



National Rapporteur on Trafficking in
Human Beings and Sexual Violence
against Children

Annual figures
Human trafficking
2022

trafficking in human beings

CONTENTS

VICTIMS

- forms of human trafficking
- origin of victims
- age of victims
- reporters

PERPETRATORS

- suspects known to the police
- prosecution

REFLECTION

- what do the 2022 figures tell us?

INTRODUCTION

The National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children has a statutory duty to investigate the nature and extent of human trafficking and sexual violence against children in the Netherlands and to advise the Dutch government on combating these forms of crime. Every year, we provide an update on the state of human trafficking in the Netherlands. In this report, we present figures of both (potential and actual) offenders and victims in 2022. To put these figures in perspective, figures of previous years are also included in this report.

The figures provide insight into victims who are known to both civil society organisations and the government. We also provide insight into (potential and actual) offenders who are known to the police and the number of prosecutions and trials. We use the reporting and registration figures of the Coordination Centre for Human Trafficking (CoMensha), the Dutch police and the Public Prosecution Service. Using these figures, among other things, the National Rapporteur reports recent developments and bottlenecks in the fight against human trafficking.

The Human Trafficking Annual Figures are published annually. In addition, the National Rapporteur releases the Human Trafficking Monitor every two years. The Human Trafficking Monitor includes more figures and has more room for explanation of those figures and discussion of relevant developments.

The registrations of organisations that monitor victims or (potential or actual) perpetrators are not always complete. That means information is sometimes missing. Therefore, a significant 'unknown' category appears regularly in this annual report. However, the number of reports that are incomplete is decreasing. This is positive because it allows for a better picture of who the victims and perpetrators are and what form of trafficking they are involved in.

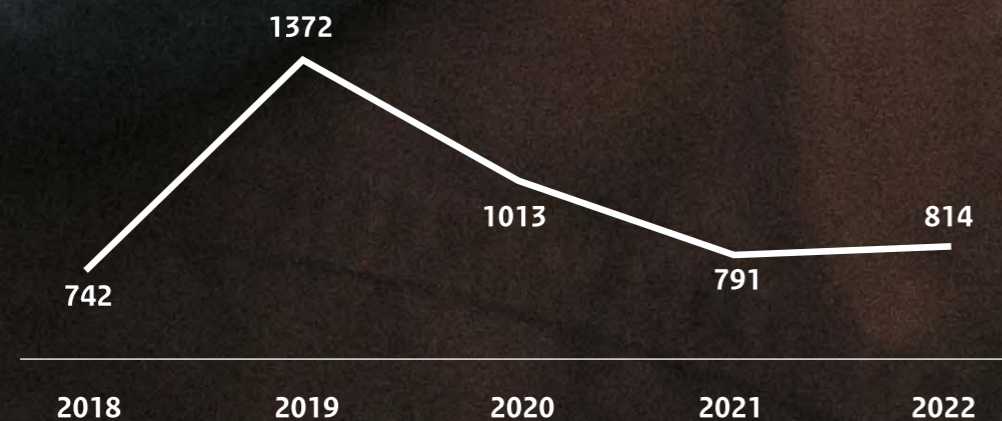
VICTIMS

DECREASE IN NUMBER OF REPORTS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IS STABILISING

814 victims of human trafficking were reported in 2022.

This means the downward trend in the number of victims reported in recent years has not continued. It is still a low number of victims who are known to organizations, especially when set against the estimated 5,000 victims each year.

This raises the question of how the detection and identification of victims by investigative organisations and other parties who may play a role in this can be improved. The National Rapporteur is currently investigating this.



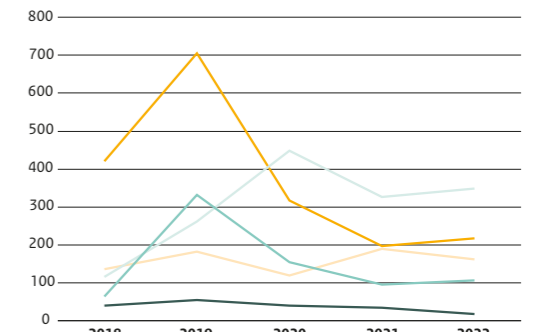
Forms of human trafficking



SEXUAL EXPLOITATION IS THE MOST COMMONLY REPORTED FORM OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Domestic and international sexual exploitation together constitute the most reported form of human trafficking in 2022.

Compared to 2021, there are few differences. There has been a small increase in the number of reports of international sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and labour exploitation. There has been a small decrease in the number of reports of domestic sexual exploitation. Although more attention is being paid to criminal exploitation (especially of young people) as a form of trafficking, the identification of victims is lagging behind.



	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Domestic sexual exploitation	135	181	119	189	162
International sexual exploitation	420	705	317	197	217
Labour exploitation	114	261	449	326	348
Criminal exploitation	63	331	154	95	106
Unknown	39	54	39	33	16

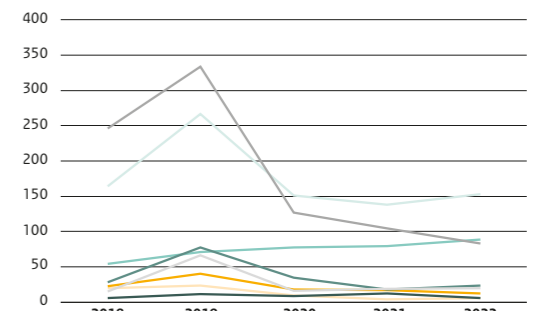
Note: The numbers add up to more than the total number of victims, because victims may have experienced multiple forms of exploitation
Source: CoMensha databases

Form of exploitation per year



RISE IN REPORTS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION IN HOME PROSTITUTION

Sexual exploitation, as in previous years, is most common in home prostitution, followed by escort/hotel prostitution. Both sectors saw an increase in reports compared to last year. By contrast, the number of reports of sexual exploitation in 2022 in the visible sectors, window prostitution and brothels, clubs and private houses, is again low compared to previous years.



	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Window prostitution (above everything except brothels)	20	24	10	<5	6
Brothels/clubs/private houses (above all)	23	40	18	17	12
Home prostitution (above Other and not worked yet)	164	267	151	138	153
Escort/Hotel prostitution (above all other less visible sectors)	54	71	78	79	89
Street prostitution (takes precedence over other)	28	78	35	18	24
Other sectors (massage & internet) (only above not worked yet)	6	11	9	12	6
Haven't worked yet	15	66	16	19	20
Unknown (exclusively)	246	334	127	105	83

Source: CoMensha databases

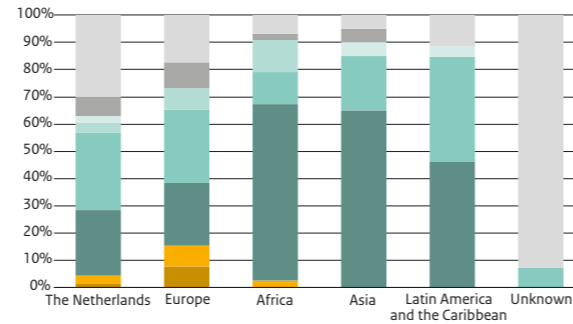
Year of reporting

VICTIMS



NATIONALITIES OF VICTIMS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION IN DIFFERENT SECTORS

Looking at the origins of victims of sexual exploitation in different sectors, it is notable that 77 African victims were reported exploited in home prostitution in 2022. African victims are also reflected in reports of exploitation in street prostitution and escort/hotel prostitution.



Sector	The Netherlands	Europe	Africa	Asia	Latin America and the Caribbean	Unknown
Unknown (exclusively)	49	9	8	<5	<5	13
Haven't worked yet	11	5	<5	<5	<5	<5
Other sectors (massage & internet) (only above not worked yet)	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5
Street prostitution (takes precedence over other)	6	<5	14	<5	<5	<5
Escort/Hotel prostitution (above all other less visible sectors)	46	14	14	<5	10	<5
Home prostitution (above Other and not worked yet)	39	12	77	13	12	<5
Brothels/clubs/private houses (above all)	5	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5
Window prostitution (above everything except brothels)	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5

Source: CoMensha databases

Subsectors sexual exploitation by origin based on nationality – 2022

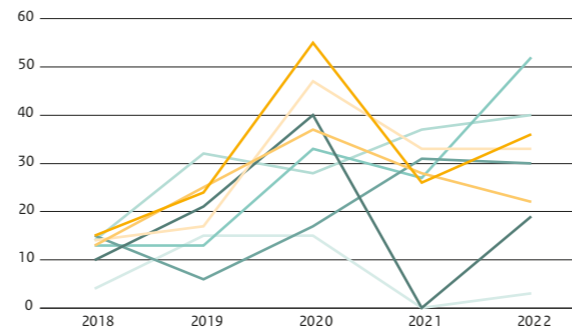


SMALL INCREASE IN REPORTS OF LABOUR EXPLOITATION, ESPECIALLY IN THE TRANSPORT AND STORAGE AND CONSTRUCTION SECTORS

Labour exploitation in 2022 was most frequently reported in the 'transport and storage', 'construction' and 'other labour/services' sectors.

The number of reports of labour exploitation in the 'transport and storage' sector increased compared to previous years. Compared to 2021, when there were no reports of exploitation in the 'house-keeping' sector, there were 19 reports in 2022.

Reported victims from the 'transport and storage' sector are mainly from Romania (13), Croatia (10) and Spain, Hungary and Bulgaria (5 each). 7 victims originating from the Philippines were reported in the 'house-keeping' sector.



Sector	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Wholesale/retail	<5	15	15	<5	<5
Construction	14	32	28	37	40
Transport and storage	13	13	33	27	52
Industry	15	6	17	31	30
Households	10	21	40	<5	19
Catering industry	14	17	47	33	33
Agriculture/forestry/fishing	13	25	37	28	22
Other work/services	15	24	55	26	36
Unknown or haven't worked yet (exclusively)	16	108	177	144	113

Source: CoMensha databases

Subsectors of labor exploitation



PROPORTION OF MINOR VICTIMS OF CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION RISING

The proportion of minor victims of criminal exploitation has been rising in recent years and this increase has also continued in 2022. There were also slightly more victims in the 18–22 age group.

Although there has been more attention recently to victims of criminal exploitation, for example young people forced into drug crime, they are still hardly known as victims of human trafficking.



Source: CoMensha databases

Number of victims of criminal exploitation

VICTIMS

Origin of victims



A MAJORITY OF VICTIMS COME FROM EUROPE

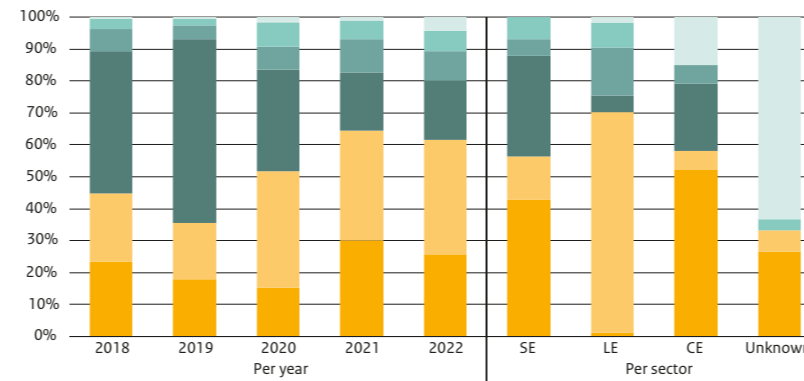
In 2022, a majority of trafficking victims are from Europe (including the Netherlands). This has been the case since 2020, when there was a turnaround. In previous years, most of the victims were from Africa.

European victims are particularly prevalent in reports of labour exploitation. Some 70% of victims of this form of human trafficking comes from Europe. They are victims of sexual exploitation to a lesser extent and European victims (excluding the Netherlands) are seen in reports of criminal exploitation only to a very limited extent.

The decrease in the number of reports of African victims seems to be stabilising. African victims are mainly victims of international sexual exploitation (79% of the number of victims of this form of human trafficking) and mainly come from Nigeria (37%) and Uganda (30%).

There were 75 Asian victims reported, which is in line with the number of reports from previous years. The reports of Asian victims mainly concern labour exploitation (68%) and international sexual exploitation (27%).

There are 53 victims from Latin America reported of which about half has faced labour exploitation and the other half sexual exploitation.



	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	SE	LE	CE	Unknown
Per year									
Unknown	<5	8	15	9	35	<5	6	10	19
Other	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5
Latin America and the Caribbean	25	27	76	44	53	26	26	<5	<5
Asia	50	57	74	83	75	20	51	<5	<5
Africa	330	791	322	145	151	119	18	14	<5
Europe	159	243	368	272	291	52	233	<5	<5
The Netherlands	174	244	155	237	209	162	<5	35	8

Source: CoMensha databases

Origin of victims reported to CoMensha 2018-2022 - and by sector in 2022

INCREASE IN REPORTS OF UKRAINIAN VICTIMS

An increase can be seen in 2022 compared to previous years as regards reports of Ukrainian victims. Where there were only 7 reports in 2021, this increased to 51 by 2022. These mainly concern cases of labour exploitation and a small number of cases of sexual exploitation. This increase gives an indication of the vulnerability of Ukrainian refugees of facing a form of exploitation during their journey to or their stay in the Netherlands.

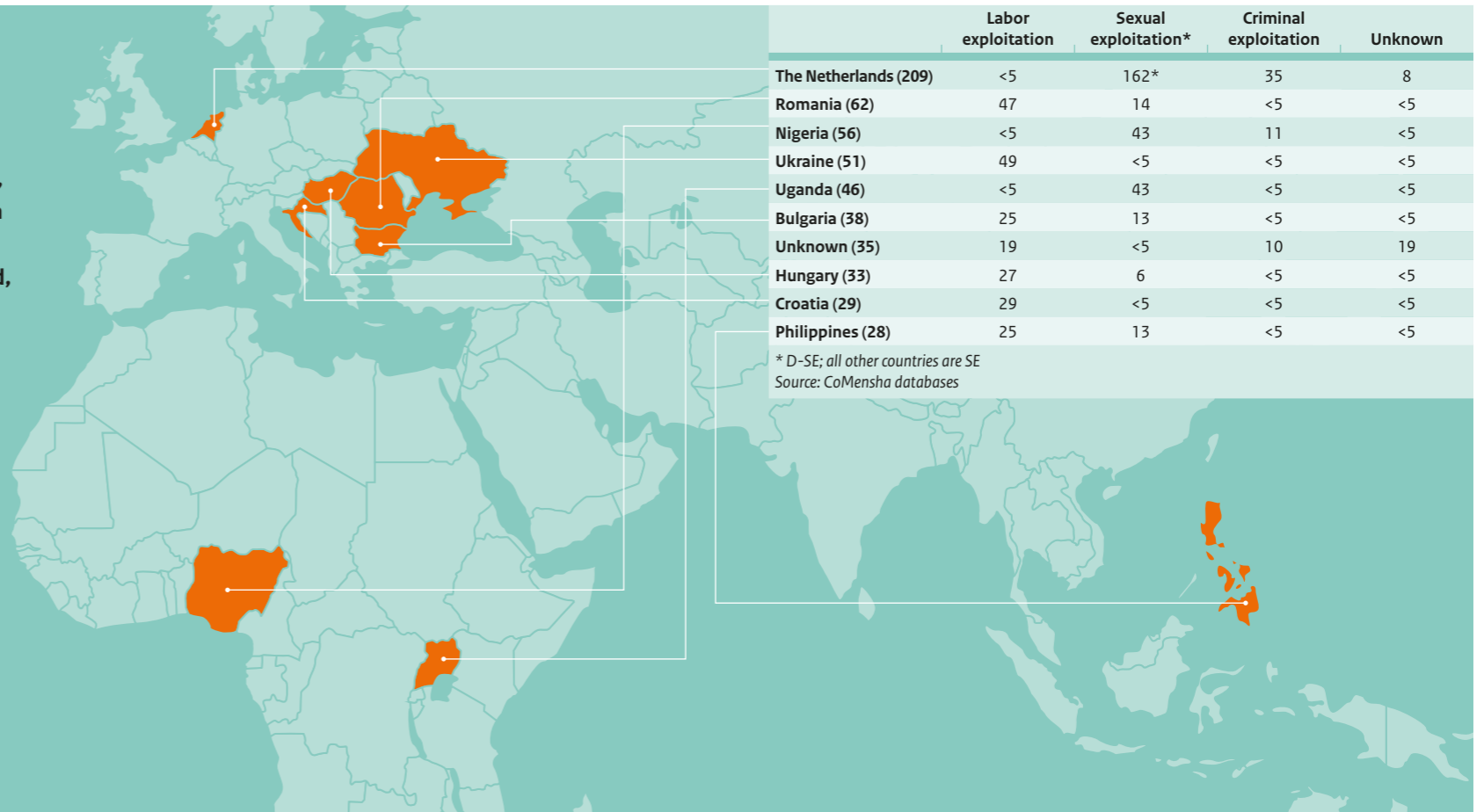
It concerns 33 female victims in the Netherlands (of which <5 minors) and 18 adult males.

The majority of labour exploitation cases, 47 of a total of 49 reports of labour exploitation with a victim from Ukraine, was reported by FairWork. There are 34 reports of labour exploitation where there is no registration of which sector the exploitation took place in. Seven of the reports of labour exploitation concern agriculture/forestry/fishing. Other victims have been exploited in the construction, industrial, hospitality sectors and other labour or services.



TOP 10 NATIONALITIES X SECTOR 2022

Looking at the form of human trafficking faced by the top 10 nationalities of victims yields the following picture. Dutch victims are reported most frequently, particularly as victims of sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation. Romania ranks second with mainly victims of labour exploitation and, to a lesser extent, sexual exploitation. Nigerian and Ugandan victims are mostly sexually exploited, with Nigerian victims also having 11 reports of criminal exploitation. Reports of Ukrainian victims have increased compared to previous years. They are mainly reported as victims of labour exploitation.



* D-SE; all other countries are SE
Source: CoMensha databases

VICTIMS

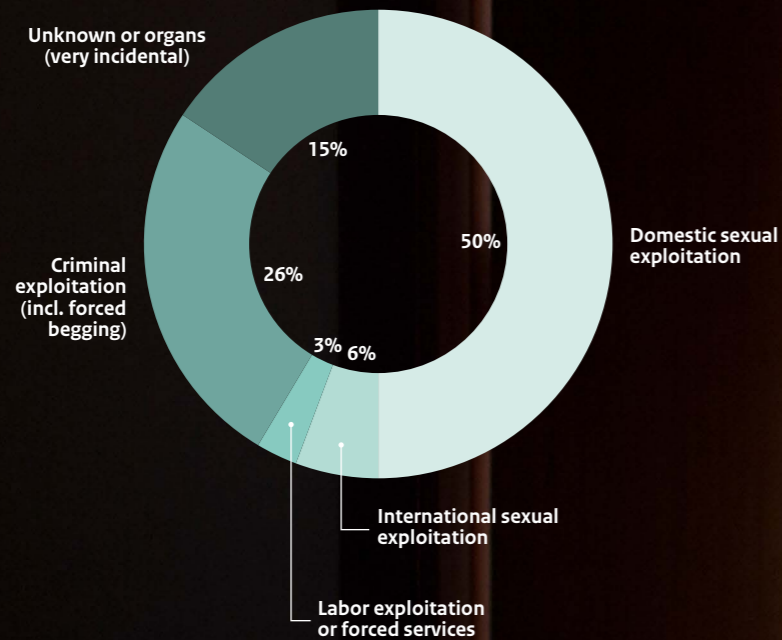
Age and gender

MINOR VICTIMS

There were 70 child victims of trafficking by reported in 2022, slightly fewer than last year. Half of which have been reported as victims of domestic sexual exploitation and just over a quarter are victims of criminal exploitation.

Of the 70 minor victims, 48 have Dutch nationality. Furthermore, 7 European minors were reported and 12 victims with an unknown nationality or country of birth.

Most reports of victimisation among minors come from care coordinators (73%), followed by police (23%).



Sectors minors

Source: CoMensha-databases

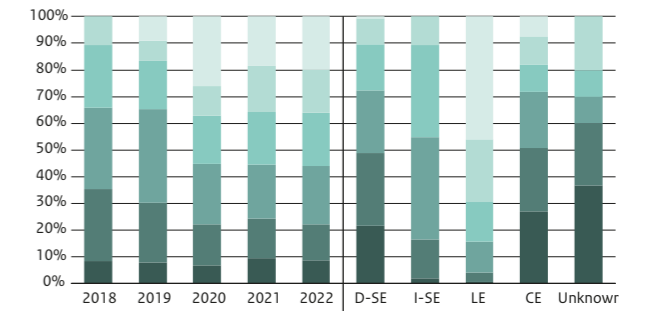


AGE OF VICTIMS

People of all ages become victims of human trafficking. Ages of victims in 2022 range between 12.4 and 67.9 years old. Victims of different forms can be divided into three age groups that are significantly different from each other. On average, the youngest are the victims of domestic sexual exploitation (25.8 years), criminal exploitation (25.8 years) and the group whose form of trafficking is unknown (24.9 years).

Victims of international sexual exploitation are older (30.3 years).

The oldest are victims of labour exploitation; they are on average 37.3 years old.



	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	D-SE	I-SE	LE	CE	Unknowr
Unknown	<5	123	264	147	162	<5	<5	156	5	<5
40+	79	104	111	137	131	16	23	79	7	6
30-39	175	248	183	155	163	28	75	50	7	<5
23-29	225	481	231	161	177	38	83	39	14	<5
18-22 (Adolescent)	200	308	156	116	111	44	32	12	16	7
Minor and adolescent	63	108	68	75	70	35	<5	<5	18	11

Source: CoMensha-databases

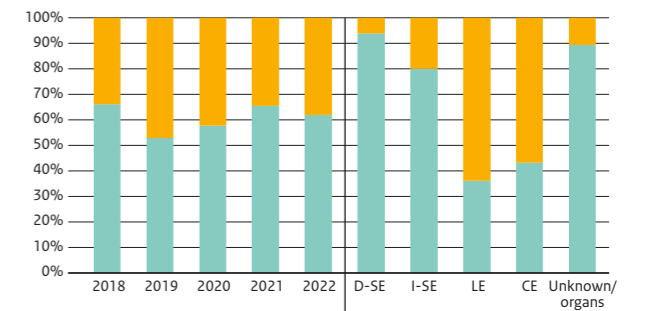
Age category of victims per year – and per sector 2022



GENDER OF VICTIMS

Similar to previous years, female victims also outnumber male victims in 2022. It involves 500 female victims and 309 male victims.

Sexual exploitation significantly more often involves female victims, while labour exploitation and criminal exploitation more often involve male victims.



	Per year in general					2022				
Man	250	643	420	268	309	10	43	215	38	<5
Woman	491	725	576	510	500	151	174	121	29	25

Source: CoMensha-databases

VICTIMS

Reporters

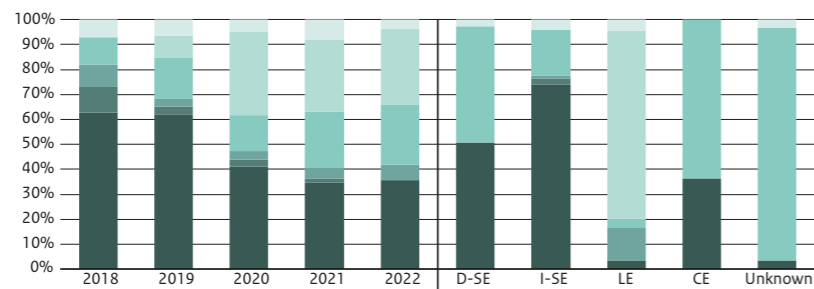


DECREASE IN NUMBER OF POLICE REPORTS APPEARS TO BE STABILISING

The number of victims reported by the police has shown a downward trend in recent years. In 2022, the number of reports remained almost the same as in 2021. The police mainly report sexual exploitation. They have limited insight into criminal exploitation. These reports come mainly from care coordinators.

The number of reports by care coordinators is increasing. The regional approach to human trafficking seems to be taking more shape. The number of reports by Fairwork, which are mainly about labour exploitation, is also increasing.

The number of reports made by the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee (Kmar) was already decreasing in recent years and that decrease continues in 2022. Kmar only reported 6 victims, compared to 86 in 2018. Research by the National Rapporteur previously showed that there are some barriers for Kmar investigators to identify trafficking victims, such as lack of capacity and investigative powers.



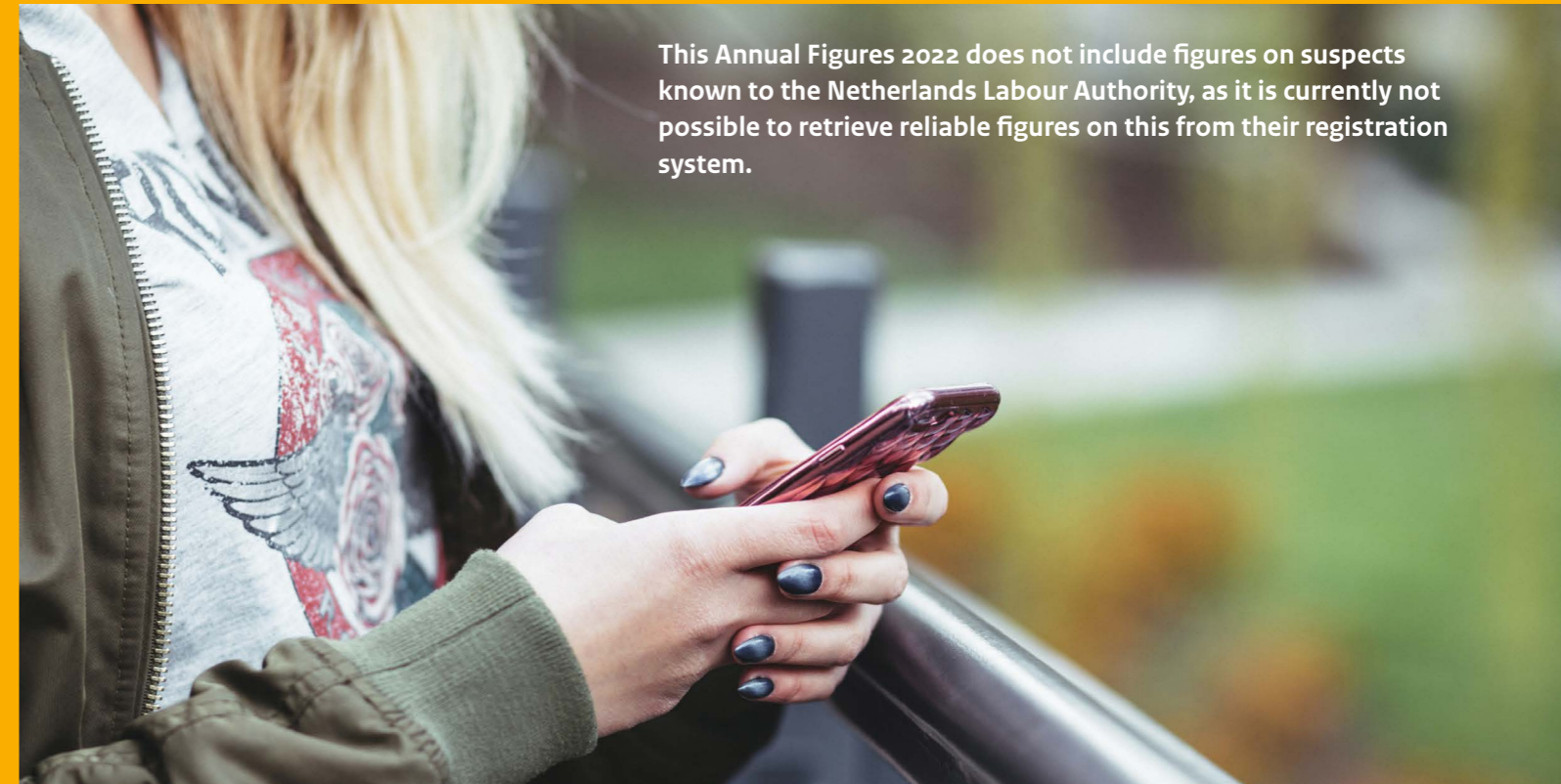
	Per year					2022				
Other reporters	56	101	54	72	32	5	10	16	<5	<5
Fairwork	5	134	378	255	274	<5	<5	274	<5	<5
Care coordinators	91	252	164	198	216	83	47	14	44	28
NLA	75	46	38	40	50	<5	<5	47	<5	<5
KMar	86	48	31	16	6	<5	6	<5	<5	<5
Police	530	953	468	307	317	91	187	13	25	<5

Source: CoMensha-databases

Reporters per year – and per sector in 2022

PERPETRATORS

Suspects known to the police



This Annual Figures 2022 does not include figures on suspects known to the Netherlands Labour Authority, as it is currently not possible to retrieve reliable figures on this from their registration system.

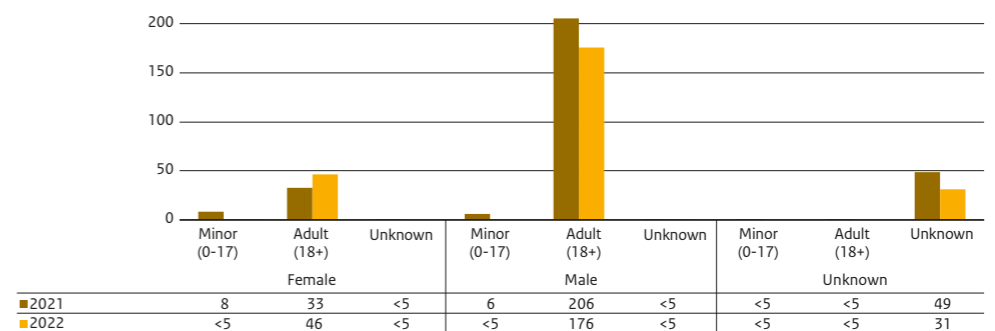


FEWER SUSPECTS KNOWN TO POLICE

Police became aware of 255 human trafficking suspects in 2022. They include 176 men, 46 women, fewer than five minors and 32 persons whose age is unknown. This is significantly fewer than in 2021, when there were 306 suspects known.

The vast majority of suspects, 170, has Dutch nationality. There are also 20 Romanian suspects and five suspects with Spanish nationality. Other suspects are spread across different nationalities.

The police launched 165 investigations in 2022 because there were enough signs of human trafficking. This is somewhat fewer than in 2021, when 168 investigations were started. Thus, a drop in the number of suspects becoming known to the police has not led to a large drop in the number of investigations launched.



Source: EMM databases

PERPETRATORS

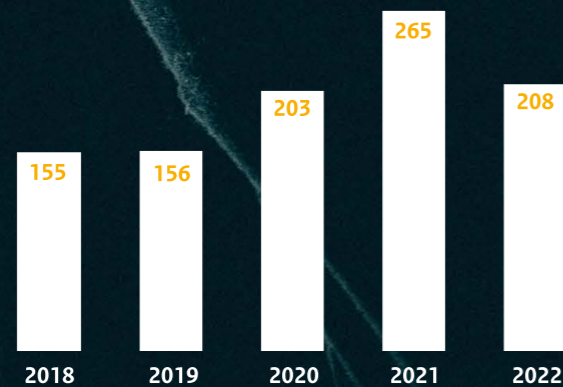
Prosecution



NUMBER OF CASES REGISTERED WITH THE PUBLIC PROSECUTION SERVICE DECREASED COMPARED TO 2021

After the number of registered cases with the Public Prosecution Service rose to 265 in 2021, the number dropped again in 2022. 208 cases were registered. This falls short of the target set in the Security Agenda 2023/2026 (220).

After a decrease in the number of cases registered with the Public Prosecution Service, there was an upward trend after a low point in 2019. In 2022, this increase turned out not to have continued.



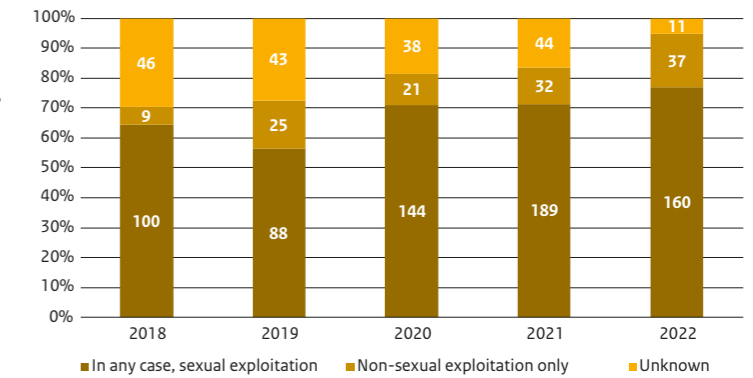
Registered cases with the Public Prosecution Service

Source: WODC databases



NUMBER OF CASES REGISTERED BY FORM OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

In any case, the vast majority of cases registered with the Public Prosecution Service involve sexual exploitation. The way the Public Prosecution Service registers cases does not allow for a further breakdown of the remaining cases by form. The 'exclusively non-sexual exploitation' category thus covers labour exploitation as well as criminal exploitation and possibly forced organ removal. On a positive note, the number of cases in which the form of trafficking was recorded as 'unknown' decreased.



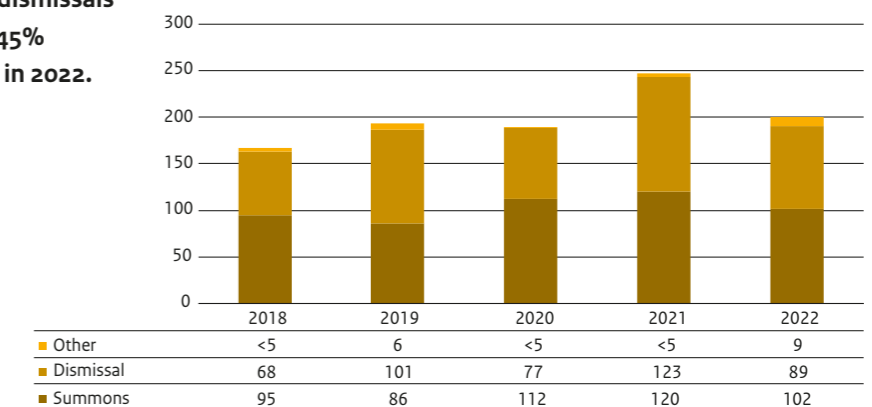
Source: WODC databases



HANDLING

In 2022, 200 cases were handled by the Public Prosecution Service. That is 47 fewer than the year before.

Of the 200 cases, 51% resulted in a summons and 45% in a dismissal. Compared to 2021, the number of dismissals in both absolute and relative terms has somewhat decreased; from 50% dismissals in 2021 to 45% dismissals in 2022.



Source: WODC databases

PERPETRATORS

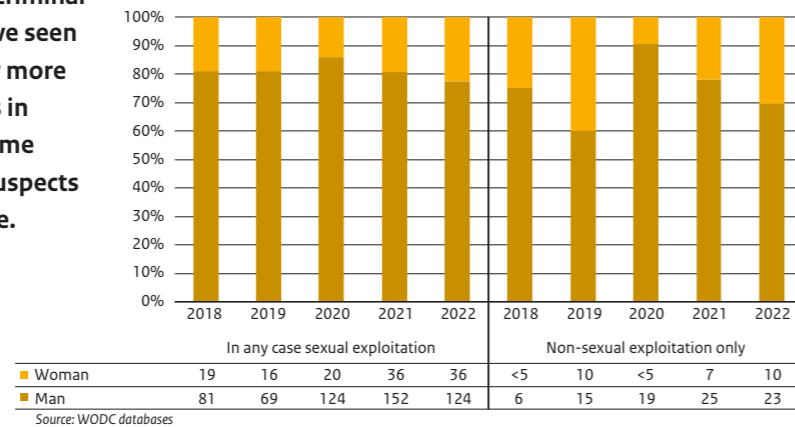
Prosecution



GENDER OF SUSPECTS BY HUMAN TRAFFICKING FORM 2018-2022

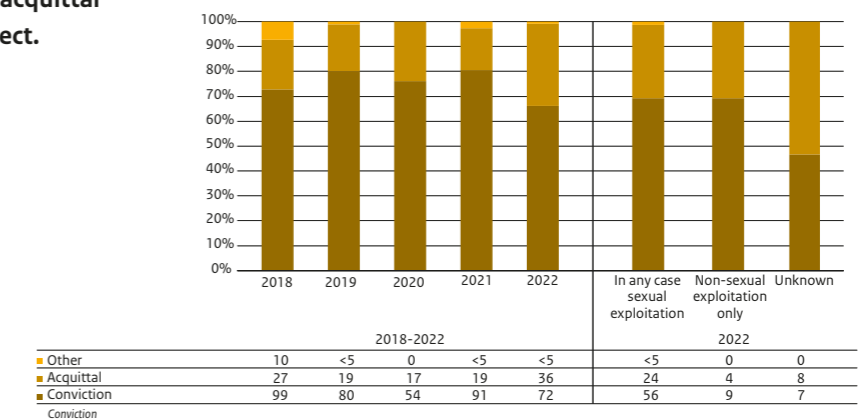
Human trafficking suspects continue to be predominantly male in 2022. Over the years, 78% of suspects has been male.

Cases involving labour exploitation or criminal exploitation have seen proportionately more female suspects in recent years. Some 24% (n=46) of suspects in 2022 is female.



JUDGMENT

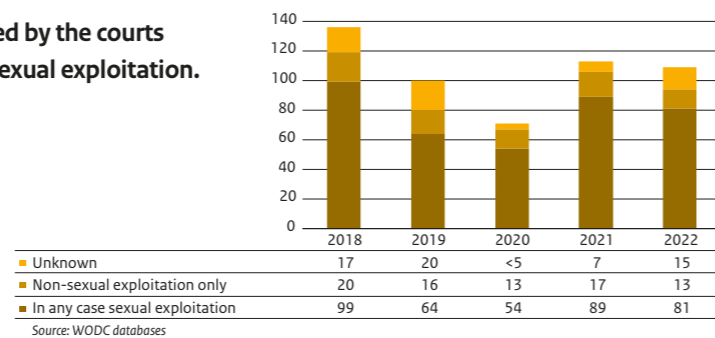
Of the 109 cases handled in 2022, conviction occurred in 66% of cases. This is the lowest conviction rate in the last five years. There has been a significant increase compared to last year and previous years in the number of cases that resulted in acquittal of the suspect.



CASES HANDLED BY THE COURT

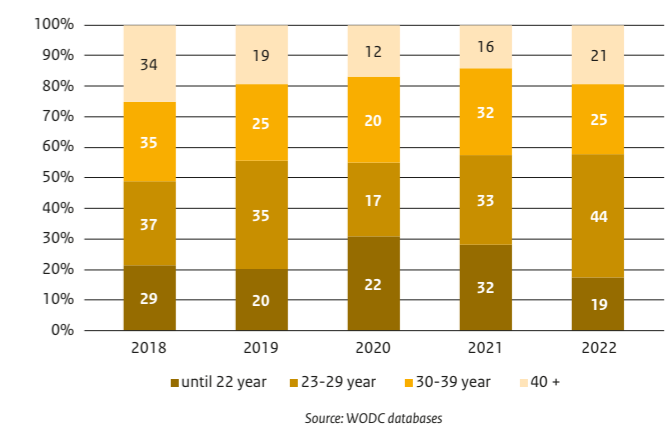
With 109 cases handled, there are 4 fewer cases handled than in 2021.

Most of the cases decided by the courts ($\pm 70\%$) involve at least sexual exploitation.



AGE OF TRIED SUSPECTS

The proportion of minor and adolescent suspects tried has decreased both in absolute and relative terms. In contrast, the group of suspects aged 23-30 years has increased.



REFLECTION

What do the 2022 figures tell us?

1 DECREASE IN NUMBER OF REPORTED VICTIMS SEEMS TO STABILISE, BUT STILL MANY VICTIMS ARE UNKNOWN

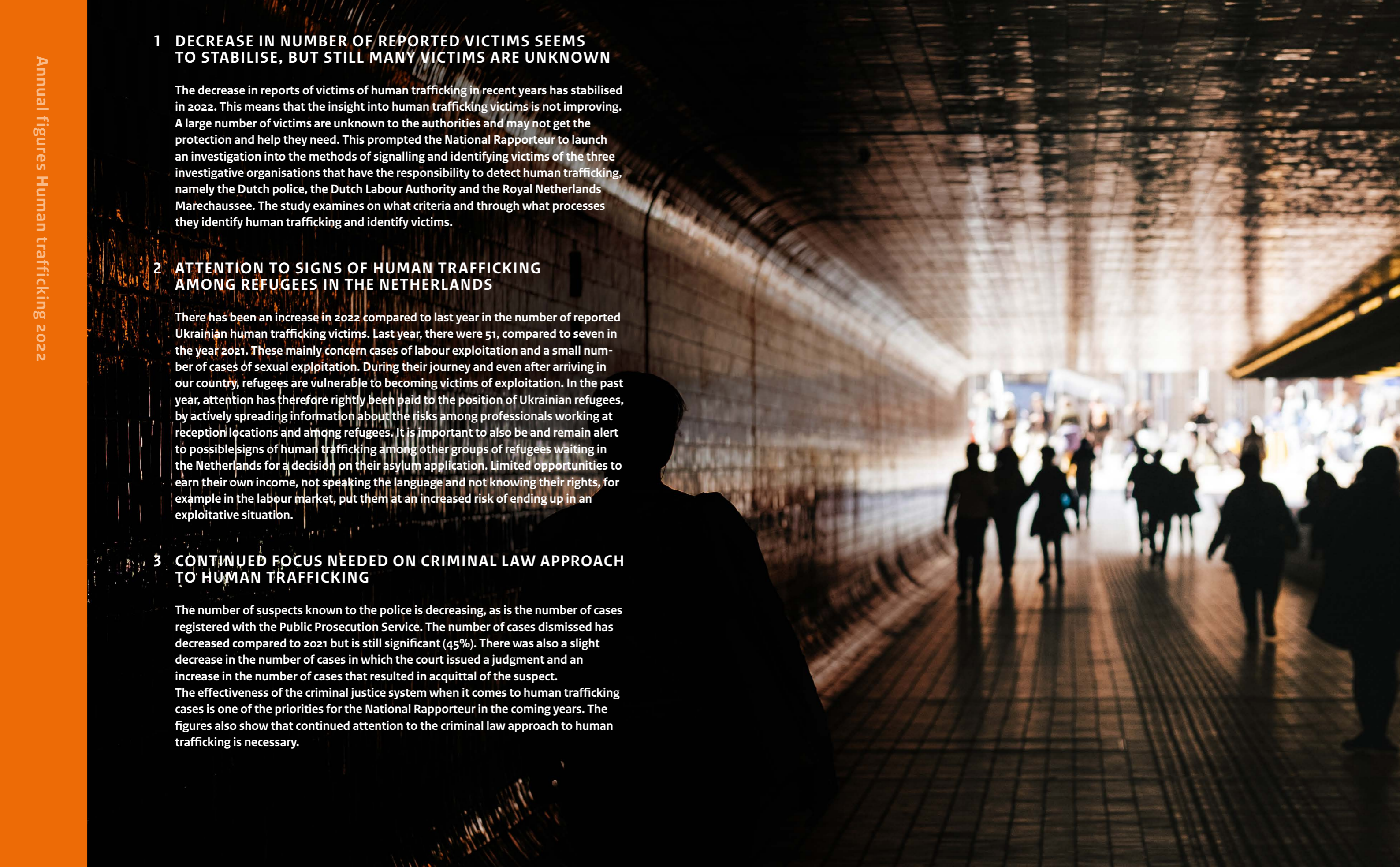
The decrease in reports of victims of human trafficking in recent years has stabilised in 2022. This means that the insight into human trafficking victims is not improving. A large number of victims are unknown to the authorities and may not get the protection and help they need. This prompted the National Rapporteur to launch an investigation into the methods of signalling and identifying victims of the three investigative organisations that have the responsibility to detect human trafficking, namely the Dutch police, the Dutch Labour Authority and the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee. The study examines on what criteria and through what processes they identify human trafficking and identify victims.

2 ATTENTION TO SIGNS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING AMONG REFUGEES IN THE NETHERLANDS

There has been an increase in 2022 compared to last year in the number of reported Ukrainian human trafficking victims. Last year, there were 51, compared to seven in the year 2021. These mainly concern cases of labour exploitation and a small number of cases of sexual exploitation. During their journey and even after arriving in our country, refugees are vulnerable to becoming victims of exploitation. In the past year, attention has therefore rightly been paid to the position of Ukrainian refugees, by actively spreading information about the risks among professionals working at reception locations and among refugees. It is important to also be and remain alert to possible signs of human trafficking among other groups of refugees waiting in the Netherlands for a decision on their asylum application. Limited opportunities to earn their own income, not speaking the language and not knowing their rights, for example in the labour market, put them at an increased risk of ending up in an exploitative situation.

3 CONTINUED FOCUS NEEDED ON CRIMINAL LAW APPROACH TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The number of suspects known to the police is decreasing, as is the number of cases registered with the Public Prosecution Service. The number of cases dismissed has decreased compared to 2021 but is still significant (45%). There was also a slight decrease in the number of cases in which the court issued a judgment and an increase in the number of cases that resulted in acquittal of the suspect. The effectiveness of the criminal justice system when it comes to human trafficking cases is one of the priorities for the National Rapporteur in the coming years. The figures also show that continued attention to the criminal law approach to human trafficking is necessary.



Colophon

Reference: Annual figures Human trafficking 2022

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