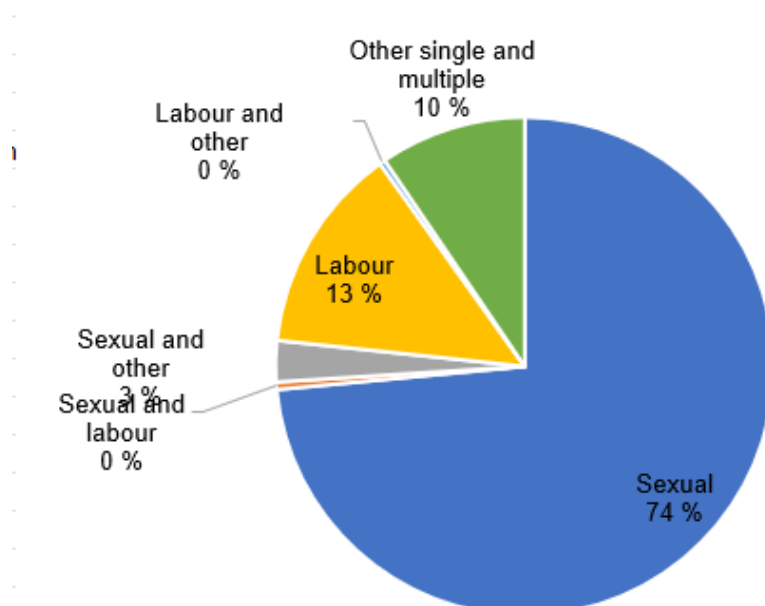
Figure 16. Prosecuted for trafficking by sex



Source: Eurostat (extraction based on special request from [THB annual data](#))

Sexual exploitation was still the most common reason for prosecution, accounting for 77% of all recorded prosecutions for trafficking crimes across the EU as compared to 72% in 2021-2022. In 2023-2024, all trafficking prosecutions (100%) in Malta and Slovenia were for sexual exploitation. The second most common form of exploitation was labour exploitation, representing 14% of all prosecutions for trafficking crimes in the EU.

Figure 17. Prosecuted for trafficking by form of exploitation



Source: Eurostat (extraction based on special request from [THB annual data](#))

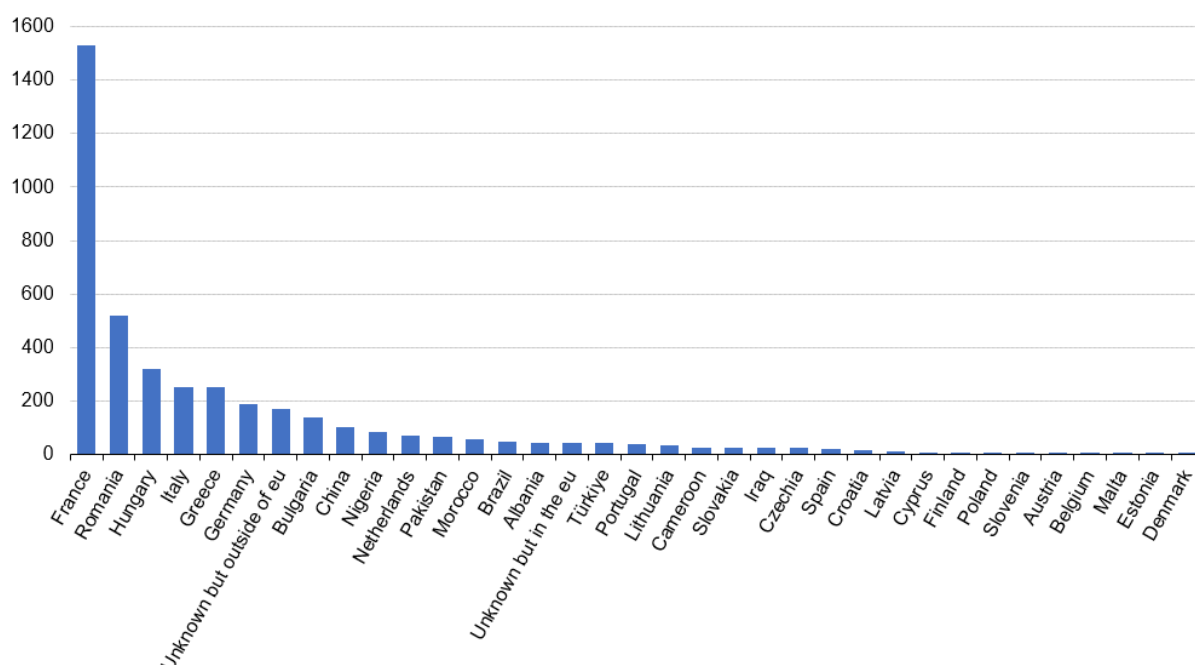
3. Individuals convicted of trafficking offences

The total number of individuals convicted of trafficking crimes (both EU and non-EU citizenships) increased by 3.8% between 2021-2022 (4 728) and 2023-2024 (4 908). Within the reporting period 2023-2024, EU citizens accounted for 75% of all individuals with known citizenship convicted for trafficking crimes.

The Member States with most citizens among convicted individuals were France (1 530), Romania (518), Hungary (318), and Italy (251).

The most frequently recorded known non-EU countries of citizenship among convicted individuals were China (103), Nigeria (81), and Pakistan (67).

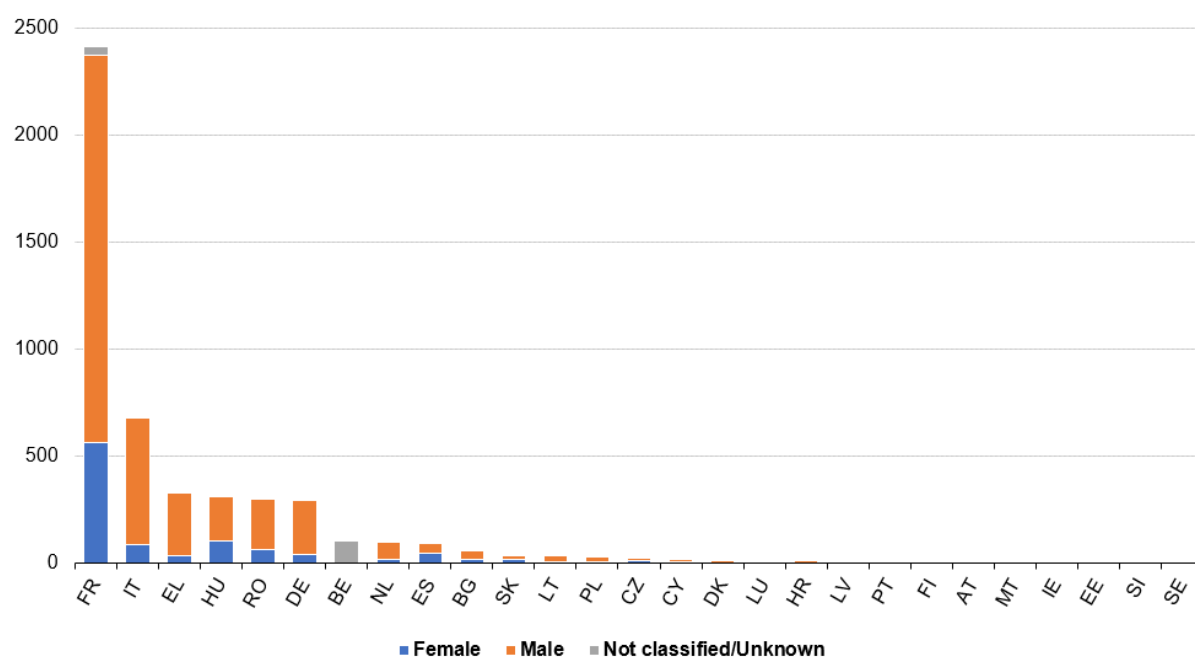
Figure 18. Trafficking convicts per citizenship of EU and top 10 non-EU nationals



Source: Eurostat (online data code, [crim_thb_sex](#))

In line with the preceding sections, the overwhelming majority (78%) of individuals convicted of trafficking crimes in the EU in 2023-2024 were men. Member States that convicted a high share of women in 2023-2024 were Ireland (100%) and Portugal (55%).

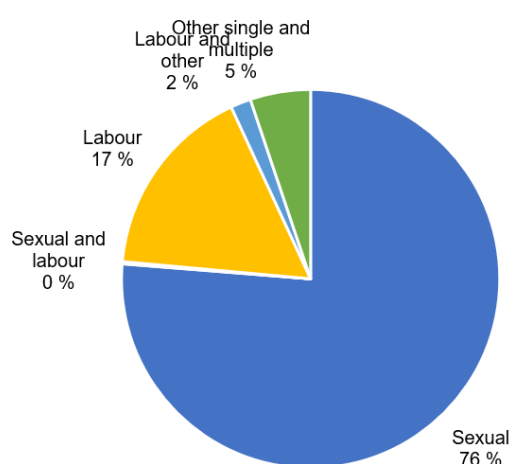
Figure 19. Persons convicted for trafficking by sex¹⁰



Source: Eurostat (online data code, [crim_thb_sex](#))

Sexual exploitation was the most frequent form of exploitation recorded for convicted individuals (76%), reaching 100% in Estonia, Ireland, and Luxembourg. The Member States with the lowest numbers of convictions for sexual exploitation were Lithuania (17%), Cyprus (26%) and Italy (27%)¹¹.

Figure 20. Persons convicted for trafficking by form of exploitation



Source: Eurostat (extraction based on special request from [THB annual data](#))

¹⁰ The values for Belgium are missing in 2023 and 2024 and the values for Ireland and Finland are missing for 2024.

¹¹ The breakdown of convictions by form of exploitation was not available for Bulgaria, Czechia, Denmark, Austria, Poland, Portugal, and Slovakia in 2023-2024. In addition, no such data on 2024 were available for Finland, Ireland, and Malta.

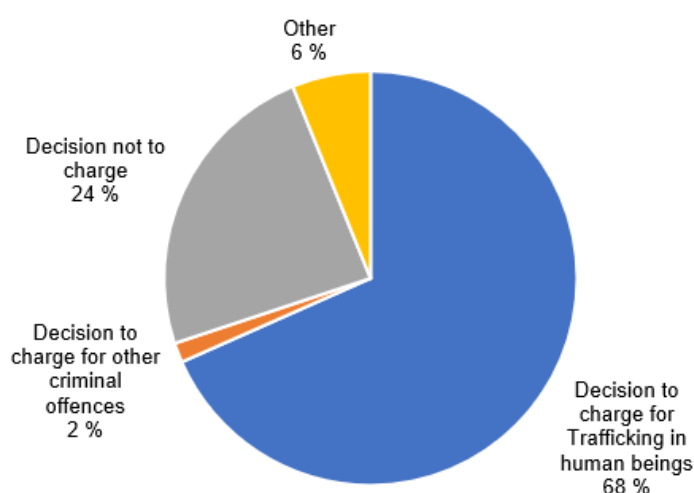
4. Final decisions of prosecution

In 2023-2024, 68% of 5 135 final decisions of the prosecutors in the EU brought charges for trafficking in human beings, 2% for another criminal offence and 24% of final prosecutorial decisions did not bring charges at all¹².

All final decision of the prosecutors brought charges for trafficking in human beings in seven Member States: Denmark, Italy, Latvia, Hungary, Malta, Slovakia and Sweden. The Member States with the smallest percentage of final decisions bringing charges for trafficking in human beings were Luxembourg (14%), Romania (27%) and Poland (34%).

The Member States with the highest percentage of final prosecution decisions where charges were not brought at all was Romania (73%), while the countries with the smallest percentage of final decisions where no charges were brought at all were Greece (7%), Cyprus and Poland (8% each).

Figure 21. Final prosecution decisions by outcome



Source: Eurostat (extraction based on special request from [THB annual data](#))

5. Court judgements

In 2023-2024, 77% of 6 558 court judgements in Member States led to convictions, while 11% led to acquittals¹³.

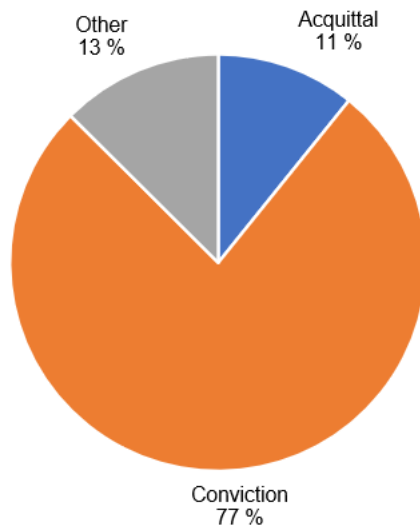
The Member States with the highest percentage of acquittals in their total number of court judgements were Slovenia (100%), Denmark (69%), and Finland (57%). The countries with the lowest percentage of acquittals in their total number of court judgements were France, Hungary and Romania (1% each), Poland (6%) and Czechia (7%). The totality

¹² The number of final decisions of the prosecution service by outcome was not available for Germany, Spain Austria, Portugal and Finland in 2023-2024. In addition, such data were not available for Denmark and Estonia in 2024.

¹³ The number of court judgements by outcome was not available for Spain for 2023-2024. In addition, this number was not available for Belgium and Slovakia for 2023 and for Ireland for 2024.

(100%) of court judgements led to convictions in eight Member States: Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg and Malta.

Figure 22. Court judgements for trafficking by decision



Source: Eurostat (extraction based on special request from [THB annual data](#))

6. Use of exploited services

In the EU in 2024, 130 individuals were suspected of using services provided by victims of trafficking. Most suspected users were reported by Sweden (68), followed by Czechia (45), Romania (16), and the Netherlands (1). In addition, 33 individuals were prosecuted, primarily in Greece (22). Many countries do not report the data as the use of services is not criminalised or data are not available.