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Delegations will find attached document SWD(2022) 429 final.

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Brussels, 19.12.2022  
SWD(2022) 429 final

## **COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT**

**Statistics and trends in trafficking in human being in the European Union in 2019-2020**

*Accompanying the document*

**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE  
COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE  
COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**Report on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings (Fourth  
Report)**

{ COM(2022) 736 final }

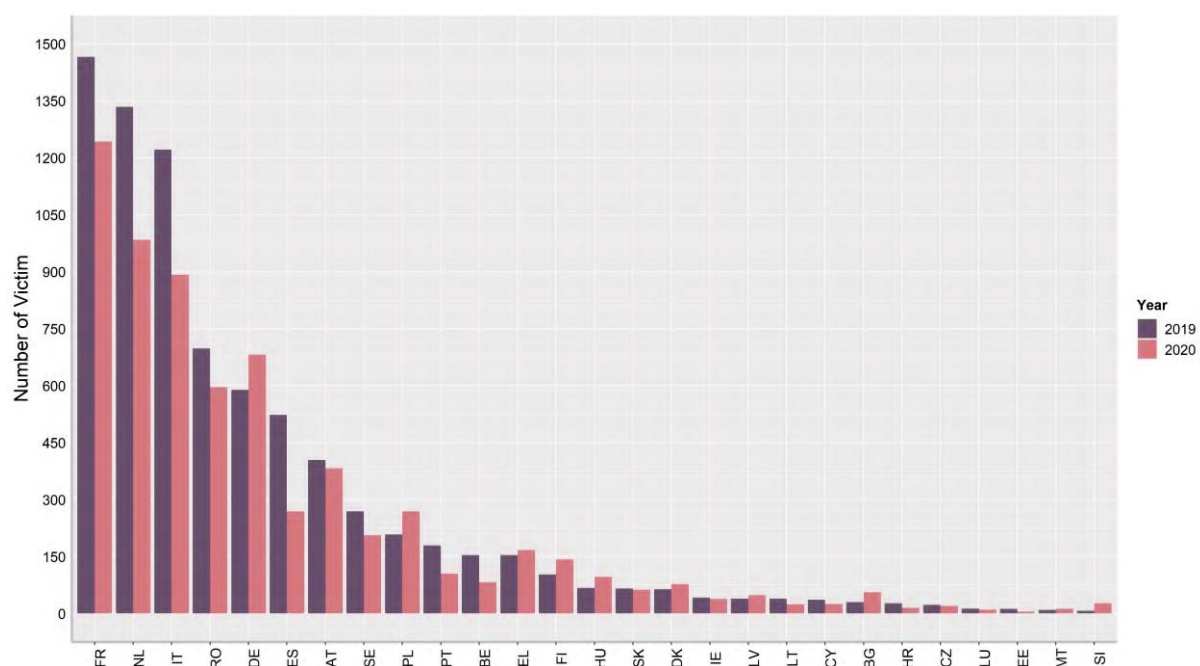
The Staff Working Document sets out the state of play regarding the levels of and trends in THB. The analysis is extracted from data provided by EUROSTAT<sup>1</sup>. The analysis will primarily focus on the period 2019-2020.

## 1. 1. TOTAL NUMBER OF VICTIMS: CURRENT SITUATION AND TRENDS

The **total number of victims registered in the EU27<sup>2</sup> during the period 2019-2020 was 14,311**, with an average of 8 registered EU-citizen victims per million inhabitants. The total annual number of victims showed a **slight decrease** from the 7,777 registered victims in 2019 to 6,534 in 2020. **The actual number of victims is likely significantly higher than reported data suggests**, as these statistics only capture victims that become known to one of the registering entities and many victims remain undetected.

The most victims were registered in 2019-2020 in **France** (2,709), in the **Netherlands** (2,318), in **Italy** (2,114), in **Romania** (1,294) and in **Germany** (1,271). If one considers the number of victims proportionate to the population size, rather than the absolute number of victims, the **most victims were registered in the Netherlands** (67 per 100 000 inhabitants), **Austria** (44 per 100 000 inhabitants), **Cyprus** (35 per 100 000 inhabitants), **Romania** (33 per 100 000 inhabitants) and **Sweden** (23 per 100 000 inhabitants).

**Figure 1: Number of victims per (registering) Member State in 2019-2020**



*Source: Eurostat*

<sup>1</sup> Eurostat collects data from the Member States via the national statistical offices. A questionnaire was sent to all Member States with requests to provide data per indicators, together with guidelines on how to fill in the questionnaire. All Member States provided data on victims for both 2019 and 2020. 25 Member States provided data on suspects in 2019 (all but EE and RO) and 23 in 2020 (all but EE, IE, NL and RO). 24 Member States provided data on prosecuted persons in 2019-2020 (all but CY, DE and IT). 26 Member States provided data on convicted persons in 2019 (all but IT) and 25 in 2020 (all but BE and IT).

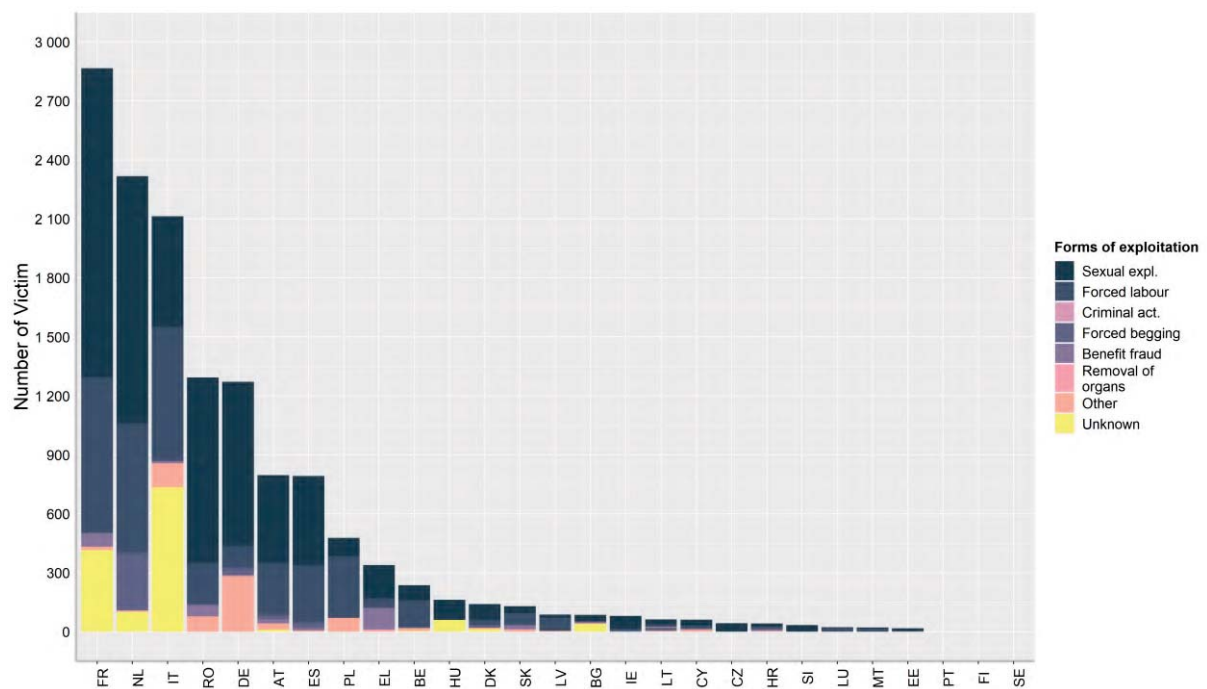
<sup>2</sup> The data collection does not include the UK.

## 2. 2. TRENDS IN THE FORMS OF EXPLOITATION

### 2.1. 2.1. Overview of trends

The main forms of exploitation in the EU are sexual exploitation and labour exploitation. During the reporting period, sexual exploitation made up 51% of the share of trafficking cases, followed by labour exploitation (28%). Other forms of exploitation in order of prevalence are criminal activities (3%), forced begging (3%), other non-specified (5%) and unknown (10%).

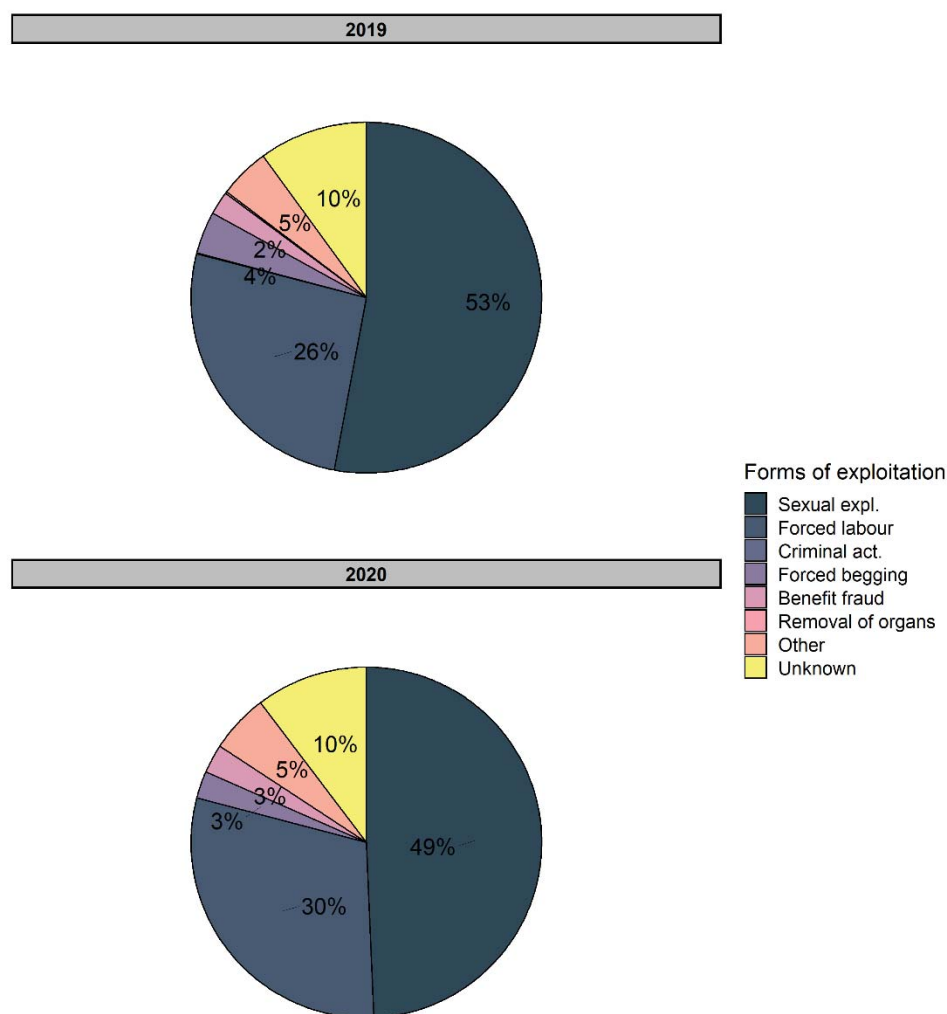
**Figure 2: Number of victims per Member State and form of exploitation in 2019-2020<sup>3</sup>**



Source: Eurostat

<sup>3</sup> FI, PT and SE did not provide data for this indicator.

**Figure 3: Repartition of the number of victims per form of exploitation**



Source: Eurostat

## 2.2. Sexual exploitation

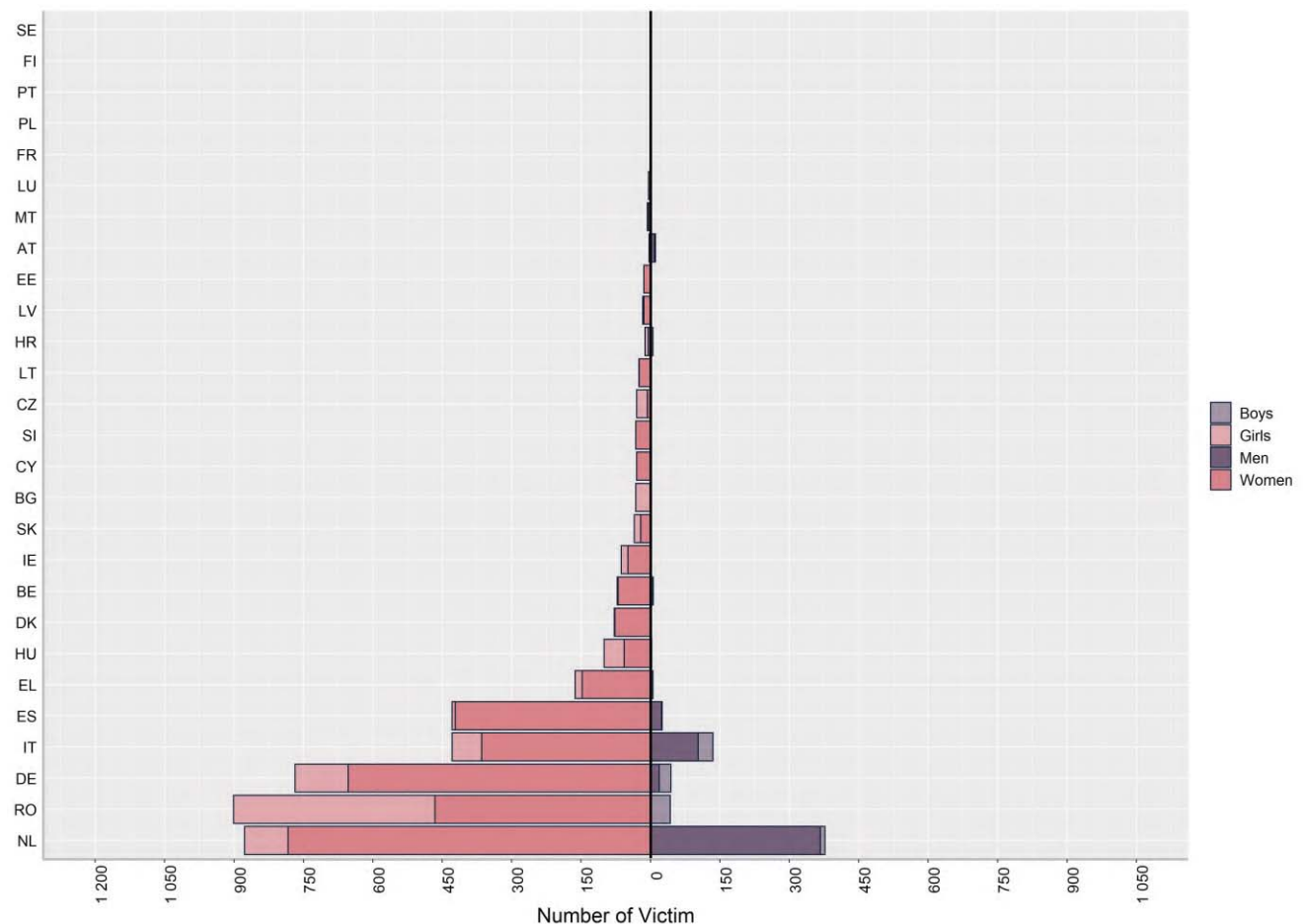
The **victims of sexual exploitation** are primarily female (87%)<sup>4</sup>, of which 73% women and 27% girls. In all Member States, female victims account for the majority of victims of sexual exploitation. The **Member States registering the highest numbers of female victims of sexual exploitation are Romania (901), the Netherlands (878), Germany (786), Austria (435), Italy (429) and Spain (429).**

Over the reporting period, **children accounted for 22% of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation** (with adults accounting for 78%). The Member States registering the highest number of child victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation are Romania (477), Germany (140), and the Netherlands (104).

**The number of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in the EU overall decreased from 2019 (3,833) to 2020 (3,037).**

<sup>4</sup> Prevalence is calculated on known values.

**Figure 4: Number of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation per Member State, sex and age in 2019-2020<sup>5</sup>**



Source: Eurostat

### 2.3. 2.3. Labour exploitation

Trafficking for **labour exploitation or forced labour is the second main form of exploitation in the EU (28%)**. Labour exploitation includes domestic work, care activities or cleaning services.

The Member States registering the highest numbers of victims of trafficking for labour exploitation are France (792), Italy (681), the Netherlands (660) and Poland (311). The most represented **EU citizenships** among registered victims are Romanian (493), Polish (267), and French (266).

The victims of trafficking for labour exploitation are mainly male (66%<sup>6</sup>), while females amount to 34%.

**Children** account for 3% of the reported victims for this form of exploitation.

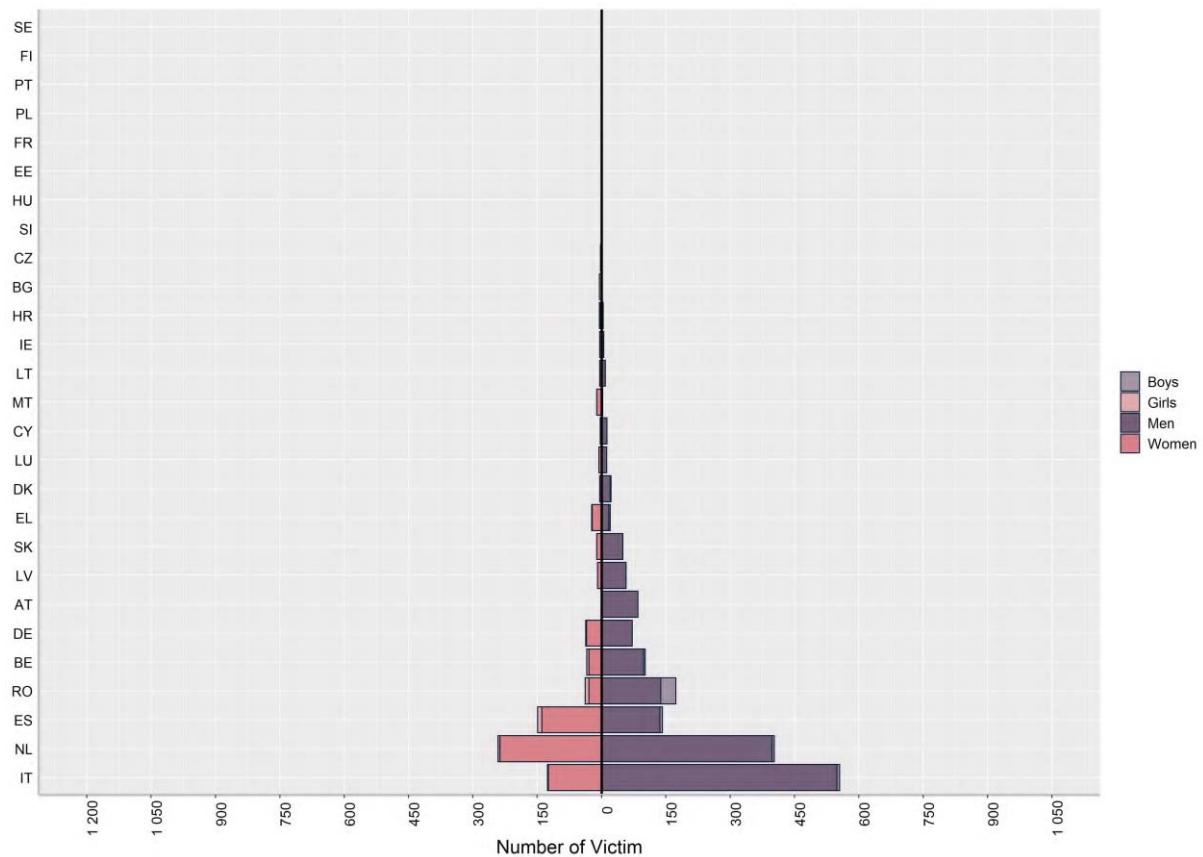
**The number of labour exploitation victims in the EU** in 2019 was 1786 and in 2020 1548. The numbers of victims over the broader reporting period suggest that there is an **increase in**

<sup>5</sup> FI, PT and SE did not provide data for this indicator.

<sup>6</sup> Prevalence is calculated on known values.

**victims of labour exploitation** in 2019-2020, as compared to 2015 (900), 2016 (1047), 2017 (1052), and 2018 (980).

**Figure 5: Number of victims of trafficking for labour exploitation per Member State, sex and age in 2019-2020<sup>7</sup>**



Source: Eurostat

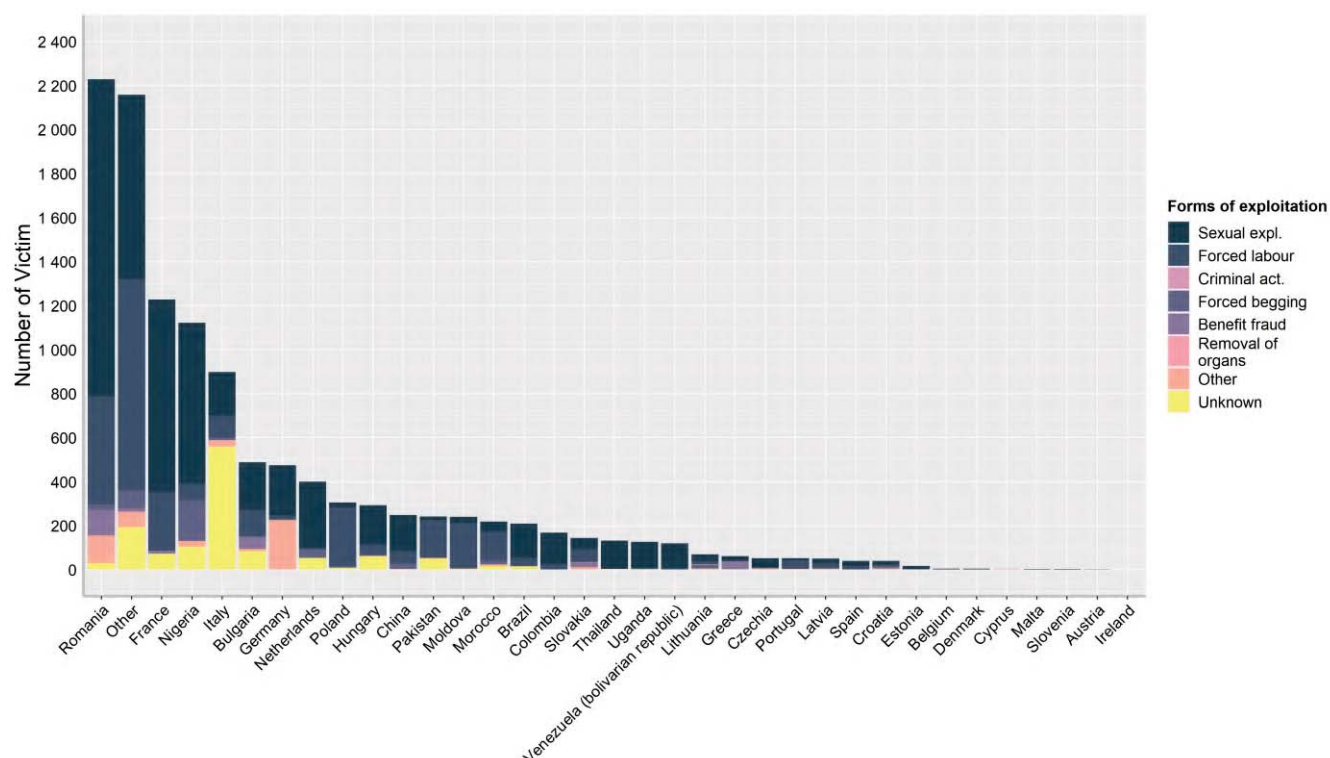
## 2.4. 2.4. Other forms of exploitation

Other forms of THB, excluding sexual and labour exploitation, account for 11%, which are 1,455 cases (in 2019 802 and in 2020 653) of cases where the form of exploitation was indicated. Forms of exploitation falling under the ‘other’ umbrella term include criminal activities (3% of all cases during 2019-2020), forced begging (3%), and benefit fraud and removal of organs (both less than 1%). Cases with a form of exploitation marked as ‘other’ (i.e., not indicating any of the aforementioned cases) account for 5% of all cases during the reporting period.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> EE, FI, PT and SE did not provide data for this indicator.

<sup>8</sup> For the remaining 10% of recorded victims of trafficking in human beings, the reported form of exploitation was ‘unknown’

**Figure 6: Number of victims per citizenship and form of exploitation in EU and the main non-EU countries in 2019-2020**



Source: Eurostat

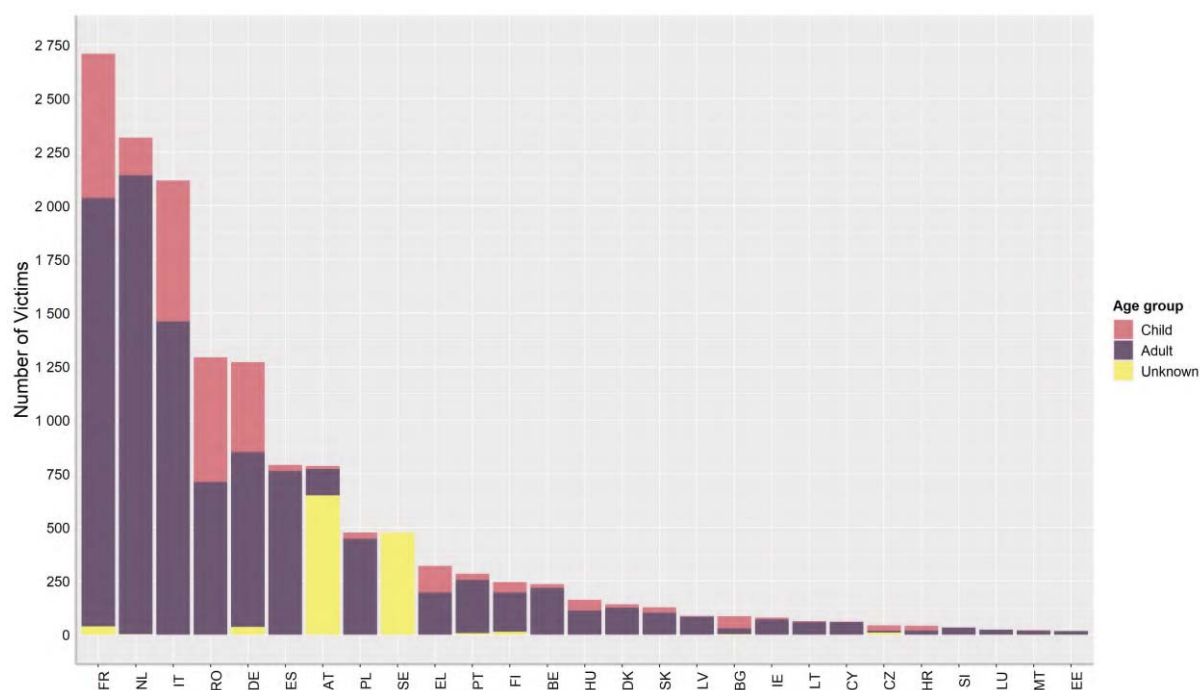
### 3. 3. TRENDS IN THE TYPES OF PEOPLE WHO ARE TRAFFICKED

#### 3.1. 3.1. Victims by age – child victims of trafficking in human beings

In 2019-2020, **child victims constituted over one-fifth of all registered victims in the EU (23%) where the victim's age group was known.** The **majority of child victims were female (75%).** The Member States with the highest numbers of registered child victims where the age group was known were France (672), Italy (657), Romania (582), and Germany (419). The largest proportion of child victims within a given citizenship was Maltese (100%), Greek (75%), German (67%), Italian (63%), Czech (53%) and Finnish (51%).



**Figure 7: Number of victims per Member State and age group in 2019-2020<sup>9</sup>**



Source: Eurostat

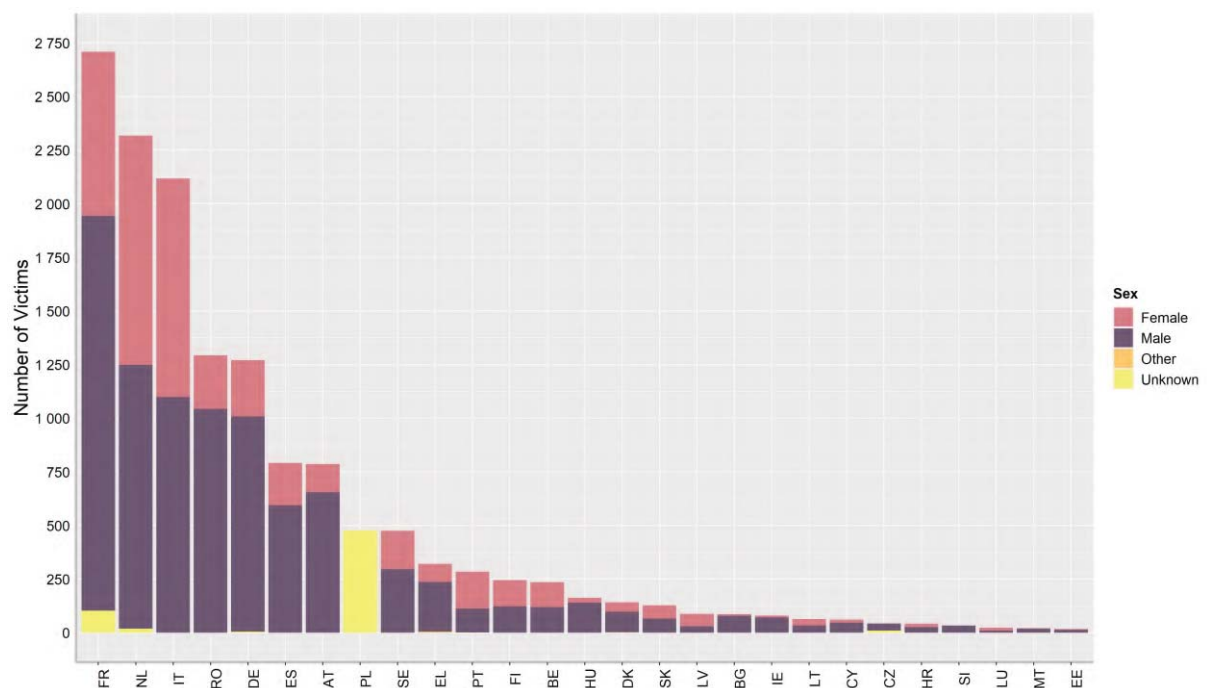
### 3.2. 3.2. Victims by sex

More than half of all the victims in the EU were female (women and girls) (63%)<sup>10</sup>, ranging from 34% in Latvia to 97% in Slovenia. The Member States with the highest percentage of male (men and boys) victims during this period were Latvia (66%), Portugal (61%), and Luxembourg (57%). The Member States with the highest percentage of female victims were Slovenia (97%), Bulgaria (92%) and Ireland (89%). The number of male victims equaled with the female victims in Belgium (50%) and Finland (50%). The Member States registering the most female victims were France (1,896), the Netherlands (1,234), Italy (1,099) and Romania (1,044). The Member States registering the most male victims were the Netherlands (1,063), Italy (1,099), France (802) and Germany (263).

<sup>9</sup> SE only provided unknown values for this indicator.

<sup>10</sup> 63% Female, 33% male, 4% unknown

**Figure 8: Number of victims per Member State and sex in 2019-2020**

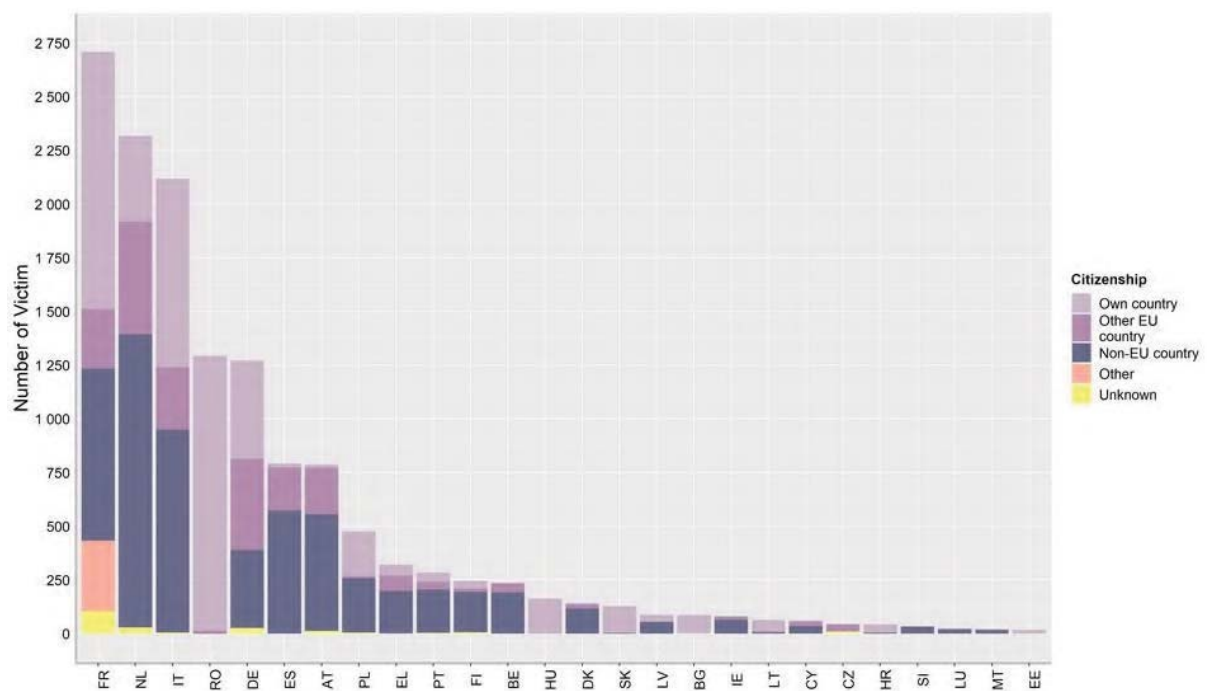


Source: Eurostat

### 3.3. 3.3. Victims by citizenship

In 2019-2020, 53% (7,330) of the registered victims with known citizenship were EU citizens and 43% (5,979) were non-EU citizens. For 2% (332) of cases, the victim's citizenship was recorded as other not specified and for 2% (199) of cases as unknown. Although the share of EU victims dropped slightly from 2019 to 2020 (3,716 to 3,614), the number dropped significantly for non-EU victims from 3,518 to 2,461. Such pattern is likely a result of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The most represented citizenships of EU victims are Romanian (2,315), French (1,202), Italian (904) Bulgarian (553) and Polish (518). However, if one considers the number of victims proportionate to the population size, Romania (1 out of 16,781), Bulgaria (1 out of 25,316), and Hungary (1 out of 59,242) are the most represented EU citizenships.

**Figure 9: Number of victims per Member State and citizenship in 2019-2020<sup>11</sup>**



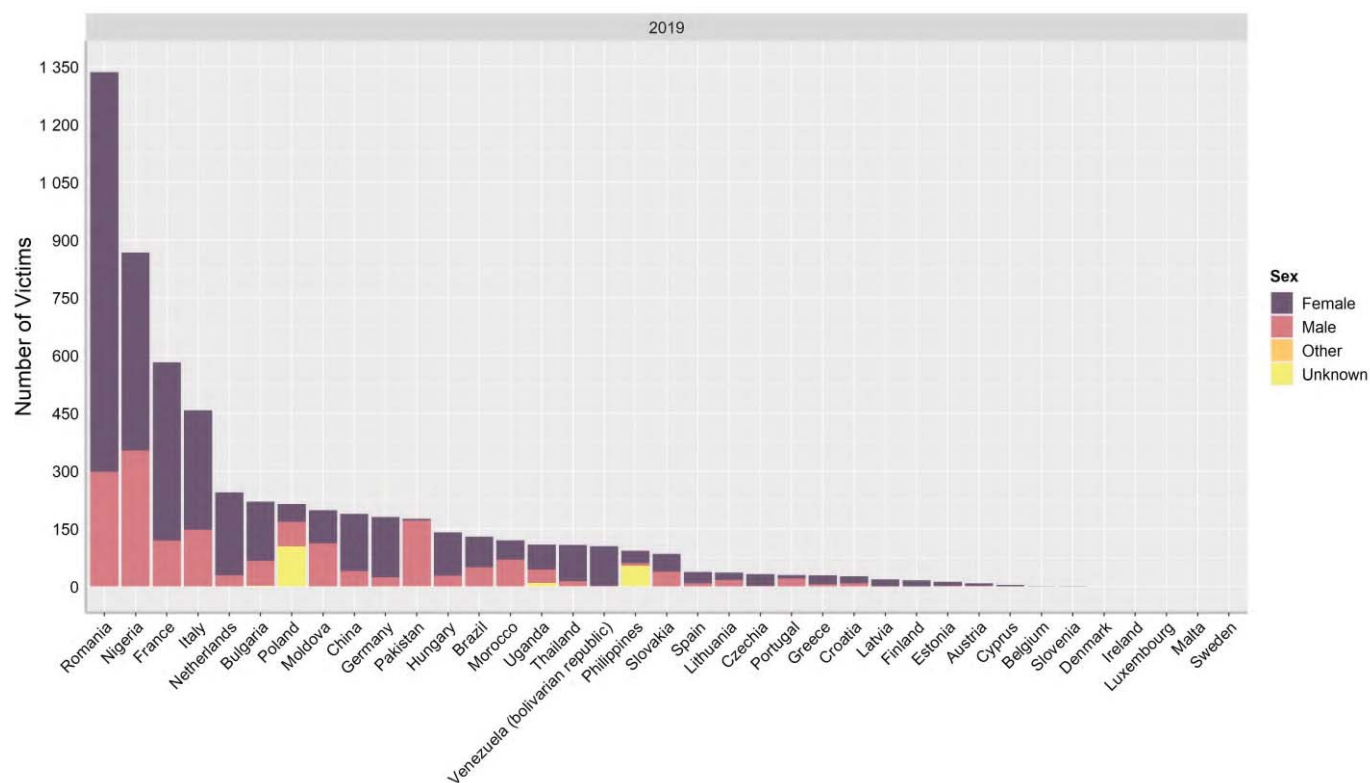
Source: Eurostat

The main countries of citizenship of non-EU victims in the EU were Nigeria (1,312), China (309), Moldova (257), and Pakistan (243). However, proportionate to population size, Moldova is the highest non-EU country of origin in 2019-2020, as 1 out of 15,696 Moldovans are victims of trafficking. This stands in stark comparison to the rates in Nigeria (1 out of 157,118) and in China (1 out of 4,658,005).

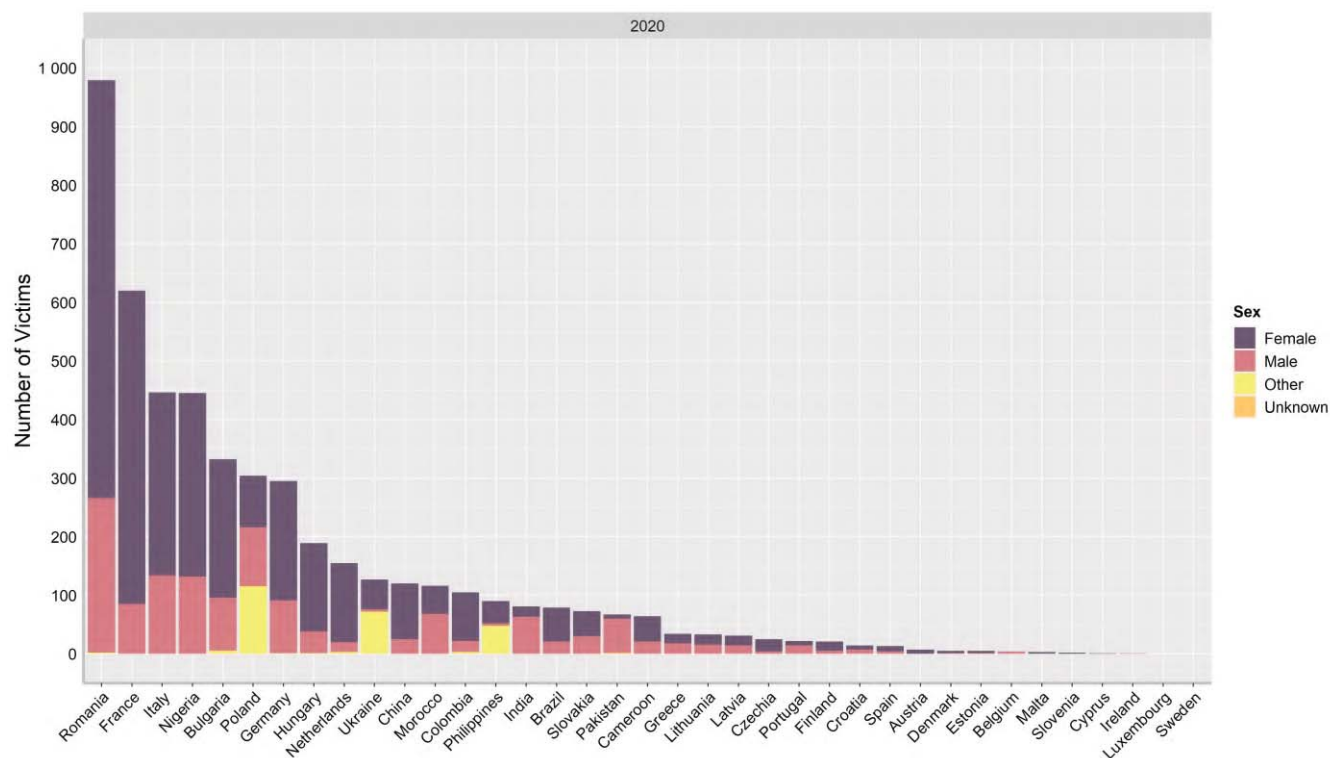
Across the EU, approximately 37% of all registered victims were citizens of the country in which they are registered. The countries with the highest rates of registering their own citizens are Estonia (100%), Hungary (99%), Bulgaria (99%), Romania (99%), and Slovakia (98%).

<sup>11</sup> SE did not provide data for this indicator and PL only provided unknown values.

**Figure 10: Number of victims per citizenship of EU27 and top 10 non-EU27, year and sex**



Source: Eurostat



Source: Eurostat

## 4. 4. TRENDS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM INDICATORS RELATED TO THB

Eurostat collects data on different aspects relating to suspected individuals, prosecuted individuals, and convicted individuals.

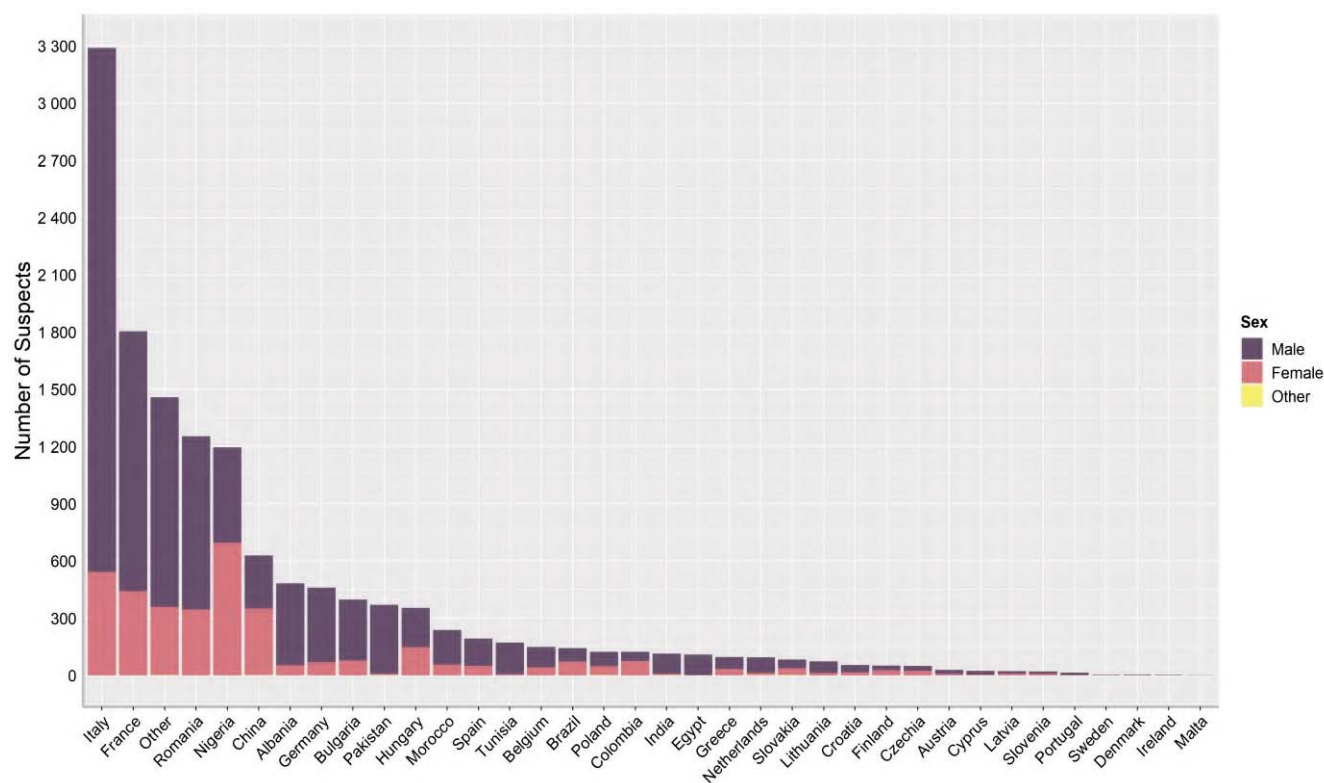
### 4.1. 4.1. Individuals suspected of THB crimes

The total number of individuals suspected of THB crimes (both EU and non-EU citizenships) in 2019-2020 is 15,214. **EU citizens accounted for 62% (8,641) of all suspects during the reporting period.**

Member States with the highest number of nationals among those suspected of THB crimes were Italy (3,289), France (1,804), Romania (1,254), and Germany (459).

The most frequent non-EU nationalities among suspects were Nigeria (1,195), China (628), Albania (483), and Pakistan (370).

**Figure 11: Number of suspects per citizenship of EU27 and top 10 non-EU27 and sex in 2019-2020**

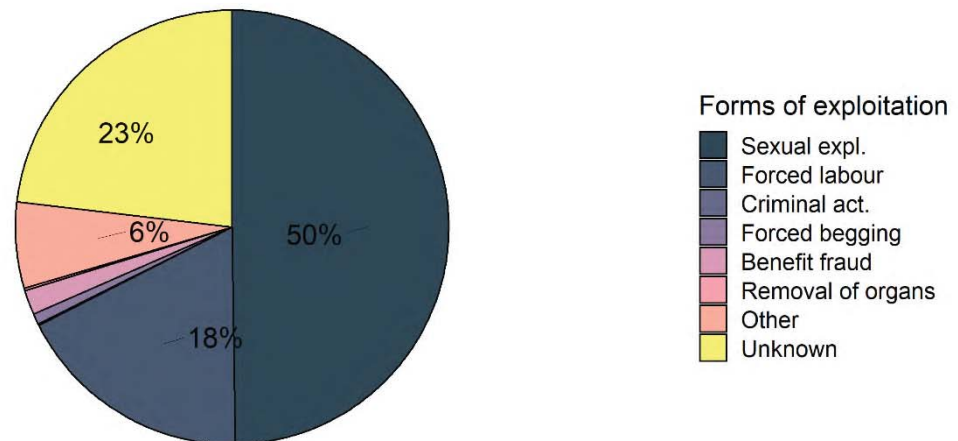


Source: Eurostat

Where information on the sex is recorded, 74% of individuals suspected of THB crimes are male (11,234). Men accounted for the majority of individuals suspected of THB crimes in all but one Member State. The exception to the rule was Finland, where women accounted for 53% of recorded suspects. In further three Member States (Denmark and Czech Republic), the proportion of women among suspects exceeded 40%.

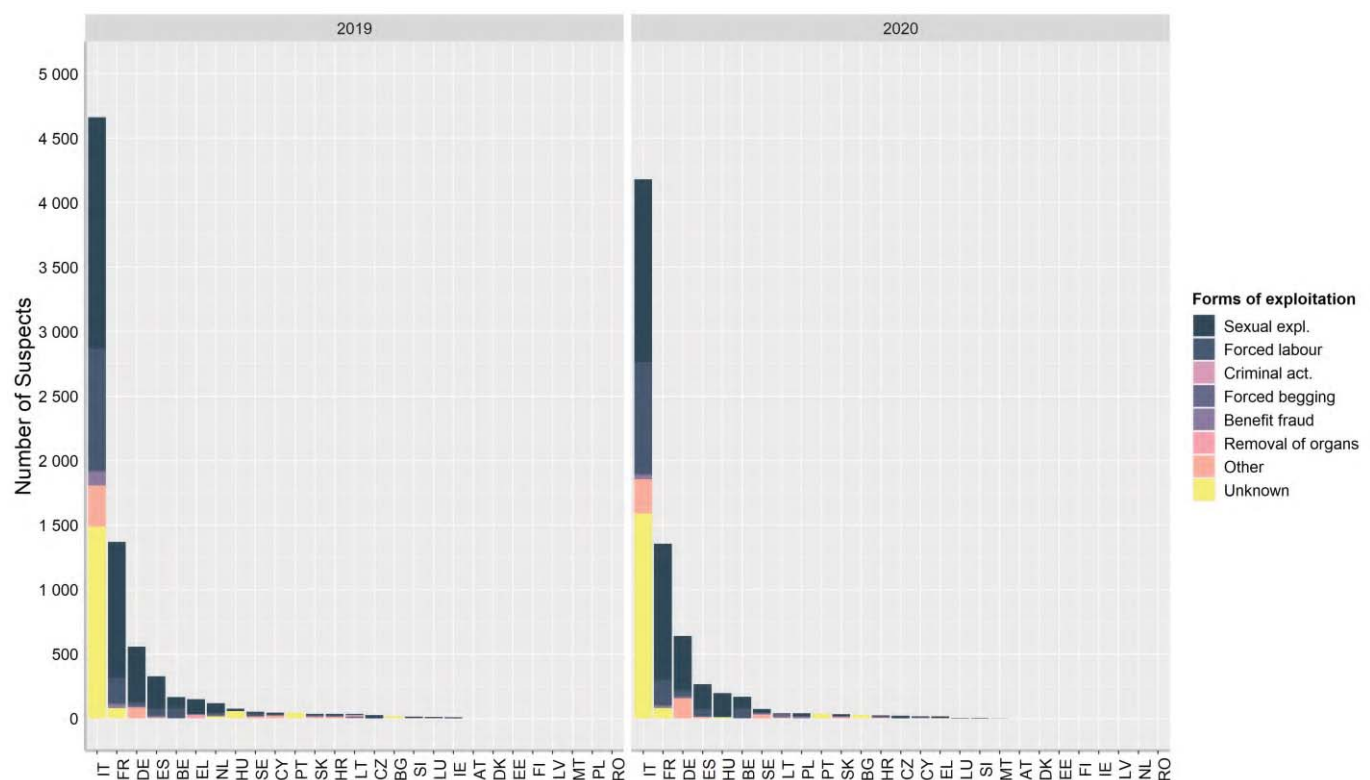
With respect to various types of exploitation, **individuals were most frequently suspected in relation to sexual exploitation (65%), followed by labour (23%), and other (11%) types of exploitation.**

**Figure 12: Repartition of suspects per form of exploitation in 2019-2020**



*Source: Eurostat*

**Figure 13: Number of suspects per Member State, year, and form of exploitation<sup>12</sup>**



Source: Eurostat

#### 4.2. 4.2. Individuals prosecuted for THB crimes

The total number of individuals prosecuted of THB crimes (both EU and non-EU citizenships) in 2019-2020 is 6,539. EU citizens accounted for 70% of all prosecuted individuals during the reporting period.

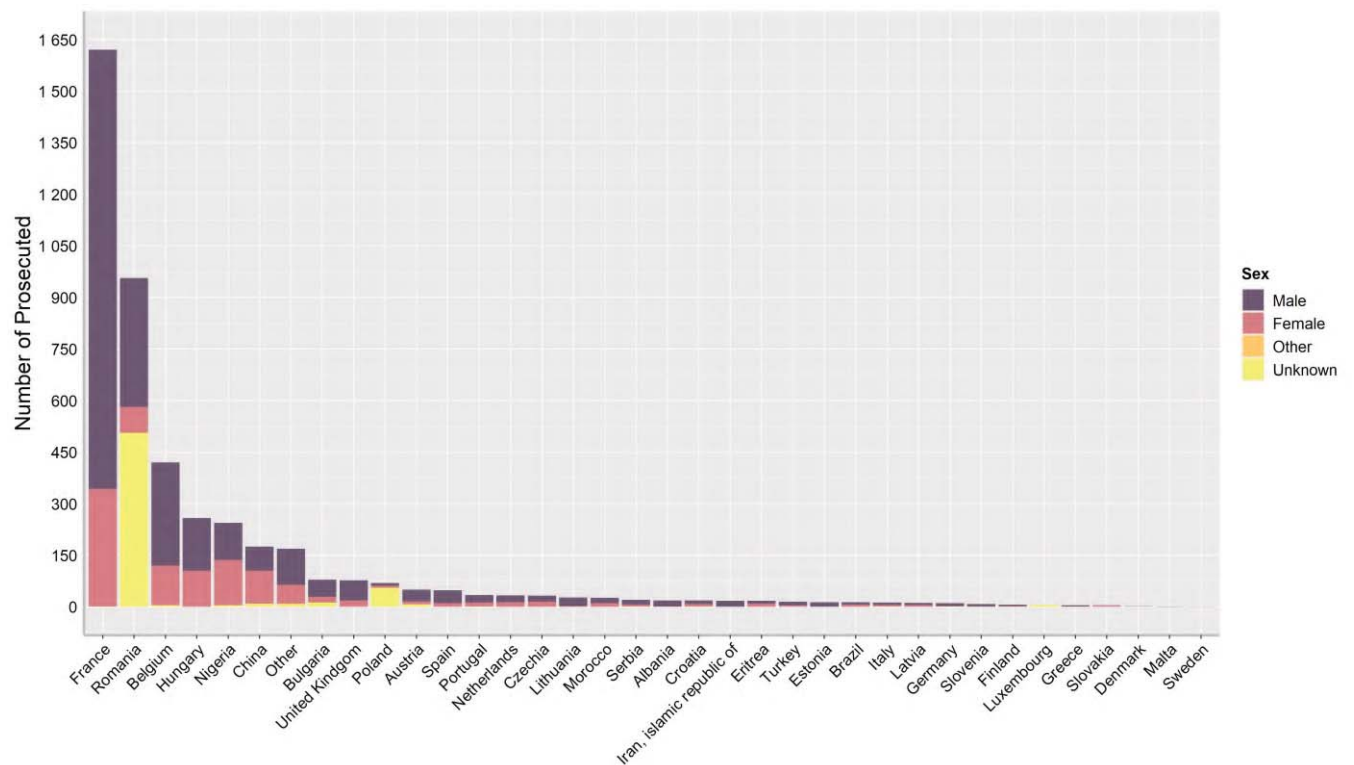
**Member States with the highest number of nationals among those prosecuted of THB crimes were France (1,620), Romania (956), Belgium (420), and Hungary (258).**

The most frequent non-EU nationalities among prosecuted were Nigeria (244), China (175), United Kingdom (77), and Morocco (26).

<sup>12</sup> AT, DK, EE, FI, LV and RO did not provide data for this indicator in 2019 and 2020. PL did not provide data for this indicator in 2019, while IE and NL did not provide data for this indicator in 2020.



**Figure 14: Number of prosecuted persons per citizenship of EU27 and top 10 non-EU27 and sex in 2019-2020**



*Source: Eurostat*

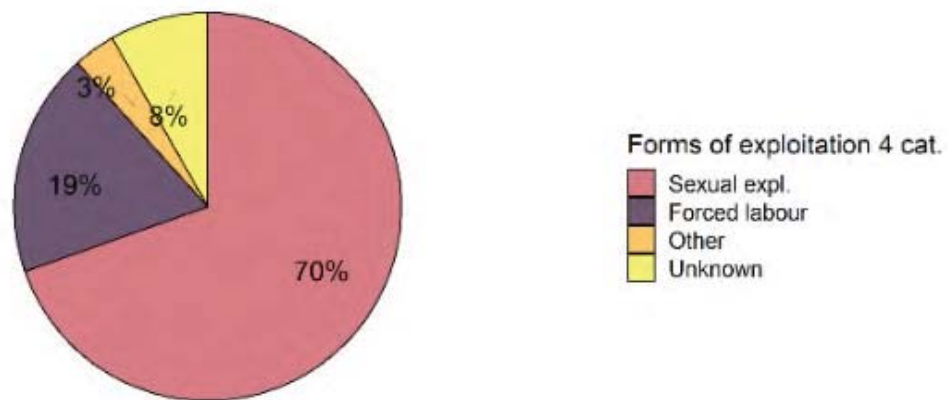
Where information on the sex was recorded, 73% of individuals prosecuted of THB crimes are male (4,513). The Member States with the highest shares of women among those prosecuted were Czechia (53%).

Sexual exploitation was the most common reason for prosecution, accounting for 70% of all recorded prosecuted persons. The second most common form of exploitation is forced labour, with representing a 19% share.

Sexual exploitation was the most frequent form of exploitation recorded for prosecuted individuals in most Member States (where the form was recorded as known) reaching 100% in Hungary, 86% in Finland, and 87% in Spain.

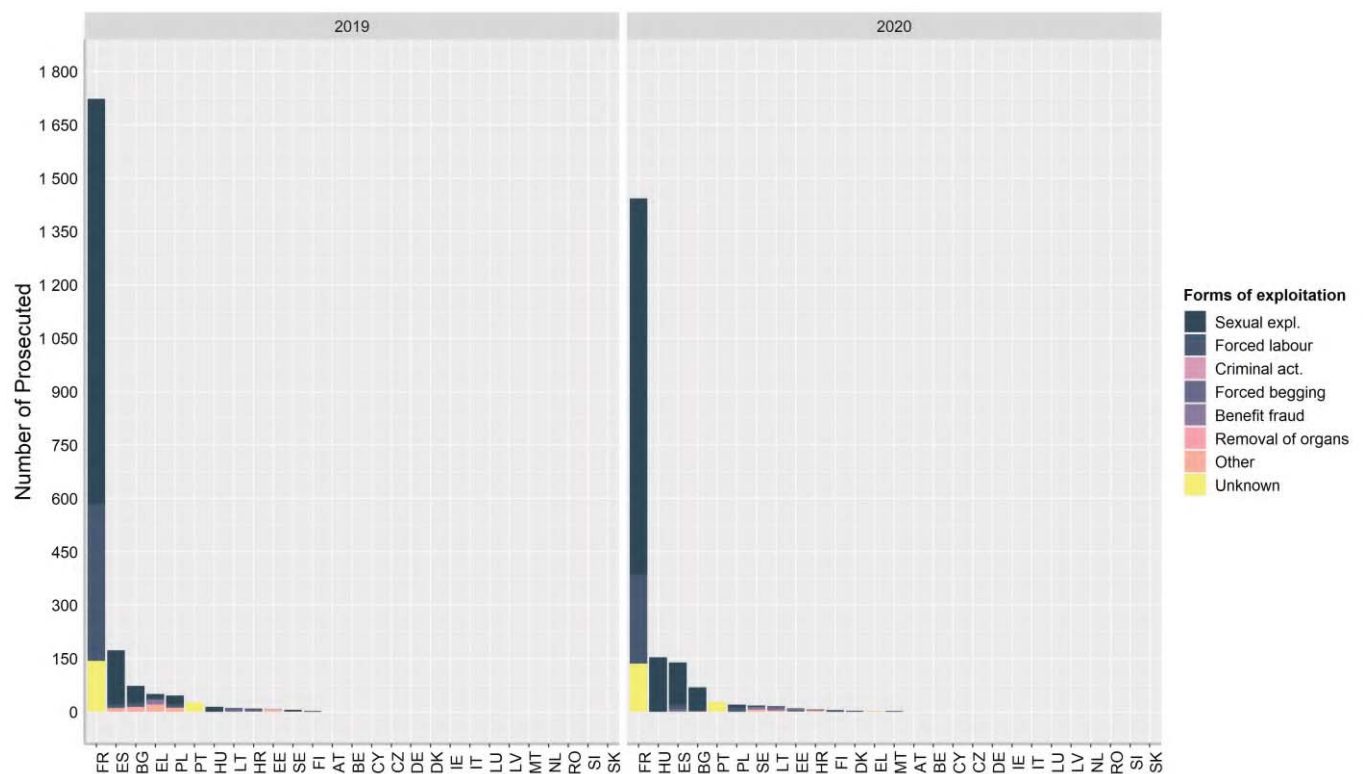


**Figure 15: Repartition of the number of prosecuted persons per form of exploitation in 2019-2020**



Source: Eurostat

**Figure 16: Number of prosecuted persons per Member State, year and form of exploitation<sup>13</sup>**



Source: Eurostat

<sup>13</sup> AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, IT, LU, LV, NL, RO, SI and SK did not provide data for this indicator in 2019 and 2020.

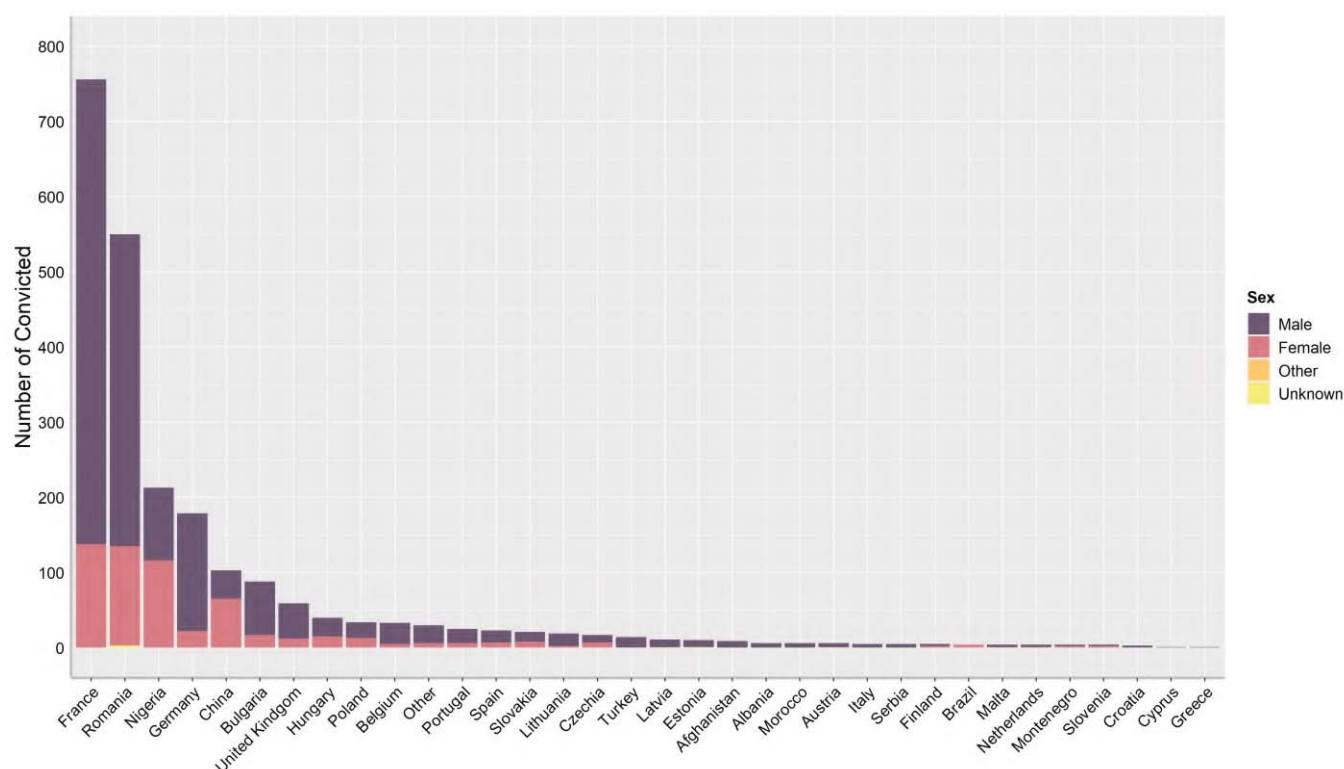
### 4.3. 4.3. Individuals convicted of THB offenses

The total number of individuals convicted of THB crimes (both EU and non-EU citizenships) in 2019-2020 is 3,019. EU citizens accounted for more than half (66%) (1,839) of all convicted individuals with known country of citizenship during the reporting period.

**Member States with the highest numbers of citizens among convicted individuals were France (756), Romania (550), Germany (179), and Bulgaria (88).**

The most frequently recorded non-EU countries of citizenship among convicted individuals were Nigeria (213), China (103), and United Kingdom (59).

**Figure 17: Number of convicted persons per citizenship of EU27 and top 10 non-EU27 and sex in 2019-2020**

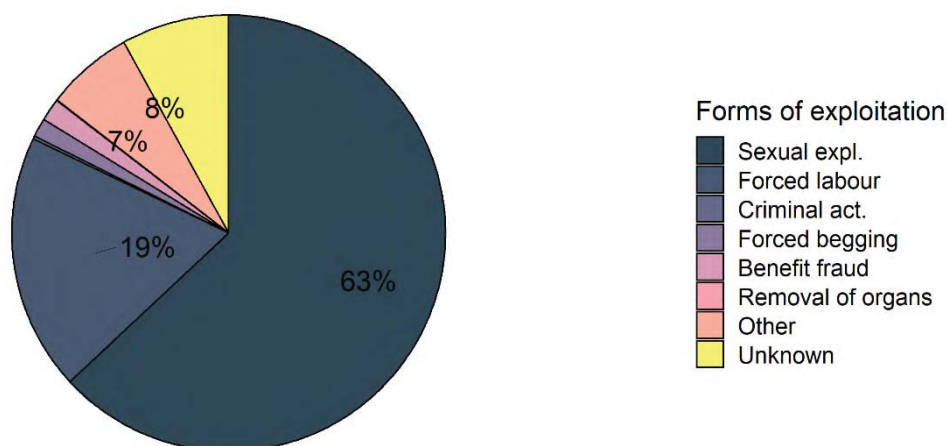


Source: Eurostat

**In line with the preceding sections, the overwhelming majority (74%) of individuals convicted for THB crimes in the EU in 2019-2020 were men. The only Member State that had a relatively higher share of convicted women is Czechia (67%).**

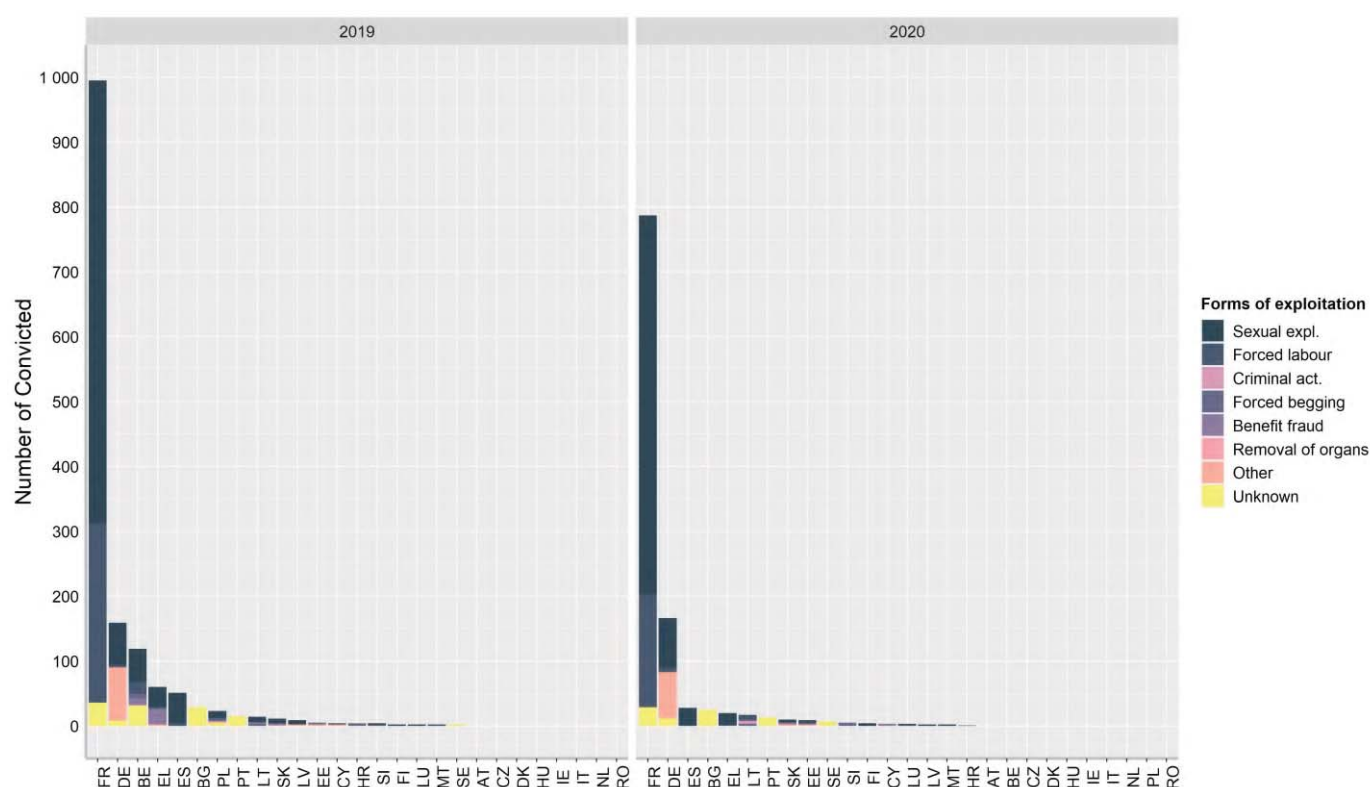
Sexual exploitation was the most frequent form of exploitation recorded for convicted individuals in many Member States (where the form was recorded as known) reaching 100% in Finland, 94% in Spain, and 82% in Latvia. The Member States with the lowest numbers of convictions for sexual exploitation are Slovenia (22%), Cyprus (28%), and Estonia (28%).

**Figure 18: Repartition of the number of convicted persons per form of exploitation in 2019-2020**



Source: Eurostat

**Figure 19: Number of convicted persons per Member State, year and form of exploitation<sup>14</sup>**



Source: Eurostat

<sup>14</sup> AT, CZ, DK, HU, IE, IT, NL, RO and SE did not provide data for this indicator in 2019. AT, BE, CZ, DK, HU, IE, IT, NL, PL and RO did not provide data for this indicator in 2020.

#### **4.4. 4.4. Use of exploited services**

**Data on the criminal offence of the use of the services of trafficking victims, as established in national law**, was collected for the third time. 11 Member States reported a total of 159 suspects, 46 prosecutions and 51 convictions in relation to the criminal offence of the use of the services of trafficking victims, which is significantly lower than during the previous reporting period<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> During 2017-2018 eleven Member States reported a total of 170 suspects, 162 prosecutions and 133 convictions in relation to the criminal offence of the use of the services of trafficking victims.