



The National Board
of Social Services

Human Trafficking in Denmark 2021

A excerpt of the annual report,
with a focus on statistics and data

DANISH CENTRE
AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Preface

In this excerpt of the annual report, The Danish Centre against Human Trafficking presents key statistics and data from 2021.

The Danish Centre against Human Trafficking publishes an annual report in Danish about human trafficking in Denmark. This English version is an excerpt of the Danish report 2021 with a focus on statistics and data about victims of human trafficking.

In Denmark, efforts against human trafficking have been maintained and developed in 2021, although there has been a number of challenges due to the coronavirus pandemic. Despite closed borders in large parts of the world, 2021 is historically the year with the highest number of assisted voluntary returns. 38 victims of human trafficking travelled to their country of residence or origin with an assisted voluntary return. They have received reintegration support to establish a life without exploitation. Of the 38 victims, the three largest groups of nationals are from Thailand, Romania and China.

Statistics show that 80 persons are identified as victims of human trafficking in 2021 in Denmark. Historically, female victims have outnumbered the share of male victims, but in 2021, the share is almost equal, with a total of 37 male victims and 42 female victims. The distribution of gender in 2021 is a result of an increase of male victims and a decrease of female victims compared to previous years.

The men are primarily exploited for forced labour or criminal actions. The number of people trafficked into forced labour and criminal actions has doubled compared to 2020, while the number of people trafficked into prostitution has decreased. Primarily female victims are exploited for prostitution.

With this short excerpt, The Danish Centre against Human Trafficking presents key statistics and data from 2021. The purpose is to disseminate knowledge about human trafficking in Denmark and information about distribution of gender, nationality, age and forms of exploitation.

Identification and support

80 persons are officially identified as victims of human trafficking in 2021. Fewer are trafficked into sexual exploitation, and more are trafficked into forced labour and criminal actions compared with 2020. The share of male victims almost equals the share of female victims.

The Danish Centre against Human Trafficking operates a hotline where various organisations, collaborators, and individuals may report suspected trafficking. Potential victims of trafficking rarely contact the hotline directly. In 2021, a man did however contact the hotline and asked for advice and support. He reported that he had been forced to perform various kinds of labour for several years. A number of interviews were held to determine whether there were signs and indicators of trafficking. Based on the interviews, the man was identified as a victim of human trafficking. He was offered assistance and support according to the national action plan.

The Danish Centre against Human Trafficking received a total of 273 calls on the hotline during 2021. With 111 calls, Danish police has been the most frequent caller. The calls primarily concerned a suspicion that persons in their custody could be victims of trafficking. In addition, calls from the police concerned information about upcoming raids and ongoing individual cases.

Other collaborators such as the Danish Immigration Service, the Danish Return Agency, local case workers, NGOs, and shelters account for a total of 112 calls. The calls were related primarily to inform about potential trafficking victims and to follow up on current cases.

193 potential victims of trafficking

The Danish Centre against Human Trafficking and the three NGOs; AmiAmi, HopeNow, and Reden International have assessed 193 potential victims of trafficking in 2021. Just under 42 per cent of the 193 persons are subsequently identified as victims of trafficking.

Different partners have established the contact that ended up identifying 80 women, men, and children as victims of trafficking in 2021. The partners included, for example, authorities such as the police, the Danish Immigration Service, and the Danish Tax Agency. In addition, the Red Cross,

NGOs, trade unions, attorneys, and medical personnel have established contact to the victims.

80 victims of human trafficking

In 2021, 80 persons are identified as victims of human trafficking by the Danish authorities. In comparison 77 persons were identified as victims in 2020.

Over the years, there is a change in the number of persons identified as victims of trafficking. There is no single explanation for these fluctuations, but the presence of complex cases involving a group of victims affect the numbers in some of the years.

Men account for almost half the cases



In 2021, 37 of the victims of human trafficking are men. They make up almost half of the total number of victims in 2021.

The number almost doubled since 2020 when 21 men were identified as trafficked. Over the years the number of male victims has increased, and the number of female victims has decreased. Historically female victims have outnumbered the share of male victims, but in 2021 and 2015 the share was almost equal. In addition, the number of male victims exceeded the number of female victims in 2018. In 2015 and in 2018, a number of men were identified as trafficked in two single large scale cases. In 2018, 26 men primarily from the Philippines were identified as trafficked into forced labour in the transportation industry. In 2015, 37 persons (mostly Romanian men) were exploited into committing financial criminal acts. Both years the share of male and female victims were almost equal.



Assessment of human trafficking

The excerpt uses the term “victims” to denote persons assessed as victims of human trafficking by the Danish authorities.

Several authorities are in a position to assess whether a person is a victim of human trafficking:

- The Danish Immigration Service, when the person in question does not have a legal right to live in Denmark or is applying for asylum
- The Danish Centre against Human Trafficking, when the person has a legal right to live in Denmark

- Courts and prosecutors may in criminal cases determine whether a person has been a victim of trafficking.

Trafficking interview

When authorities, NGOs, or ordinary citizens suspect that a person might be a victim of human trafficking, the person will be referred to an interview with a representative from the Danish Centre against Human Trafficking. The Centre will set up one or more interviews with the person to discover any signs and indications that the person’s story relates to trafficking. These trafficking interviews are the basis for the majority of assessments of trafficking in Denmark.

In 2021, men are mostly exploited for forced labour and criminal actions. Half of the persons exploited for criminal acts are from Morocco.

The women are primarily from Nigeria and Thailand, and most are trafficked into sexual exploitation in the form of prostitution.

Just under one-fourth are under 25

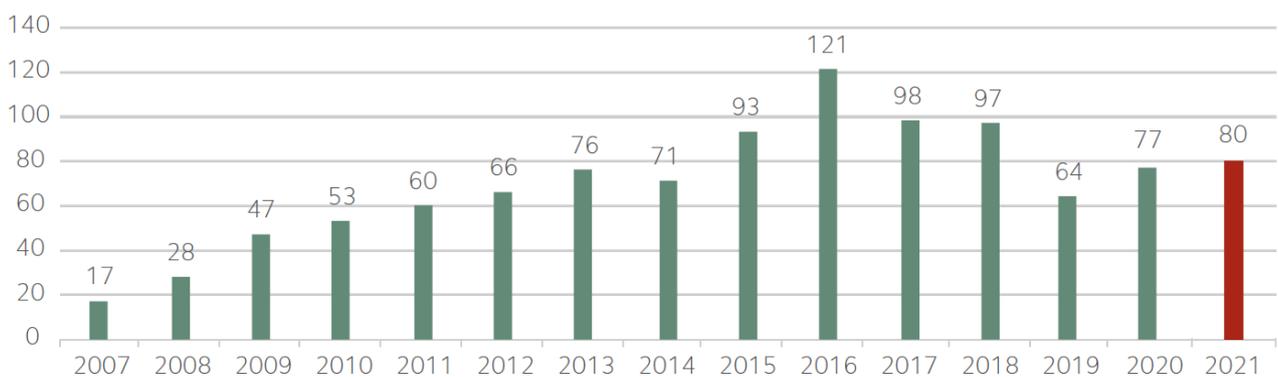


The victims of trafficking are aged 15-52, on average 31 years of age. Most are over the age of 18. 18 persons are children and youths under the age of 25, and five are aged 15-17.

Among the 18 persons under 25 years of age, 15 are boys and young men. Nine are from Morocco, two are from Afghanistan, two are from Algeria, one is from Vietnam, and one is from Gambia. For the most part, they are exploited into criminal actions such as committing theft or selling or transporting drugs. Two are trafficked for sexual exploitation.

Three girls and young women are under the age of 25. They are from Nigeria, Thailand and Serbia, and they are primarily trafficked for sexual exploitation.

Victims of trafficking, 2007-2021



* Note: The graphic shows the number of trafficked persons by year. A given person may have been trafficked more than once. When a person is found to be trafficked twice in a year, he or she is counted only once. When a person is trafficked several years apart, he or she may be counted in each year.

Increase in victims for forced labour



19 persons have been trafficked for forced labour. This represents a doubling since 2020 when nine persons were trafficked for forced labour. Six persons are exploited on construction sites, five are exploited in restaurants, and two are exploited in the export industry. As examples, the remaining persons are forced to work as domestic workers, in odd jobs and in a warehouse.

Victims from Romania and China make up over half of the persons exploited for forced labour. Six persons are from Romania, and five are from China.

Over time, victims of trafficking for forced labour are predominantly men. This is also the case in 2021 where 14 of the 19 victims for forced labour are men.

Increase in victims for criminal actions



18 persons are trafficked into criminal actions in 2021. All of the victims are men, and the number has doubled compared with 2020. That year, nine persons were trafficked into criminal actions. Over time, men have been in the majority among persons exploited into criminal actions.

The 18 men trafficked into criminal actions in 2021 are exploited to commit theft, to sell and transport drugs, and to grow cannabis. They are primarily from Morocco, Vietnam, and Nigeria.

Women trafficked for sexual exploitation



33 persons are trafficked into sexual exploitation in the form of prostitution. This number is lower than the number in 2020 when 44 persons were trafficked into sexual exploitation. Most of the 33 persons are women, but two men and a trans person are among the victims of trafficking into sexual exploitation.

Two thirds of the victims of sexual exploitation originates from Thailand and Nigeria.

Cases of slavelike conditions

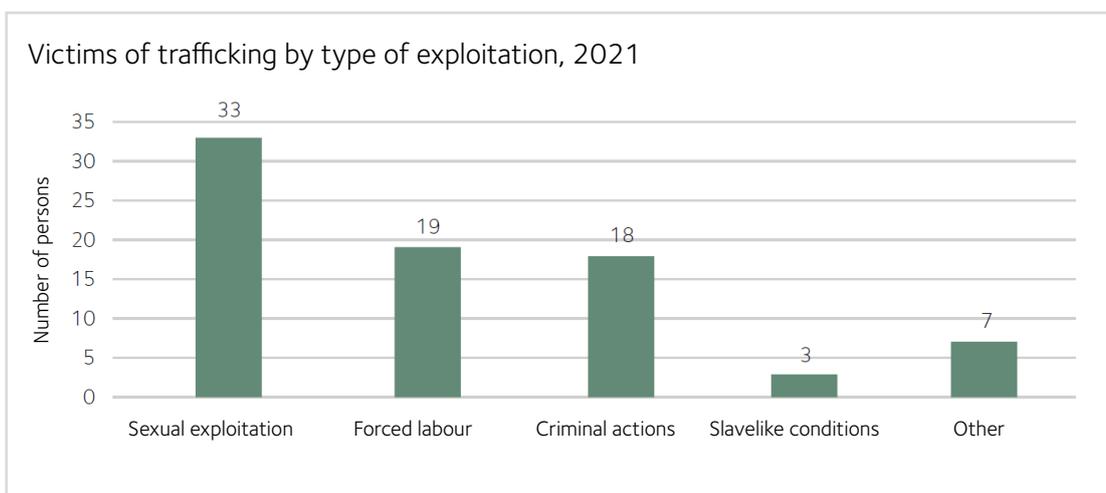


Three women are trafficked into slavelike conditions in 2021. That is the same number as in 2020 when the Danish Centre against Human Trafficking for the first time assessed persons as being victims of trafficking into slavelike conditions. The three women are gravely abused in several ways and were available to the trafficker around the clock. All three are over the age of 18 and have been exploited into domestic work and sexual exploitation.

Other forms of exploitations

In 2021, six persons are identified as victims of trafficking without details of the type of exploitation. One reason for this could be that the intent was to exploit the person into e.g. prostitution but the exploitation had not yet occurred. For three women over 18 and three men, one of whom is underage, the specific type of exploitation could not be finally determined.

One woman was trafficked for marriage.



All seven persons are shown as “Other” in the graphics.

26 different nationalities

The 80 persons identified as victims of human trafficking in 2021 originate from 26 countries.

16 persons are from Nigeria. Except for a few years, Nigerians have made up the majority of the victims since 2007, but in recent years the number of victims from Nigeria has decreased. The victims from Nigeria are primarily women trafficked into sexual exploitation. In 2021, five of the 16 victims are men. All are over the age of 18. Four of them are trafficked into committing criminal actions such as selling drugs. In one case, it was not possible to determine the specific type of exploitation.

11 victims are from Thailand. In recent years, the number of victims from Thailand has been relatively stable while the number of referral of cases to the Danish Centre against Human Trafficking regarding potential victims from Thailand has increased. All victims are women over the age of 18 and were trafficked into sexual exploitation for the purpose of prostitution.

Nine victims are from Morocco. During the years 2007-2017, there are few or no victims from Morocco. Since 2018, victims from Morocco are

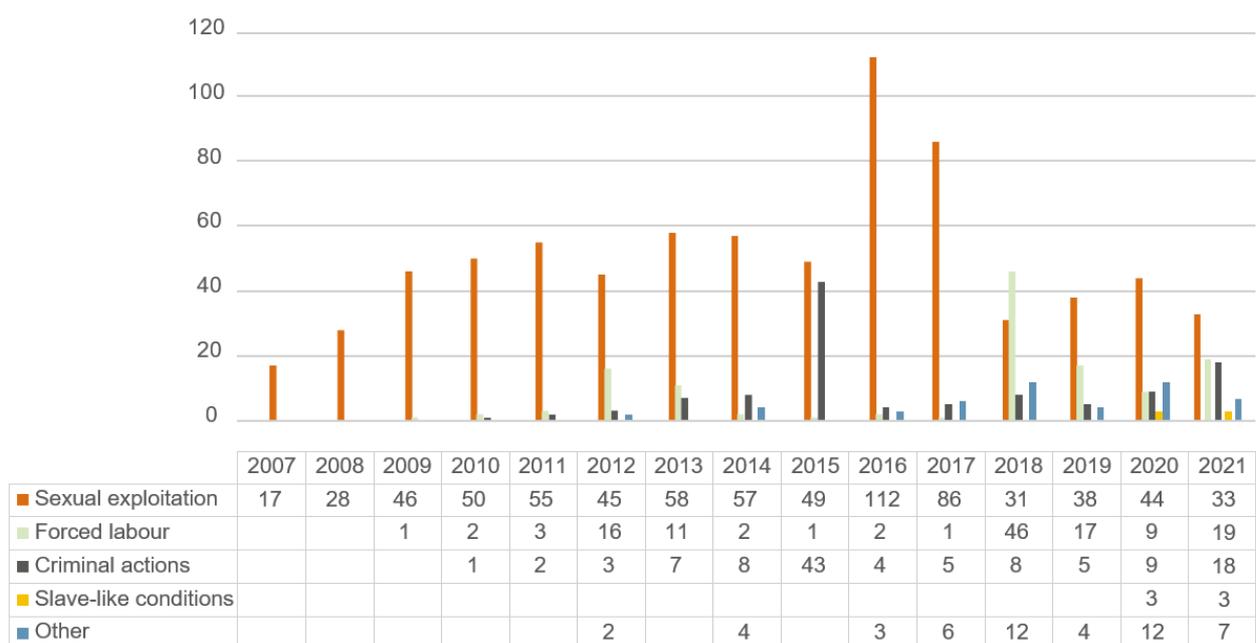
among the four most frequently represented nationalities. In 2021, all the Moroccan victims are men under 25, and three are boys aged 17. Eight out of the nine victims are trafficked into committing criminal actions such as theft and selling and transporting narcotics. In one case, it was not possible to determine the specific type of exploitation.

Six victims are from Vietnam. They are all over 18, and five are exploited to commit criminal actions such as growing cannabis. The sixth person was trafficked for forced labour.

Six victims are from Romania. All are men over 18, and they are exploited in a single case for forced labour in construction.

Five victims are from China, all trafficked for forced labour. Among the Chinese victims are two married couples. Victims from China have previously been identified in 2013 and 2017. In 2013, the victims included a married couple.

Victims of trafficking by type of exploitation and by year, 2007-2021



Note: The graphic shows the number of victims of trafficking by type of exploitation and by year during 2007-2021.

Victims of human trafficking in Denmark in 2021

Nationality, gender, age and exploitation	Number	Nationality, gender, age and exploitation	Number	Nationality, gender, age and exploitation	Number
Nigeria	16	Algeria	2	Gambia	1
Woman / above 18	11	Man / above 18	1	Man / above 18	1
Sexual exploitation	11	Criminal actions	1	Sexual exploitation	1
Man / above 18	5	Man / under 18	1	India	1
Criminal actions	4	Could not be determined	1	Man / above 18	1
Could not be determined	1	Cameroun	2	Forced labour	1
Thailand	11	Woman / above 18	2	Iraq	1
Woman / above 18	11	Sexual exploitation	1	Trans person / above 18	1
Sexual exploitation	11	Other	1	Sexual exploitation	1
Morocco	9	Ghana	2	Russia	1
Man / above 18	6	Woman / above 18	1	Woman / above 18	1
Criminal actions	5	Sexual exploitation	1	Sexual exploitation	1
Could not be determined	1	Man / above 18	1	Serbia	1
Man / under 18	3	Forced labour	1	Woman / under 18	1
Criminal actions	3	Keyna	2	Could not be determined	1
Rumania	6	Woman / above 18	2	Surinam	1
Man / above 18	6	Sexual exploitation	1	Woman / above 18	1
Forced labour	6	Forced labour	1	Forced labour	1
Vietnam	6	Pakistan	2	Tanzania	1
Man / above 18	6	Woman / above 18	2	Woman / above 18	1
Criminal actions	5	Slavelike conditions	2	Slavelike conditions	1
Forced labour	1	Bulgaria	1	Uganda	1
China	5	Woman / above 18	1	Woman / above 18	1
Woman / above 18	3	Sexual exploitation	3	Could not be determined	1
Forced labour	3	Cambodia	1	Ukraine	1
Man / above 18	2	Man / above 18	1	Woman / above 18	1
Forced labour	2	Forced labour	1	Sexual exploitation	1
Afghanistan	3	Denmark	1	Hungary	1
Woman / above 18	1	Woman / above 18	1	Woman / above 18	1
Could not be determined	1	Sexual exploitation	1	Sexual exploitation	1
Man / above 18	2	Phillipines	1	Total number of victims	80
Sexual exploitation	1	Man / above 18	1		
Forced labour	1	Forced labour	1		

Assisted voluntary returns

2021 was the year with the largest number of assisted voluntary returns from Denmark ever. They were offered assistance and support according to the national action plan.

If a victim of human trafficking must or wishes to depart from Denmark, he or she is offered an assisted voluntary return and reintegration into the country of residence or origin. The offer is optional and does not depend on the victim collaborating with the police or testifying against traffickers. The offer is made regardless of whether the person is in Denmark legally or irregularly. The Danish Return Agency is an authority under the Ministry of Immigration and Integration. The agency is responsible for the assisted voluntary return and reintegration programme. This is conducted in cooperation with the trafficked person, DRC Danish Refugee Council and the Danish Centre against Human Trafficking.

38 victims of human trafficking travelled to 16 different destinations in 2021. That many completed returns have not previously been registered in a single year. 22 persons returned to Thailand, Romania and China. 27 of the 38 persons who have returned to the country of residence or origin are identified as victims in 2021. 11 persons were identified victims of human trafficking in 2020 or earlier; they were waiting for an opportunity to

return to their country of residence or origin – hindered partly due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Many of the victims accepting an assisted voluntary return in 2021 established themselves with a new occupation, and some have set up a small business in the country of residence or origin. For example, one person opened a dog-grooming salon, and another opened a restaurant. Others started working as taxi or school bus drivers.

Destination countries for the assisted voluntary returns:

- Thailand: 11
- Romania: 6
- China: 5
- Ghana: 3
- Nigeria: 2
- Afghanistan: 1
- Brazil: 1
- Bulgaria: 1
- Philippines: 1
- Italy: 1
- Kosovo: 1
- Morocco: 1
- Poland: 1
- Spain: 1
- Suriname: 1
- Ukraine: 1



Investigation and prosecution

It is difficult to prosecute perpetrators of human trafficking. Therefore, the new national action plan against human trafficking aims to strengthen the prosecution of traffickers.

Statistics from the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions show that the number of charges, indictments, and convictions in 2021 is roughly equal to the number in 2020. In 2021, eight charges and three indictments are issued; that is one more charge than in 2020.

There are no criminal convictions related to trafficking in 2021. The latest conviction occurred in 2018 when the Eastern Division of the Danish High Court sentenced a person to seven years in prison for human trafficking among other crimes. The person was one of several traffickers involved in a major case in 2016 referred to as the "Hvepsebo" case (Wasp-nest). In this case, a group of Romanian men were exploited for various types of criminal actions in Denmark.

Number of persons charged, indicted, and convicted for human trafficking (Section 262a of the Criminal Code), by year

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Charges	14	15	2	9	1	7	7	8
Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Indictments	4	29	1	5	0	0	3	3
Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Convictions	10	4	14	8	1	0	0	0

Source: Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (i)

(i) Note that the figures are based on data from the police' case management system (POLSAS). The figures are thus subject to uncertainty, as POLSAS is a filing and case management system and not a statistical system. Be aware that the figures are based on dynamic data which implies that the figures are not final. Thus, they are subject to changes depending on the time of extracting the information from the figures as there might be registrations done at a later stage. The data was updated 15 January 2022. The figures are estimates from the latest verdict, for which the verdict can be appealed in the meantime. Thus, the verdicts are not necessarily final. Charges, indictments, and verdicts are estimates from the number of counts. That is, how many persons per file-number who is charged, indicted and convicted

The Danish Centre against Human Trafficking

The Danish Centre against Human Trafficking is part of the National Board of Social Services and reports to the Minister for Equality, who is responsible for the implementation of the National Action Plan against Human Trafficking.

The Danish Centre against Human Trafficking constitutes the core of the Danish nationwide effort to combat human trafficking. The Centre is composed of a multidisciplinary team ensuring coordination and development of the social efforts to victims of trafficking and involved parties.

The Danish Centre against Human Trafficking is responsible for identification of victims of human trafficking. The Centre also assesses whether citizens with a legal residence in Denmark are victims of human trafficking. Furthermore, the Centre offers a range of assistance, support, and counselling to victims.

The Danish Centre against Human Trafficking is responsible for coordinating the cooperation between relevant authorities and other partners nationally and internationally. Collection and dissemination of information on human trafficking are also part of the tasks of the Centre. In addition, the Centre provides training and capacity building to relevant actors.

The Danish Centre against Human Trafficking operates a national hotline, where for instance authorities, private persons, citizens and potential victims can report suspicion of human trafficking.

For more information: www.cmm.dk/english

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