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1. List of acronyms

EKKA	National Centre for Social Solidarity (NCSS)
GA	Grant Agreement
LEAs	Law Enforcement Agencies
OCG	Organized Crime Groups
PVoT	Presumed victim of trafficking in human beings
THB	Trafficking in Human beings
WP	Work package
VoT	Victim of Trafficking in human beings

2. Executive Summary

Trafficking in human beings constitutes a complex criminal phenomenon worldwide. Preventing and combatting trafficking in human beings has long been a priority for the European Union, as it is highlighted on the EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in human beings 2021-2025.

Under WP2 of INTERCEPTED project, the deliverable 2.1 “Recruitment & advertisement analysis framework” provides an overview of trends elicitation on THB recruitment (online & offline) and THB online advertisement. Based on real use cases provided by project’s partners, this document analyses the data collected in order to identify common themes and trends on THB recruitment methods and further proceed with a current trafficking trends elicitation. The following analysis is based on statistical data derived from the use cases provided, mainly containing police and judicial archives/records and open-source data. As there is limited intelligence-based evidence on detailed description per case, reliable conclusions may be drawn in a limited extend.

Deliberating the analysis results, the INTERCEPTED project could allow for more targeted prevention and investigation strategies, contributing to the identification of potential cases of trafficking, as in most cases the potential victims are often under traffickers’ control, or they are simply unable to ask for help due to the dangerous situation they find themselves in.

This document consists of two main parts:

1. The presentation of 53 use cases in the form of a list
2. The statistical analysis of use cases data for the trend elicitation on the first stage of Human Trafficking “Recruitment”.

3. Introduction and Objectives of the deliverable

As mentioned in EU Strategy on Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings (2021), on REPORT on the implementation of Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims 1.2.2021 - (2020/2029(INI)) and the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (UNODC, 2022), although the traditional ways in which trafficking and the recruitment of victims remain, with the rise of new technologies, some traffickers have adapted their modus operandi by integrating technology and taking advantage of digital platforms to advertise, recruit and exploit victims. It has been observed that trafficking methods differ per platform and per country, as well as the profiles of the victims and perpetrators (Collier, 2023).

In this context, INTERCEPTED aims to shed light in this phenomenon through by providing a better understanding of trafficking today by sharing information and knowledge gathered in the duration of the project. In fact, the project’s purpose is to strengthen the digital capabilities of law enforcement and judicial authorities, through a better understanding of the phenomenon, an enhanced capacity to stay on-top of online

trends from a technological and an operational perspective, and by providing new tools for the detection of recruitment and advertisement of trafficked services online.

Against this background, INTERCEPTED focuses on two points of the trafficking chain, that is the recruitment and advertisement, by also considering the ways in which methods differ in terms of language, platforms, targets, and strategies, according to the type of exploitation and profiles of the victims. That is exactly how this deliverable is structured, i.e., following the chapter on the methodology (Chapter 4), chapter 5 provides uses cases per partner country on the recruitment and on the online advertisement and some uses cases combining both.

The present deliverable reports the outcomes of the research activities carried out by the partners of the INTERCEPTED project to collect a total of fifty (50) use cases (as indicated in the GA) which demonstrate real life cases on how victims of trafficking have been recruited (either online or via offline means). This deliverable includes fifty-three (53) cases disaggregated according to the type of exploitation, age, gender, nationality etc., by also mentioning, where applicable, the online platform in which recruitment occurred. Through this coding and tagging of the analysed cases (Chapter 5), general trends on THB have been elicited, which include the ways in which recruitment and advertisement occurs as well as an analysis on the profile of the victims and their purchasers/perpetrators and the type of exploitation.

As such, this deliverable provides valuable input to other Work Packages (WP) of the INTERCEPTED project, in particular in the ones of WP2 on the Analysis and Co-creation and WP5 on the piloting and reporting.

Methodology

The methodology followed to identify, clarify and elicit existing trends in the recruitment of victims is the case study research method. “Case study is defined as an empirical inquiry which investigates a phenomenon in its real-life context. In case study research, multiple methods of data collection are used, as it involves an in-depth study of a phenomenon. It must be noted that a case study is not a method of data collection, rather is a research strategy or design to study a social unit” (Yin R., 2014). This method permits a multi-faceted analysis of the complex phenomenon of THB, including both qualitative and quantitative data.

Primarily, KEMEA designed a template-framework for the analysis of a minimum of 50 cases in which victims of trafficking have been recruited or subjects of attempted recruitment online, addressed to the Consortium partners in order to collect the relevant input (ANNEX 1). The input collected covers the geographic regions of South Europe, namely Italy, Greece and Spain and the geographic region of Central Europe, namely Germany.

According to the GA, the aforementioned cases should be presented as a catalogue of cases in order to identify the ways in which recruitment occurs online and the profile of the victim/type of exploitation. To this regard, in D2.1, the cases are presented in the form of a list (with consecutive numbering).

Furthermore, regarding the type of THB exploitation, the most common forms that have been identified in the context of the use cases provided are the following and have been defined according to INTERPOL's terminology:

1. **Sexual exploitation:** This form of trafficking affects every region in the world. Victims, most of them women and children, are lured in through different methods, and transported or harboured to or in the place of exploitation where they are often deprived of their travel and identification documents, their movements are controlled or restricted, and they are sexually exploited, often facing many other forms of violence and abuse.
2. **Forced Labour exploitation:** Victims of this widespread form of trafficking come primarily from developing countries. They can be forced to work in labour-intensive jobs such as agriculture, mining, fisheries or construction work, or kept in domestic servitude.
3. **Forced Criminal Activities:** Victims are forced to carry out a range of illegal activities, which in turn generate income for criminal organizations. Activities can include theft, drug cultivation, selling counterfeit goods, and recently also fraud which is often conducted through the misuse of technology. Victims often have quotas and can face severe punishment if they do not perform adequately.
4. **Migrant Smuggling:** There is an increase in the activities of organized criminal networks who facilitate irregular migration. By providing fraudulent travel documents, organizing transport, and bypassing official border controls, criminals are making huge profits. Smuggling is carried out by land, air, or sea. It all depends how much one is willing to pay – and risk.

Also, in this deliverable it was deliberately decided to use the term purchaser/perpetrator as:

A purchaser: refers to the person who seeks to use the services that are the objects of exploitation, with the knowledge that someone is a victim of THB.

A perpetrator: is a person who initiates the process of Human Trafficking aiming at generating profit through recruitment, transportation, and finally seeking purchasers (clients) for the exploitation of someone else.

The sources used for the extraction of use cases data are coming mostly from open sources and police and judicial archives and records. It is worth mentioning that during the collection of use cases data, all the ethical and legal protocols were followed.

4. Use cases

4.1 Italy

Use case No1¹

Title: STOP PASSEUR CASE (20/03/2023)

Incident description:

The investigation began after numerous traces of illegal migrants in the area of the Alpine crossing were found. The investigations led to the discovery of a criminal organisation composed of Kurdish-Iraqi citizens, actively transporting migrants from the Slovak Republic to Italy through Austria, in with the purpose of economic gain. During the transport, migrants were forced to remain hidden through the transportation, without water and food, in inhumane conditions within the cargo compartment of cargo vans, which did not have windows or air conditioning. On one occasion, more than 30 migrants were transported in inhumane conditions.

Type of exploitation: Migrants smuggling

Profile of the victim: Migrants of various nationalities (if possible, to know the origins of migrants), transiting through Italy from the Balkan route.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: European arrest warrant in Graz (Austria) against a 30-year-old Iraqi citizen residing in Germany, accused of aiding illegal immigration along the Balkan route.

Online platform in which the incident took place: Telegram, Signal, Skype, Viber, WA

Trend identification: Migrant smuggling and human trafficking

Use case No2

Title: ASSESSED CASE NUMBER: 320 JS 6517/19

Incident description:

The Ugandan victim was recruited in Uganda by an Italian. The woman accepted an offer to work in a restaurant in Italy. Upon arrival in Italy, the victims were faced with the duty to “pay their debts” for administrative expenses, travel and accommodation with “sexual services”. The victims were forced to engage in prostitution in Italy and after a few weeks in Germany. In Germany, the victim applied for asylum. The victim further indicated that her passport was confiscated by the perpetrator to forbid her from leaving. Online means are used in a quite common way, esp. through Facebook (FB): The perpetrators are looking on FB for potentially fitting victims and approach them as if they were a job placement agency.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: Recruitment of prostitutes in the country of origin: Uganda

¹ Retrieved from: <https://www.nordest24.it/migranti-nascosti-nel-vano-del-furgone-trasportati-in-condizioni-disumane-arrestato-passeur/>

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Italian

Online platform in which the incident took place: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, FaceTime, IMO, Messenger, Telegram, Signal, Skype, Viber, WA, WeChat, Zalo

Trend identification: The victim has been coerced through the debt-bondage method. This is a common method: The victim does not have to pay for travels, visa, etc. But when arriving in Germany, an “invoice” is presented by the perpetrators to the victim and they have to work to get rid of their “debts”. Italy is a destination, transit, and source country for women, children, and men subjected to sex trafficking and forced labor. The phenomena are rather common, often, Nigerian children and women are subjected to labor trafficking through debt bondage and coercion through voodoo rituals.

Use case No3

Title: ASSESSED CASE NUMBER: 330 JS 8125/17

Incident description:

The authors (1 Nigerian man and 1 brothel manager with Lithuanian citizenship) forced a Nigerian woman in Germany to prostitute herself in the brothel of the Lithuanian citizen.

The Nigerian perpetrator initially helped the victim flee Nigeria for economic reasons with the promise of decent work in Europe. The victim had no money, initially had to engage in street prostitution for him in Italy. In Nigeria, she had taken her to a voodoo priest who had sworn her to do whatever the perpetrator asked her to do. She believed that the Voodoo would kill her and her family if she did not comply with the demands of the perpetrator. In Germany, she had been raped several times by Nigerians, including customers. She was abused by the perpetrator consistently. He was in possession of his ID Card. From Italy, they first went to restaurants in northern Germany for the purpose of illegal prostitution. The mentioned restaurants were run by Thai and Bulgarian women. Online means are used in a quite common way, esp. through Facebook (FB): The perpetrators are looking on FB for potentially fitting victims and approach them as if they were a job placement agency.

A guest of the brothel then filed an anonymous police complaint regarding possible trafficking in human beings and forced prostitution.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: Nigerian women

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 1 man from Nigeria and 1 Lithuanian citizen

Online platform in which the incident took place: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, FaceTime, IMO, Messenger, Telegram, Signal, Skype, Viber, WA, WeChat, Zalo

Trend identification: Captured through the false promise of work in Germany, coercion method was through the possession of the ID Card, and threats over Voodoo. This has happened and is happening so often, there are even newspaper articles on this issue in Germany’s leading magazine: <https://www.spiegel.de/panorama/justiz/italien-wie-die-nigerianische-mafia-frauen-versklavt-a-1282881.html>

Use case No4

Title: ASSESED CASE NUMBER: 1B 109/17

Incident description:

The applicant, born in 1991, appeals in preliminary legal protection proceedings against the rejection of her application for extension of a residence permit under Paragraph 25(4) a (3) of the Law on residence. The applicant is a Nigerian national. According to her own statements, she lived in Libya since 2008, where she worked as a housekeeper in a private home. In May 2011, she fled to Italy. There she was last in possession of a residence permit valid until 29 January 2016 ("Stay Permit") for work purposes ("TYPE OF PERMESS: SUBORDINATE LAV"). According to her own statements, she entered the Federal Republic of Germany in March 2015 to work there as a prostitute.

Type of exploitation: Forced Labour & Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: Nigerian woman

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Group of Nigerian Men

Online platform in which the incident took place: Not identified.

Trend identification: Coerced method exercised through intimidation and threats.

Use case No5²

Title: "OPERATION 15" (29/03/2023)

Incident description:

The investigators managed to reconstruct at least part of the network of traffickers behind the three defendants, who has been operating in Ticino, Switzerland. 15 people were arrested within the scope of the investigations. The perpetrators were all from Kurdish-Iraqi origins. The origins of irregular migrants were Kurds-Iraqis, alongside Syrians and Turks.

3 Iraqi citizens, including two residents of Lugano, faced trial for transporting 243 irregular migrants from Italy to Germany in just two and a half months. The trafficking network involved about fifteen Kurdish-Iraqi individuals, some of whom were arrested in Switzerland during 'Operation 15.' The main defendant denies being the mastermind, claiming he received directions from an office in Iraqi Kurdistan, while the third defendant admits to a dozen trips. The irregular migrants were mainly Iraqi Kurds, Syrians, or Turks, paying between 200 and 900 euros each, with the alleged bigwig of the organization residing in Germany. The court heard from another alleged organization member who delivered money to the transporters and claimed the migrants' crossing into Switzerland was facilitated by individuals in Germany and the 46-year-old defendant. The defendants apologized but downplayed their roles, often in contrast to the evidence presented. The public prosecutor sought prison sentences ranging from 20 months suspended to 3 years and 9 months, accompanied by fines.

Type of exploitation: Migrants smuggling

Profile of the victim: Kurdish-Iraqi migrants, Syrians, Turks

² Retrieved from: <https://www.rsi.ch/news/ticino-e-grigioni-e-insubria/Passatori-a-processo-a-Lugano-16134232.html>

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 15 male perpetrators from Kurdish-Iraqi origins

Online platform in which the incident took place: Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp

Trend identification: Trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling.

Use case No6

Title: SENTENCE N. 883/2019 (08/07/2019)

Incident description:

With the active collaboration of organised criminal groups operating internationally, perpetrators IC and PG were involved in the recruitment, transportation and harbouring of Nigerian women, in order to exploit them sexually within the Italian market, later to be transported to other European countries (Belgium, Germany, UK and Spain. The girls would be procured by ‘madames’ throughout the aforementioned countries and become subjects of financial profit.

The victims’ transportation journey starting from Nigeria, required travels through Niger and Libya. These travels were organized diligently, often in cooperation with Libyan traffickers who exercised military-like control and para-entrepreneurial planning, alongside high levels of corruption within the border.

The perpetrators IC and PG took care of the transportation fee and organizational aspects, further exercising the debt-bondage method to coerce the victims to pay their debts through sexual labor (the debt being determined by the perpetrators as 45.000 Euros).

Before leaving Nigeria, all the victims underwent a Voodoo Ritual, in which under the circumstances of incomppliance with the orders of the perpetrators, serious harm could come to the victims and /or their families. This coercion method created a strong amount of pressure and control over the victims.

From listening to the conversations recorded on the monitored phone 351/1893420 (formally in the name of in the name of XX XXX, born in Nigeria on XX XXX: all. no. 12) it emerged that the user always introduced himself and was called by the name PG (see progr. 137) and sometimes provided his interlocutors with his profile account Facebook, indicating it as "PG."

Further investigation conducted by the Italian police revealed that he would go through the victims Facebook profiles to determine if the victims “looks” are eligible or not, further proceeding the communications through WhatsApp or Facebook.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: 5 Female Nigerian victims, ranging between the birth date 1995-2000

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 2 Male Nigerian perpetrators aged 50 and 34 respectively.

Online platform in which the incident took place: Facebook and WhatsApp

Trend identification: The recruitment, transportation and receipt and of young Nigerian women in order to exploit them as prostitutes.

Use case No7

Title: SENTENCE N. 1081/2019 (07/10/2019)

Incident description:

The perpetrators JF and JE, husband and wife, were convicted of aggravated human trafficking and facilitation of illegal entry to the Italian territory, while JE was also charged for drug offences.

The couple were involved in the recruitment, transporting and harbouring of two Nigerian female victims with the aim of sexual exploitation. The crime was committed in cooperation with criminal groups operating transnationally. The victims' journey from Nigeria to Italy involved the crossing of Niger and Libya and was organised and paid for by the defendants. The fee for transportation ranged from 15.000,00 to 25.000,00 euros, which the girls had to pay back through their work. The victims were constantly subjected to physical abuse and threats. Before leaving Nigeria, they were forced to cast a Voodoo spell, which would mean harm to themselves or their families in circumstances of incompliance with the perpetrators wishes.

The defendants had different roles within the exploitation scheme, while JE took care of the recruitment of the girls, the voodoo rituals, the organisation of transport to Italy and payment to the criminal groups; She also acted as a "madame", teaching the girls how to solicit customers and how much they should charge the clients. JF took care of the transportation of the victims to Catania and back to their house shared with his wife, and bookkeeping activities to record the earnings of the victims. Based on the testimony of the victims, the wiretapping and surveillance activities on the perpetrators, their claims as to only renting a room to the victims and not having any knowledge of the prostitution activities were deemed false, therefore on 7.10.2019 they were both convicted to 10 years imprisonment and immediate expulsion from Italy upon completion of the sentence.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: 2 Female Nigerian Victims aged 17 and 21

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: A Nigerian Couple aged 23 and 26 respectively

Online platform in which the incident took place: Not identified

Trend identification: The recruitment, transportation and receipt and of young Nigerian women in order to exploit them as prostitutes.

Use case No8

Title: PROC. NO. 12809/2019 (01/10/2019)

Incident description:

The case analysed concerns the arrest of three suspects for the charges of human trafficking, torture, murder, sexual assault, enabling clandestine migration and kidnapping of hundreds of men, women and children in Libya. The three suspects were accused of transforming an abandoned military base into an illegal prison in Libya, where the migrants were forcibly detained, tortured, beaten and abused in order to coerce them or their families into paying a "liberation fee". In the circumstances in which no fee was paid, the victims were either tortured and killed, or sold to other traffickers for the purposes of labor or sexual exploitation. The head of the organization, a Libyan national, was responsible for running the prison and coordinating with different actors of the organization, including taxi drivers and local police officers who would deliver victims to the prison or

other traffickers that would sell victims to the organization. The other two suspects were responsible of detaining the victims, often abusing and torturing them. All suspects arrived irregularly to Italy, together with 56 other migrants who were rescued by an NGO off the Libyan coast. Even though the suspects denied the allegations, stating that they were also illegally kept in the prison, the testimonies of the victims helped in the recognition of the true essence of the crime. Some testimonies also mentioned different individuals who were part of the criminal organization.

Type of exploitation: Migrants smuggling, Forced Labour & Sexual exploitation.

Profile of the victim: Migrants of unknown origins

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 1 Libya National leading the organisation (Male, 26 years old), 1 Guinea National (Male, 22 years old) 1 Egypt National (Male, 24 years old)

Online platform in which the incident took place: Not identified

Trend identification: Threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, Abduction, deception, abuse of power or a position of vulnerability, giving or receiving payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person. Human trafficking cases are characterized by the central use of force, fraud, or coercion to exploit victims for labor or sex, setting it apart from related offenses. These methods can manifest as various forms of abuse, ranging from physical and mental torment to verbal intimidation, threats, and manipulation of victims' rights and wages to hinder their escape. Especially within the Libyan context, torture and intimidation methods for ransom seeking is a common trend.

Use case No9

Title: THB, TRIBUNAL OF PADOVA (18/04/2018)

Incident description:

Territorial Articulation of the Carabinieri Force, of the province of Padua, executed an O.C.C. ordered by the Judge for Preliminary Investigations of the Court of Padua, against 3 subjects (1 Italian, 1 Romanian, 1 Bangladeshi) accused of aiding and abetting human trafficking, illegal immigration with the purpose of labor exploitation.

Type of exploitation: Migrants smuggling & Forced Labour exploitation in the agricultural sector

Profile of the victim: Migrants from Bangladesh and China (paid €10,000 to get to Italy)

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 1 Italian, 1 Romanian, 1 Bangladeshi

Online platform in which the incident took place: WhatsApp and Telegram

Trend identification: Illegal immigration with the purpose of labor exploitation.

Use case No10

Title: THB, TRIBUNAL OF PADOVA (29/01/2021)

Incident description:

The Judge of the Court of Padua issued a conviction against a Chinese national found guilty of the crimes of aiding and abetting illegal immigration for the purpose of labor exploitation.

Type of exploitation: Migrants smuggling & Forced Labour exploitation

Profile of the victim: Migrants from China and Senegal

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: A Chinese national

Online platform in which the incident took place: WhatsApp and Telegram

Trend identification: Illegal immigration with the purpose of labor exploitation.

Use case No11

Title: THB, TRIBUNAL OF PADOVA (13/10/2021)

Incident description:

The Judge of the Court of Padua handed down a sentence against two Italian citizens found guilty of the crimes of aiding and abetting illegal immigration for the purpose of labor exploitation.

Type of exploitation: Migrants smuggling & Forced Labour exploitation in the industrial packaging industry

Profile of the victim: Migrants from Pakistan

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Two Italian Nationals

Online platform in which the incident took place: WhatsApp and Telegram

Trend identification: Aiding and abetting illegal immigration - labour exploitation in the industrial packaging industry

Use case No12³

Title: OPERATION “VENICE” (11/01/2017)

Incident description:

The Ancona State Police has concluded an important transnational operation, in collaboration with the German Federal Police and with the coordination of the Public Prosecutor’s Office of the Anti-Mafia District Directorate of Ancona and the Prosecutor’s Office of the Republic of Hof-Baviera, which has defeated a criminal association composed of Pakistani citizens, aimed at facilitating illegal immigration of compatriots through the so-called “Balkan route”. In the case at hand, the crime of smuggling was aggravated through the crime of kidnapping. The Serbian police also contributed to the investigation. The Mobile Team of the Police of Ancona, alerted by the Central Operational Service of the State Police and Interpol, had immediately started

³ Retrieved from: <https://questure.poliziadistato.it/it/Ancona/articolo/11245876173e66ea2858827437>

a technical investigative activity, which over time allowed reconstructing the profiles of the transnational criminal organisation. The leader of the organisation was identified as Mekmood Muhammad, 30 years old resident in Macerata, a worker with occasional jobs and two individuals, a 57-year-old and a 42-year-old resident in Senigallia. All off the perpetrators arrived in Italy a while ago and obtained their legal residencies as political asylum seekers.

Type of exploitation: Migrants smuggling

Profile of the victim: Pakistanis

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: The organisation consisted of three Pakistanis: a 30-year-old resident in Macerata and two associates, a 57-year-old and a 42-year-old.

Online platform in which the incident took place: N/A

Trend identification: Trafficking in human beings through extortion, crimes of smuggling and kidnapping

Use case No13⁴

Title: OPERATION “CARON” (10/05/2023)

Incident description:

According to the result of the investigation conducted, migrants were guaranteed to arrive at their destination in exchange for a payment of 10.000 Euros. An illegal reception system was created to meet the needs of the migrants, which was organised between cities abroad and several Italian capitals. The organisation also included aspects such as food and accommodation in the various stages, which was offered in Trieste, Lecce, Crotona, Brindisi, Foggia, Grosseto, Imperia, Milan and Turin. In the course of the investigations, numerous elements were collected according to which money laundering took place through the payment into a common fund managed by some people resident in Trieste.

Type of exploitation: Migrants smuggling & Forced criminal activities

Profile of the victim: Thousands of migrants of undefined nationality

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 29 persons suspected of belonging to a transnational association dedicated to the facilitation of illegal immigration and the money laundering of illegal activity were arrested.

Online platform in which the incident took place: N/A

Trend identification: Migrant smuggling and human trafficking

4.2 Greece

Use case No14

Title: Recruitment in Athens 2018

⁴ Retrieved from: <https://www.calabriamagnifica.it/cronaca-e-attualita/traffico-di-esseri-umani-rota-balcanica-arresti/>

Incident description:

In 2018 the Department of Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings of Athens investigated a case where a criminal group that was exploiting women from East Europe, at brothels in the centre of Athens. Two victims there were released that were recruited with false promises while there were in their country, Belarus, from another woman, member of the OCG with the same nationality. The OCG arranged their travel and paid for everything. As soon as the women arrived in Greece, the OCG arranged their legal residence in Greece with the method of forgery. Also, they were established in specific apartments in the centre of Athens. After that, using physical and emotional abuse, and the debt that was created during their travel, the victims were forced to work as prostitutes in two brothels in the centre of Athens. The victims were not allowed to move freely in Greece and the OCG was continually threatening and abusing them to achieve the extension of their exploitation. Moreover, to gain more profit from the exploitation of the women, the OCG forged visas from other European countries and gave them to the victims. While the two victims managed to escape and come to the authorities, the OCG members believing that they accept help from other people, owners of a local store in Athens, they command to arson in that store to treat them.

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation & Migrants smuggling

Profile of the victim: Two victims, aged 20 years old from Belarus there were recruited by members of OCG, in a big need of money to support their families. They were not well educated.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Eight members of the OCG were arrested, coming from various countries such as Russia, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine that there were in charge of running the brothels.

Online platform in which the incident took place: There wasn't an online advertisement for the victims.

Trend identification: It is a typical way of sexual exploitation of women of East Europe. With the use of false promises the victims are coming to the Greek territory to work as prostitutes. Also, their legal residence in Greece is arranged by the OCG members with techniques of forgery.

Use case No15

Title: Recruitment in Athens 2022

Incident description:

In 2022 the Department of Combatting Human Trafficking of Athens ran an investigation about sexual exploitation of a Greek young woman that she was sexually exploited in brothels in the centre of Athens. The victim was approached and recruited through Facebook from an Albanian man. The perpetrator offered her a job as a waitress in a cafeteria that he owned. They arranged a meeting in order to discuss for the job and the Albanian guy gave her to drink a lot of alcohol and as a result she got drunk. He offered to host her in his apartment and since that day he locked her in his house and started beating her in order to bend her resistors and force her to work as a prostitute in three brothels that he owned. She was forced to work as a prostitute every day for about eight months. Her money was withheld, she was locked in his apartment and the Albanian exploiter was transporting her to the brothels. Finally, the Albanian guy was arrested, and another Greek man who worked as a service of the brothels. During the research of the house of the Albanian exploiter guns and a lot of bullets were found.

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation

Profile of the victim: The victim a 26-year-old woman, from the race of Roma. Her family was not supportive at all and she was not educated.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Albanian man, living for a long time in Greece, aged 26 years old. He was very violent and he was known to the authorities for attempted murder.

Online platform in which the incident took place: Facebook was used as a means of approaching and communication.

Trend identification: For the Albanians exploiters is common to pretend the lover boys and they are very violent towards the victims. Mostly they are exploiting one woman each time and they are forcing them to work as prostitutes in brothels withholding the whole amount of money that they are earning.

Use case No16

Title: Recruitment in Thiva

Incident description:

Police department of Thiva in 2016 ran an investigation for four men from Pakistan that they were working in the fields of potatoes. One of them recruited the victim to travel from Athens to Thiva to work as farmer in the fields of potatoes. As soon as the victim arrived in Thiva, was established in the house of the Pakistan chief and the other three Pakistanis were in charge of guarding the victim. His passport was withheld and his money from the work in the fields. Moreover, the three guardians were deported because they didn't have residence permits.

Type of exploitation: Forced Labour exploitation in agricultural sector

Profile of the victim: One male victim from Afghanistan, aged 18 years old, living in Thiva with his exploiters.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Three Pakistani men were arrested, aged 26, 25 and 23 years old. The recruiter is unidentified.

Online platform in which the incident took place: Any online platform was used.

Trend identification: It's a common tactic for workers in the fields of agricultural sector. Mostly of the times, there is a chief of the workers who is in charge of recruitment and establishment of PVoT. Other people are in charge of transporting and guarding the PVoT. Moreover passports, or IDs, and money are withheld by the chief of the criminal group.

Use case No17

Title: Recruitment in Thessaloniki

Incident description:

This investigation was run by the Department of Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings of Thessaloniki. A Nigerian woman was recruited in her country by another woman who promised a better future in Europe. She arranged the whole travel, she paid for the expenses and the victim was told that she would pay back as soon as she started working in Europe. She started her travel with other women from Nigeria and the first stop was Instabul. In Turkey she was captured and held in a house with other women from many different countries and forced to have sex with clients in exchange of money. Also, she was under a voodoo ceremony in order not to say to the authorities what she is going through. Eventually, she managed to escape through boat and she arrived first at the island of Kos and finally at Thessaloniki.

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation and Migrants smuggling

Profile of the victim: A 29-year-old Nigerian woman, not well educated and poor family.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Two unidentified traffickers. A Nigerian woman as recruiter and a Turkish exploiter.

Online platform in which the incident took place: No online platform was used.

Trend identification: The Nigerians criminal groups they are using juju and voodoo ceremonies to recruit and exploit women. It is difficult to identify the perpetrators and most of the cases are linked to illegal immigration.

Use case No18

Title: Case Thessaloniki 2018

Incident description: In 2018 the Department of Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings of Thessaloniki had a case of attempt of trafficking for a purpose of sexual exploitation. A Ukrainian man created an online advertisement as a model agency that finds job as model in Greece. He recruited a Ukrainian woman, he arranged her travel, he picked her up from the airport and established her in a hotel room. As soon as, she arrived in the hotel room, she was locked, the perpetrator tried to rape her, he physically abused her with the purpose of sexual exploitation. The victim managed to escape and talk to the authorities.

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation

Profile of the victim: Ukrainian woman, aged 21 years old, in need for money to survive.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: The perpetrator was a Ukrainian man, unidentified who was living for a long time in Greece.

Online platform in which the incident took place: The online platform that was used for the recruitment was “VST.MODELS AGENCY”.

Trend identification: According to EKKA’s national reports⁵ and police evidence, it has been noticed that women from Russia, Serbia, Ukrainian is most likely to be recruited to come to our country to work as models. As soon as they are arriving to Greece the members of the criminal organization are trying to force them to work as prostitutes in escort offices by using physical and emotional abuse.

Use case No19

Title: Case Thira Island

Incident description: In 2023 on the island of Santorini an operation took place in which three Greek women were released. Sexual dates with exchange of money were taking place in a variety of luxurious apartments that were rented by the members of OCG for this specific reason, and the victims were always transported by the “drivers” of the OCG. Also, the recruiter was an unidentified Albanian man known by his nickname and his wife was also an unidentified Bulgarian woman known by her nickname who was in charge of answering the phone and arranging the sexual dates.

⁵ See more: <https://ekka.org.gr/index.php/el/ethnikos-mixanismos-anaforas>

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation

Profile of the victim: Ukrainian woman, aged 21 years old, in need for money to survive.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: The perpetrator was a Ukrainian man, unidentified who was living for a long time in Greece.

Online platform in which the incident took place: The online platform that was used for the recruitment was “VST.MODELS AGENCY”.

Trend identification: According to EKKA’s national reports and police evidence, it has been noticed that women from Russia, Serbia, Ukrainian is most likely to be recruited to come to our country to work as models. As soon as they are arriving to Greece the members of the criminal organization are trying to force them to work as prostitutes in escort offices by using physical and emotional abuse.

Use case No20

Title: Case Katerini region

Incident description: The operation took place in Katerini in 2018. In general, four Greek people were arrested for trafficking in human beings and money laundry. The head of OCG was a Ukrainian woman with Greek citizenship and she was the owner of the “office”. She was recruiting women from Russia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan, arranging their travel and establishing them in specific apartments. Sexual dates with exchange of money were taking place in apartments that were rented by the members of OCG for this specific reason, and the victims were always transported by the “drivers” of the OCG. Each sexual date costed sixty euros and the money were given directly to the Ukrainian woman. Also, she was in charge of answering the phone and arranging the sexual dates. Throughout the investigation and the wiretapping, the Ukrainian perpetrator arranged approximately one hundred twenty-three appointments and she was sexually exploiting approximately nine women. Additionally, a Greek businessman, was in charge of legalizing the money of their illegal action.

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation

Profile of the victim: The victims were Russian, Ukrainian, Uzbekistani around the age of 40. They didn’t know about the job as prostitutes and they were in a bad economic situation.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: The perpetrator was a 46-year-old woman born in Ukraine with Greek citizenship and connections with other Greek people, members of the criminal organization. Each of them had a specific role, e.g. drivers, owners of the apartments and businessmen that helped the head of OCG legalize her profit from the exploitation of the women.

Online platform in which the incident took place: There wasn’t online advertisement for the victims, because Katerini is a small city of Greece and clients were close friends and well-known people of the members of OCG.

Trend identification: It’s a very common modus operandi in Greece. More specific women from abroad are recruited and persuaded to travel to Greece in order to work as house keepers, nannies or waitresses and finally they are forced to work as prostitutes. In small cities, the client list is very closed, and the victims are not advertised through the internet. Moreover, their exploitation is taking place in apartments and not in brothels.

Use case No21

Title: Online advertisement in Athens 2018 (351)

Incident description: The Department of Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings of Athens in 2018 conducted an investigation about a criminal organization that was exploiting many women mostly coming from Albania and Romania, in escort office and brothel at the same time. Among the women that were released was a minor Bulgarian woman that was recruited with the method of lover boy. The lover boy was from Albania and with false promises about his love for her and the job that she was going to do, forced her to work as prostitute for an escort office and brothel that owned a woman from Kazakhstan and the rest criminal members group. Each member of the OCG had a very specific role. There was the owner and boss, the operators, the recruiters, the drivers and cahiers The recruiters were finding young women, with no supportive family and in a big need for money, using false promises about the income, forced them to work as prostitutes for the OCG. The sexual dates were arranged by the operators and some of the women, they were addressed to brothel, in order to gain more profit for the OCG. In order to force the women, they were using threats and emotional and physical abuse. Also, there were drivers that were transferring the victims that their exploitation was taking place, hotel rooms and apartments of the clients.

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation

Profile of the victim: The victim was a 17-year-old Bulgarian woman that she was exploited in escort office and brothel. She was living in Greece and she was recruited with the method of lover boy. Also, she was forced to travel to England and work as a prostitute for the OCG's members.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Fourteen people were arrested, with various nationalities, coming from Kazakhstan, Albania, Greece, Russia, Bulgaria and Romania. Each of them had a very discrete role and each of them were receiving orders from the owner of the escort office and the brothel, the woman from Kazakhstan.

Online platform in which the incident took place: The services of the victims were advertised on an online platform "www.alexwomen.blogspot.gr.". Naked photos from the women were appeared on that website and phone number that the clients using to arrange a date.

Trend identification: In Greece there are many of websites that PVoT are advertised. These criminal groups are well organised and each of them has a specific role. There is the owner and the chief of the escort office, the operators, the recruiters, the drivers and the cashiers. Each of them informs the owner – boss of the escort office about everything and he is the one that he is in charge of taking the final decisions.

Use case No22

Title: Online advertisement in Volos

Incident description: In 2017 in Volos a police operation took place in which two Romanian women were released. Police officers ran a preliminary investigation for about three months for an escort site in which women were advertised and sexual dates were arranged in many big cities of Greece (e.g., Athens, Patra, Volos, Larissa etc.) The case was for pimping and none of the pimps were arrested. Each sexual date was arranged by phone and cost one hundred twenty euros. Every woman was providing their services as prostitutes at six clients approximately per day. The pimps were arranging their transporting and establishment in the Greek territory and the victims had to pay back their debt from their work as prostitutes.

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation

Profile of the victim: The victims were two Romanian women, aged 27 and 28 years old, with no family and friends in Greece.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: The pimps were unidentified Greek men.

Online platform in which the incident took place: Two specific websites were used for advertising the exploited women (eg. www.spicemodels.com, www.freelist.gr)

Trend identification: This way of exploitation it's a new modus operandi, in which the victims are travelling in different cities of Greece and they are staying approximately one week in each city. The advertisements and the sexual dates are arranged by a person who is not in the same city as the victims.

Use case No23

Title: Online advertisement in Thessaloniki 2019

Incident description: In 2019, the Department of Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings in Thessaloniki had a case about pimping. More specifically, they noticed that through internet women were advertising their services as escorts. The women were from different countries (eg. Russia, Albania) and the appointments were closed through phone. The pimps were a Russian woman and a Romanian driver. Each sexual date cost one hundred fifty euros and they took place in hotel rooms and houses of the clients.

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation

Profile of the victim: The victims were multicultural from many different countries, even Greece.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: The pimps were a Russian woman that she was arranging the sexual dates and a Romanian driver that he was transferring the women in the clients.

Online platform in which the incident took place: The online platform that the pimps were using was "Escortsclub.gr".

Trend identification: In Greece, there are a lot of escort offices. The appointments are arranged by phone, the women are transferred to the clients by specific drivers and the money are given towards to the pimps.

Use case No24

Title: Online advertisement in Athens 2019

Incident description: In March of 2019, the Department of Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings in Athens ran an investigation about an escort office that was exploited at least 15 women from various countries, even natives. This criminal organization was very well-structured. There were recruiters that were finding PVoTs in bars and clubs of Athens. They were giving to the women false promises about the income and the legality of the job. Also, they were telling the victims that they are going to work as models and only escorting men to luxury restaurants, hotels and travels in islands. After the victims agreed, the recruiters were "sending" them to the boss and owner of the office in order to take the final decision and approval. Then, photographers were taking naked photos and videos of the victims and uploading them online. The sexual dates were arranged by women operators that they advertised the services of the women. Each sexual date cost at least one hundred

forty euros and took place in the house of clients and luxury hotel rooms. The victims were transferred by the drivers of the OCG and finally there were specific individuals that were collecting the money of the victims and they were delivering them to the boss. Among the women that the OCG was exploiting there was a 17-year-old woman, native that she was recruited in a bar, she was told that she will work only as escort of the clients in luxury restaurants and that she will not be forced to have sex with them. Also, naked photos and videos of the minor were uploaded, in order to advertise her services.

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation & Illegal transport

Profile of the victim: Approximately 6 women were released, among them there was a 17-year-old native minor. The minor needed money to help her family.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 15 members of the OCG were arrested, all natives except two, that there were an Albanian woman and a Kenyan man. Among them was the owner of the escort office, the recruiters, the drivers, the operators and the cashiers of the criminal group. All of them were well-known people.

Online platform in which the incident took place: The recruitment of the victims was taking place in bars, clubs and the advertisement of their services was in a specific website “athensdiva.gr”, where naked photos, description of the victims and their services were appeared.

Trend identification: In Greece, there are many of websites that PVoT are advertised. These criminal groups are well organised and each of them has a specific role. There is the owner and the chief of the escort office, the operators, the recruiters, the drivers and the cashiers. Each of them informs the owner – boss of the escort office about everything and he is the one that he is in charge of taking the final decisions.

Use case No25

Title: Online advertisement and recruitment in Athens 2019

Incident description: In August 2019, the Department of Combating Trafficking Human Beings of Athens ran an investigation about a criminal group constituted by one Uzbekistani woman and three Albanian men. The victims were from Moldova and they were recruited by the Uzbekistani woman through online platform for finding job in Athens as housekeepers. The travel was arranged from the OCG members and as soon as they were arriving in greek territory they were establishing them in houses in the centre of Athens. By the arrival of the victims in Athens, the Uzbekistani woman announced them that they are going to work as prostitutes in two brothels that she and her Albanian boyfriend owned. They were withholding the whole amount of money the victims earned as prostitutes, they had a debt towards her that they had to pay back. Additionally, she was emotionally abusing the victims and she was trying to extend the period of exploitation of the victims by promising them that she will help the victims issue a permit license. Moreover, guardians, two Albanian men, were in charge of keeping an eye on the victims while they were at the brothels and the houses. This criminal organization was exploiting at least three Moldovan woman for nine months.

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation

Profile of the victim: Three Moldovan women, aged 19, 26 and 24 years old, not educated, with serious economic problems at their country.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: The head of OCG was the Uzbekistani woman, aged 36 years old, and her Albanian boyfriend, aged 31 years old. They were living in Greece of many years, and they owned two brothels. Also, the other two Albanian men were in charge of guarding the victims.

Online platform in which the incident took place: The Uzbekistani woman created the online platform eurabota.com. Through this platform she was recruiting the women. Also, the fact that she could speak Russian, Turkish, Uzbekistani and Greek helped her with the control of the victims.

Trend identification: The way the above-mentioned criminal group acted is a very well-known modus operandi. Criminal groups constituted by many and different nationalities recruiting victims, at least one of their nationalities, they persuade them to travel from their country to Greece for a better life and a job with a huge income. Finally, with emotional and sometimes physical abuse they force the women to work as prostitutes, telling them to pay back their debt. Moreover, they are forging their passport to succeed in a bigger period of exploitation and economic profit for themselves.

4.3 Germany

Use case No26

Title: Recruitment

Incident description:

According to the findings of the judgment, at the end of October 2019, the defendant, who resides in Germany, lied to the 20-year-old Romanian injured party P. via chat messages that he wanted to start a family with her in Germany, that she should attend a language course and that he would give her a better life than in Romania. In fact, the defendant wanted to lure the injured party to the vicinity of Munich. so that she would earn a monthly living for both of them as a prostitute with at least € 3,000. On December 6/7, 2019, the injured party, who had never left Romania and pretended to her parents that she would stay in Romania, moved into the defendant's one-room apartment believing she was in a love relationship with him. A few days later, the accused asked the injured party to work as a prostitute; in order to make her compliant for this, he strangled her so that she could not breathe for a short time and threatened to throw her out of the 10th floor of a building or to hand her over to "the Albanians". Since the injured party refused, the defendant temporarily arranged a job for her as a cleaner. When the injured party wanted to work in a supermarket, the defendant replied that he would decide where she worked. Nevertheless, the injured party did not separate from the defendant because she was attached to him and also feared that she would not be able to get along in Germany without him as she did not speak the language.

Type of exploitation: Sexual & Forced Labour exploitation

Profile of the victim: Romania, woman, 20 years old

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Male, German, 42 years old

Online platform in which the incident took place: WhatsApp

Trend identification: The “false Promise to marry someone” is considered a typical element of the “loverboy” method. However, in this case it was merely a trap. It is very common, even the German Federal Criminal Police has recognized this

https://www.bka.de/DE/IhreSicherheit/RichtigesVerhalten/VerdachtDesMenschenhandels/verdachtDesMenschenhandels_node.html

Use case No27

Title: Online recruitment, mixed with direct in-person recruitment in clubs

Incident description:

The district court sentenced the defendants as follows: The defendant A. with acquittal in all other respects for aggravated trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation in combination with pimping in three cases, attempted aggravated trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation in two cases, pimping, dangerous bodily injury in two cases, fraud in two cases, incitement to bodily injury in two cases as well as for intentional bodily injury to a total term of imprisonment of ten years, the defendant B. for aggravated trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation in combination with pimping in three cases, attempted aggravated trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation in two cases, pimping, dangerous bodily injury in two cases, intentional bodily injury in four cases, fraud in three cases, and attempted Fraud to a total term of imprisonment of eight years. It further found that a forfeiture order was precluded by claims of injured persons and both defendants are jointly and severally liable in the amount of 275,224 and, in addition, in respect of defendant A. alone in the amount of €382,108.80.

According to the findings of the Regional Court, the defendants, who had already been friends for several years at that time, got together in 2011 or at the beginning of 2012 in order to generate as much income as possible for themselves by economically exploiting unsuspecting women. The accused B. was supposed to take on the role of the "lover boy", establish contact with attractive young women and pose as a man not interested in material things. In order to get the women to enter into a relationship, he made them believe that he was interested in a long-term relationship and later in starting a family. The defendant A. was supposed to take on the role of the mysterious and possibly also not harmless friend of the B., who was closely connected to him. After taking up the relationship with the defendant B., the women were to be isolated from their families, friends and acquaintances, friends and acquaintances in order to limit their social contacts largely to the defendant. Thereafter, all conceivable possibilities were to be used in order to exploit the women economically, whereby in any case, they were to be induced to take up prostitution activities.

In the process, the defendants wanted to monitor them closely; the women were to hand over all their earnings. Even if the promise of later founding a family with the defendant B. served as motivation for the prostitution activity, the women were furthermore to be put under pressure - in case of insufficient work performance from the defendants' point of view - by physical assaults or threats thereof and verbal disparagement, and thus to be induced to make greater efforts. If necessary, they were also to be to take out loans, the value of which was collected by the defendants. This in turn - because of the obligation to repay the loan or to pay installments, to which the women alone were exposed - could build up pressure on them, which at least in part was used to persuade them to take up the prostitution in the first place. to get them to take up the prostitution activity in the first place. In the years, the defendants continued their plan to the detriment of four local women of middle-class origin, the joint plaintiffs. Three of them still suffer psychologically from the crime and are also financially ruined as a result of the crimes.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: Bulgarian, German, Polish, Turkish females, age span 19-23

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Lebanese-German nationals, 2 brothers.

Online platform in which the incident took place: All "social media" channels

Trend identification: Such cases are referring to the lover boy method.

Use case No28

Title: Recruitment

Incident description:

A District Court convicted the defendant of three counts of fraud, two counts of trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation, two counts of aggravated trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation in combination with extortion, one count of assault, one count of solicitation to issue false health certificates, one count of solicitation to use false health certificates, one count of pimping in combination with attempted aggravated trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation, and one count of extortion. for the purpose of sexual exploitation, and extortion in combination with bodily injury. with bodily injury to a total term of imprisonment of four years and two months.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation, Forced Labour exploitation, Forced Criminal Activities

Profile of the victim: Poland, Romania; females, 20-23 years old

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 2 Germans; 28 and 31 years old

Online platform in which the incident took place: All “social media” channels and Tinder

Trend identification: none

Use case No29

Title: Recruitment

Incident description: The Regional Court convicted the defendants of 25 counts of smuggling foreigners into the country, each in combination with exploitation of prostitutes and pimping, of which five counts were in combination with aggravated trafficking in human beings and 20 counts were in combination with aggravated forced prostitution, of withholding and embezzlement of wages (employees' shares) in combination with withholding and embezzlement of wages (employers' shares) in 70 cases and of tax evasion in 17 cases, and sentenced the accused B. a total prison sentence of eight years and nine months and against one defendant a total prison sentence of four years and six months. In addition, the Regional Court ordered the defendants to confiscate an amount of €1,165,270.60 against the defendants as joint and several debtors.

Type of exploitation: Forced Labour & Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: Romanian and German women, age span 20-28

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Romanian and German nations (group of); age span 35-54

Online platform in which the incident took place: “Social media” channels

Trend identification: Withholding and embezzlement of wages (employees' shares) in combination with withholding and embezzlement of wages (employers shares) is often found in Germany. Often, especially when it comes to women, they are promised a “good job” in the first place and then it ends up in prostitution. The perpetrators are promising a ‘normal’ job in the services sector and then drag the victim into prostitution (using force, threatening and sometimes even torture); in Germany, prostitution is legal if the prostitute is registered – s/he can freely charge for services. Sometimes the perpetrators are not succeeding in dragging the victim into prostitution so that the victim has to work for the criminal organization as such and they are neither paying the minimum wage per hour (i.e. EUR 12,00) nor are they complying with their duty to pay the employer’s social contribution to the authorities. And this is fraud as such according to § 266a along with § 28e SGB IV)

Use case No30

Title: The “grooming” case

Incident description: The Regional Court convicted the accused of attempted aggravated trafficking in human beings in combination with sexual abuse of a child, of attempted trafficking in human beings, of attempted aggravated forced prostitution in combination with sexual abuse of a child in two cases, in one case in further combination with attempted aggravated sexual abuse of children and procuring child pornography, sentenced to a total term of imprisonment of four years for 30 counts of sexual abuse of a child, of which four counts were committed in combination with distribution of pornographic material, one count was committed in combination with procuring child pornography and one count was committed in combination with distribution of child pornography, and for possession of child pornography.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: Bulgarian nationals, women/girls

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Bulgarian and German nationals; 32-55 years old

Online platform in which the incident took place: WhatsApp

Trend identification: Such cases are belonging to the category “Grooming”

Use case No31

Title: Recruitment in Hungary

Incident description: In present case, two male Hungarians forced one female Hungarian to prostitute herself in a brothel in Germany. This had been detected in a routine check-up of a brothel.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: Hungarian woman, 21 y/o

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 2 male Hungarians, 35 and 37 y/o

Online platform in which the incident took place: “social media” channels

Trend identification: Sometimes, Hungarian nationals are exploiting individuals “from their own countries of origin” in Germany. In such cases, there are typically false promises of “good jobs” in Germany, ending-up in prostitution. So-to -say ‘standard cases’.

Use case No32

Title: Recruitment in Italy

Incident description:



The female victim from Uganda has been recruited in Uganda by an Italian perpetrator. She agreed to his offer to work in Italy in a restaurant. Upon arrival in Italy, the victim was faced with the duty to 'pay her debts' for the administrative costs, travel, and accommodation with 'sexual services', i.e. forced prostitution in Italy and after some weeks in Germany. In Germany, she applied for asylum. Her passport had been taken away by the Italian perpetrator.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: Female, Uganda, 23 y/o

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Italian nationals (at least 2), 40 and 52 y/o

Online platform in which the incident took place: "social media" first, followed by in-person meetings.

Trend identification: It is typical that Italian criminal networks are recruiting victims from West-African countries for the purposes of prostitution in Europe.

Use case No33

Title: Recruitment

Incident description:

The Romanian perpetrator and the Romanian female victim were both preliminarily arrested as they vigorously argued with each other on the street. During questioning, it turned out that she wanted to free herself from forced prostitution. Based on the statements, possible links to a criminal group in Romania, Bulgaria and Switzerland were identified. A European Investigation Order was issued in each case, but this did not lead to any results. This is surprising, because a witness (customer of the victim) had testified that he had been offered to ransom the woman for 10,000.00 EUR.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: 1 Romanian woman, 22 y/o

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: At least 1 Romanian national but there were strong hints that a criminal Network is involved.

Online platform in which the incident took place: "social media" channels

Trend identification: This case looks as if better investigations and more interest in the subject-matter could have resulted in something of transnational interest. The case was closed by court decision without any convictions. Sadly, this happens rather often in Germany.

Use case No34

Title: Recruitment in Germany

Incident description: 1 Romanian man and 1 Romanian woman (not married, both 41 years old) brought 2 Romanian women (19 and 20 years old) with the false promise of work to Germany for sexual exploitation in an official brothel. The Romanian male perpetrator was known to the German authorities (comparable previous cases).



Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: 2 Romanian women, 19 and 20 y/o

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 1 Romanian man, 1 Romanian woman (both 41 y/o)

Online platform in which the incident took place: “social media” channels

Trend identification: As in other cases, e.g. concerning Bulgarian and Hungarian perpetrators, Romanians national are capitalising on their ties in their countries of origin; often, there are links to the ethnical Roma group.

Use case No35

Title: Recruitment

Incident description: The perpetrators (1 man from Nigeria and 1 brothel operator with Lithuanian citizenship) forced a woman from Nigeria in Germany to prostitution in the brothel of the Lithuanian citizen. About the background: The Nigerian originally helped the victim to flee Nigeria for economic reasons with the promise of a decent job in Europe. She had no money and initially had to engage in street prostitution for him in Italy. In Nigeria, he had taken her to a voodoo priest who swore her to do whatever the perpetrator told her to do. If she did not do this, the voodoo would kill her. In Germany, she was raped several times by the Nigerian. He had taken the ID card from her. From Italy, they first went to restaurants in northern Germany for the purpose of illegal prostitution. It is noticeable that the restaurants were run by Thai and Bulgarian women. A customer in the brothel then filed an anonymous police report with reference to possible human trafficking and forced prostitution.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: Female, Nigerian, 23 y/o

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Male (34 y/o), Nigeria, and male, Lithuania (39 y/o).

Online platform in which the incident took place: WhatsApp first, the in-person in Nigeria

Trend identification: Several cases involving women from West-Africa are also including the aspect of “witchcraft” to capitalise on the fear of the victim. Usually, there is also the false promise to work in Germany in a qualified job.

Use case No36

Title: recruitment

Incident description:

In this case, a German male citizen contacted a Chinese woman and told her he loved her. She came to Germany where she had to produce nude videos of herself and was forced to present herself online on streaming services platform where customers asked her to ‘play with herself’, incl. demands for torturing her in the life-stream (with electro-shock-devices). The platforms used were all the common pornographic content ones available: xhamster, mydirtyhobby, etc.). The perpetrator earned around 9.000,00 EUR during a period of 6 months.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: Female, Chinese, 22 y/o

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Male, German, 36 y/o

Online platform in which the incident took place: Facebook, platforms with pornographic content

Trend identification: None

Use case No37

Title: Recruitment

Incident description: The two victims were women from Slovakia (20 and 21 years old). There was 1 male perpetrator from Slovakia in Germany and several male perpetrators in Slovakia (Slovakians). The perpetrators got in touch with the victims via their Facebook-profiles. The two victims were brought to Germany to get involved in prostitution in several brothels across Germany. The victims were put on drugs and their passports were taken from them. The main perpetrator in Germany was very 'visible' as he had several Mercedes Benz vehicles with Slovakian plates. One day, the two victims managed to ,steal back their passports and went to the police.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: Women, Slovakia (20 and 21 y/o)

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 1 male, Slovakian

Online platform in which the incident took place: Facebook

Trend identification: This is one of the standard cases where non-German citizens are capitalising on their connections to the countries of origin.

Use case No38

Title: Online advertisement

Incident description: A Regional Court sentenced the defendant to a total term of imprisonment of three years and three months for "commercial" trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation in three cases, attempted "commercial" trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation, withholding and embezzlement of wages in 19 cases, intentional bankruptcy in three cases and intentional unauthorized handling of waste. Against the non-revising co-defendant L., the district court imposed a total term of imprisonment of two years with the same verdict of guilty. The defendants jointly managed the W. farm in G. and the S. GmbH in B. in a division of labour. For this purpose, they mainly used Polish employees, whom they employed primarily for peeling and processing potatoes. The defendant and the co-defendant, as employers, did not pay the employee and employer social security contributions for their Polish employees in 2010 in the total amount of 185,279.16 euros and from January to July 2011 in the total amount of 70,279.16 euros. In addition, the co-defendant L., as managing director, and the defendant, as de facto managing director of S. GmbH, failed to pay social security contributions for the latter - as of for the years 2007, 2008 and 2009

as of June 30 of the following year. 2009; the company had been insolvent since at least January 2008. The Polish employees formed a joint pool of labor for use at the W. farm and at S. GmbH, whereby the defendants jointly decided where and what those had to work.

Type of exploitation: Forced Labour Exploitation

Profile of the victim: Both male and female (19 in total), age span 19-40.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 2 German men, 43 and 54 y/o.

Online platform in which the incident took place: Recruitment took place via an agency in Poland that published various announcement online, among them all “social media” channels.

Trend identification: It happens from time to time that non-German workers are recruited and there is something wrong with the payments – as it is in present case. Such cases are, of course, on THB for the purpose of labour but it is not “forced” in the narrow sense, more like fraudulent actions. More often, such cases are involving victims from Romania and Bulgaria. Usually, workers are recruited in their home-countries and they are promised the minimum wage per hours (i.e. EUR 12,00) when working in Germany; but when arriving in Germany, they have to pay for housing that belongs to the perpetrators for living there (usually way more than a usual room would cost) and their food is delivered by a catering service (also belonging to the perpetrators). Consequently, they are officially earning the minimum wage, but a lot of that income is again taken by the perpetrators.

Use case No39

Title: The “pimping” case

Incident description: The Regional Court sentenced one defendant to a juvenile sentence of two years and nine months for "aiding and abetting pimping", "aiding and abetting particularly serious forced prostitution in combination with pimping", "robbery in combination with intentional bodily harm" and "attempted robbery in combination with intentional bodily harm". It found two co-defendants guilty of "particularly serious forced prostitution in combination with pimping"; for this offence and further offences, the Regional Court sentenced one co-defendant to a total term of imprisonment of six years and six months and another co-defendant to a juvenile sentence of five years. In addition, it ordered the confiscation of the value of the proceeds of the offence against the accused as well as against the co-defendants.

Type of exploitation: Mainly sexual exploitation; also: forced to commit crimes, such as robbery/theft

Profile of the victim: Bulgarian women, 21-33 y/o

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Bulgarian nationals, 40-49 y/o

Online platform in which the incident took place: “social media” channels

Trend identification: Often, Bulgarian (or Romanian) nationals residing lawfully in Germany capitalise on exploiting individuals “from their own countries of origin” in Germany. In such cases, there are typically false promises of “good jobs” in Germany, ending-up in prostitution. These perpetrators are visiting their countries of origin and show-off with their cars, watches, etc. In so doing, they are attracting potential victims (motto: “See, I have made it – you can make it as well, just do what I am telling you”).

4.4 Spain

Use case No40

Title: Recruitment offline

Incident description:

A Nigerian woman was trafficked to Spain for the purposes of sexual exploitation. She was sold by her own family at the age of 16 to another Nigerian person who took her to Spain. Her passport was confiscated, she was abused, threatened, and deceived.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: Female, Nigerian and minor (16 years old).

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: The victims' family were the mediators and she was sold to traffickers in Nigeria who brought her to Spain.

Online platform in which the incident took place: Offline

Trend identification: According to the latest report from Greta the number of minors trafficked is lower than adults <https://www.coe.int/en/web/anti-human-trafficking/-/spain-urged-to-guarantee-compensation-to-victims-of-human-trafficking-and-to-step-up-investigations-of-trafficking-for-labour-exploitation-1>

However, in Spain the most common type of exploitation for trafficking victims was sexual exploitation, followed by labour exploitation, forced marriage, forced criminality and forced begging. GRETA(2023)10 Published on 12 June 2023. <https://rm.coe.int/greta-evaluation-report-on-spain-3rd-evaluation-round-greta-2023-10-ac/1680ab8d0f>

The trafficking of women from Nigeria to engage in sex work is a trend in Spain. Often voodoo known is used to subdue victims and family members and friends often work as agents. Many women enter Spain via Morocco. Source: https://www.policia.es/_es/colabora_trata_menores.php

Use case No41

Title: Recruitment Online

Incident description:

The survivor comes from a poor, rural area in Bolivia. She is a professional singer and uses Facebook to try to forward her career. She enters several chatrooms, looking for contacts for gigs. Via Facebook she was contacted by another Bolivian male who offered to help her to find work. He wrote to her frequently congratulating her on her work, he acted like one more admirer and behaved respectfully and formally. After several months exchanging messages, he began to encourage her to come to Europe and offered to pay for her ticket and let her stay with him. He told her that he had been residing in Spain for many years and that he had a good position since he worked as an engineer. He told her that he had a friend who could shoot a quality promotional video and that he would help her a lot to advance her career. However, he lied and ended up exploiting her sexually. He was able to convince her to travel to meet him by creating a fake profile. Fake account creation is the process of creating accounts using bogus or stolen identity information. He led the

victim to believe that he had contacts in the industry and that he was younger and much better looking than he really was. He tailored his profile and posted fake photos. The victim thought she would be meeting someone who could help her become a successful singer. Instead, she met an old man who exploited her.

Type of exploitation: Sexual and Forced Labour exploitation

Profile of the victim: Female, Bolivian, young professional

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Bolivian, male

Online platform in which the incident took place: Facebook

Trend identification: This shows a trend as often there is a relationship between the defendants' and victims' nationalities, such that in a large number of cases, both parties – offender and victim – share the same nationality (UNODC, 2020).

The covid pandemic has increased this vulnerability, and increasingly traffickers are using social media and other online platforms to recruit new victims due to their increased economic hardships https://www.unodc.org/unodc/es/frontpage/2021/July/covid-19-and-crime_-the-impact-of-the-pandemic-on-human-trafficking.html

<https://www.proyectoesperanza.org/ellas/testimonios/>

Use case No42

Title: lover boy method

Incident description:

An organised crime group with branches in Romania and Spain was luring victims into forced sexual labour with the so-called 'lover boy' method. This is a very complex strategy by which the lover boy seduces young, vulnerable girls and/or boys over several months. On some occasions the grooming can last for a period of years. The final aim of the method is to exploit them sexually later on. Lover boys can also threaten the victims with violence and often they use blackmail and say that they will publish compromising pictures. They use emotional blackmail to exploit the victims and sometimes the victims become so dependent on the lover boy that they will do anything to please them. The victims in this case study were sexually exploited in night clubs in Spain. To avoid detection, the Romanian gang leaders smuggled the cash out of the country themselves.

Type of exploitation: Sexual & Forced Labour exploitation

Profile of the victim: 25 victims (24 Romanian nationals and 1 Bulgarian national) identified in Romania (9) and Spain (16). The ages of the victims were not reported.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: The criminal network was initially based in the Murcian municipality of San Pedro del Pinatar, to later move to the province of Alicante and expand to the province of Toledo. 13 arrests were made (6 in Romania and 7 in Spain, 8 of whom were Romanian and 2 Spanish nationals). Spanish clients visiting night clubs for the purposes to engage in paid sexual activity

Online platform in which the incident took place: The victims were initially recruited online and then exploited in person afterwards. However, the exact platform is not mentioned.

Trend identification: This is a trend as organised gangs operate in different countries trafficking women from Romania to be exploited in night clubs in Spain.

<https://www.border-security-report.com/twenty-five-victims-of-sexual-exploitation-identified-in-romania-and-spain/>

Use case No43

Title: Online

Incident description:

The victims were in a very unfavorable socioeconomic situation in their country of origin - Columbia. They were deceived with false job offers and advertisements for careers for the elderly in France. Once in France they were forced into sexual labour for a time, until they were transferred to Spain, where they continued to be forced into sexual labour in dating apartments located in Seville.

Type of exploitation: Sexual & Forced Labour exploitation

Profile of the victim: Colombian women – in precarious economic situations

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Organised crime gangs that were solely focused on the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation were organized into disjointed networks. Four people were arrested and charged with crimes of human trafficking and sexual assault. To obtain clients, the organization published erotic photographs of women on sexual encounter websites, offering their sexual services both in the flats they controlled and in the homes of the clients themselves.

Online platform in which the incident took place: Advertisements for jobs to work with the elderly in France via specific web pages. They were then moved to Spain from France and forced into sexual labour.

Trend identification: Organised gangs to operate and undertake transborder crime. Women and girls are often moved through different countries

<https://www.border-security-report.com/spanish-national-police-dismantles-a-criminal-organization-that-prostituted-colombian-women-in-spain-and-france/>

Use case No44

Title: Recruitment online via Instagram

Incident description:

Recruitment took place through Instagram. An emotional relationship begun, and the trafficker promised a job in Spain and marriage. All tickets are paid for by the trafficker. However, on arrival after a month the survivor of trafficking is taken to a friend of the trafficker and forced into a life of crime which involves only the crime of shoplifting. The victim was forced to steal clothes. These clothes are stolen from department stores and then taken to Bulgaria for sale. The survivor as a result is subjected to poverty and violence and the threat of prison as she is committing illegal acts that could lead to prosecution. This means that she is more dependent on her trafficker as she has committed crimes and they can threaten to report her to the authorities.

Type of exploitation: Forced criminal activities

Profile of the victim: Female, student in precarious economic situation with dependent family members, 28 years old.

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: There were several traffickers that operated together. An individual male, Bulgarian national was used to lure the individual in with promises of a sentimental relationship and a job opportunity. Other friends of the trafficker including a female were used to exploit the individual. Three adult Bulgarian nationals including one female.

Online platform in which the incident took place: Instagram

Trend identification: This does represent a trend which is called forced crime – The numbers are not as high as for the crime of trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, but it is definitely an issue in Spain that needs to be considered. In Spain article 177 bis of the Penal Code reformed in 2015 includes exploitation to carry out criminal activities as one of the purposes of Human Trafficking.
<https://www.proyectoesperanza.org/ellas/testimonios/>

Use case No45

Title: The use of social media to traffic south American women via France to Spain for sexual exploitation.

Incident description:

The French Border Police (Police National/Police aux frontières) and the Spanish National Police (Policía Nacional), supported by Europol, dismantled a criminal network involved in human trafficking for sexual exploitation. The members of the criminal network, predominantly of Spanish nationality, exploited mainly Colombian nationals in Spain and in the area around the French city of Nantes. The suspects recruited clients via websites and controlled the accounts advertising the victims. The victims thought they were coming to care for elderly people in France. However, this was a lie and they were kidnapped on arrival in France and taken to Spain. The network transported the illegal profits from France to Spain themselves or by using money mules. The criminals laundered their proceeds through investments in real estate and cash-intensive businesses such as bars and clubs in Spain.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: 25 female victims from South America

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: There were 13 arrests of traffickers from Bolivian, Colombian, Ecuadorian, French, Spanish, Peruvian and Venezuelan origin)

Online platform in which the incident took place: Not mentioned

Trend identification: Organised gangs do operate in Spain and work with other criminals in other countries.
<https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/human-trafficking-gang-exploiting-south-american-victims-busted-in-france-and-spain>

Use case No46

Title: Online advertisement

Incident description: A Spanish young woman reported a fake waitress job offer which tried to force her into prostitution. When she went to the interview, “attending clients” was one of its main roles. Also, she would have to download date apps such as Tinder or Badoo to attract clients into the bar.

Type of exploitation: Forced Labour Exploitation

Profile of the victim: Spanish young women, economic needs

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Alleged bar owner who truly rented a prostitution center at Madrid City Center. Older than 35 years old men with economic wealth.

Online platform in which the incident took place: Job Today

Trend identification: Other Spanish women reported the same modus operandi at the same bar, in similar scenarios as the ones described.

<https://blogs.publico.es/mierdajobs/2020/09/28/mujeres-denuncian-una-oferta-laboral-de-camarera-que-realmente-obligaba-a-la-prostitucion/>

Use case No47

Title: Online advertisements on job recruitment and dating websites

Incident description: The Spanish National Police dismantled a sexual exploitation network that was dedicated to prostituting women in brothels in Asturias, León and Alicante. The victims, most of whom were Colombian nationals, were also forced to sell drugs to clients to increase the profits of the ring. Eight members of the gang have been arrested in Asturias and Alicante and five of them have been remanded in custody, according to the police. They were accused of belonging to a criminal organisation, trafficking in human beings, offences relating to prostitution, promoting prostitution, encouraging clandestine immigration and crimes against public health. Two of the women were released, who, like other women exploited by the plot, were recruited in their countries of origin through advertisements on the Internet and acquired a debt with the criminal network of illegal immigration. 3,000 euros in debt to the criminal network. The women were initially recruited through Internet advertisements on dating websites advertising vacancies in their apartments, most of the women were in a vulnerable situation. When they arrived at the flats, they found a different reality than the one agreed, since they had to be available 24 hours a day, without being able to sleep or rest. They were also controlled with video surveillance cameras and on many occasions, they were not paid the agreed salary.

Type of exploitation: Forced Labour Exploitation, Forced criminal activities.

Profile of the victim: Colombian young women

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Criminal organisation Prostitution centers at Spain

Online platform in which the incident took place: Recruitment websites and dating sites

Trend identification: Many women and men are forced into sexual exploitation via fake offers on digital recruitment platforms. This is a trend that occurs throughout Europe and not only in Spain.

https://www.antena3.com/noticias/sociedad/cae-red-explotacion-sexual-que-prostitua-mujeres-pisos-citas-asturias-leon-alicante_20210923614c6a9f3e484e0001eb99b4.html

Use case No48

Title: Online advertisement

Incident description: The Spanish National Police dismantled a group dedicated to recruiting minors through Facebook by offering them false work as waitresses to sexually exploit them. According to the Ministry of the Interior, the detainees operated in two brothels in the province of Murcia (in Murcia and Santomera) in which 29 victims have been identified, two of whom are minors and 15 others are 18 or 19 years old.

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation

Profile of the victim: Minor girls

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 5 people, criminal organisation Prostitution Centers at Murcia

Online platform in which the incident took place: Facebook

Trend identification: Fake offers on social media as waitress to forced them into prostitution

https://www.diariodenavarra.es/noticias/sucesos/2016/11/13/desarticulada_una_red_explotacion_sexual_que_captaba_sus_victimas_facebook_498577_3204.html

Use case No49

Title: Online advertisement

Incident description: The National Police have arrested three people as alleged perpetrators of a crime of trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The investigation began in mid-April when agents of the Operational Group on Foreigners (GOE) of the Provincial Brigade of Foreigners and Borders of Pamplona, in collaboration with their counterpart groups of the Provincial Brigades of Foreigners of Santander and Burgos, became aware of the existence of a brothel in Navarre that could be using women victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation. The alert was raised while investigating national and transnational criminal organisations related to human trafficking. Once the establishment was located, an investigation was launched in which it was possible to verify that some of the victims had been deceived through advertisements on social media sites. In one of the cases the victim, who had lost her job, went onto a well-known social network site with the intention of finding a new job and there she contacted a woman who had published an advertisement offering a job as an escort for men at events. The advertiser, a 36-year-old woman, persuaded the victim to urgently travel to Navarre from her town of residence in the centre of the country. However, upon her arrival the victim was taken to a hostess club where they told her that she had to sleep with men in exchange for money

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation

Profile of the victim: Young girls

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 3 people, criminal organisation, 2 men & 1 women. Prostitution Centers at Navarra

Online platform in which the incident took place: The exact name of the social media site is not mentioned.

Trend identification: Fake offers on social media to force them into prostitution.

<https://www.epe.es/es/sucesos/20230124/desarticulada-red-trata-sexual-navarra-81800940>

Use case No50

Title: Online advertisement

Incident description: The National Police investigated a criminal organization that was allegedly engaged in THB for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The criminal organisation recruited the victims, mainly women from Eastern Europe, through agencies that published false job offers on the Internet. The National Police continued investigating other websites and social networks used by the organization for recruiting women from other European countries.

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation

Profile of the victim: East Europe women

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 22 detainees, criminal organisation, online recruitment agencies connected with a network of prostitution in Andalucía. Prostitution Centers Andalucía.

Online platform in which the incident took place: Online agencies

Trend identification: Fake offers on websites and social media to force them into prostitution.
https://sevilla.abc.es/andalucia/malaga/sevi-captaban-mujeres-falsas-promesas-trabajo-para-explotarlas-prostibulos-andalucia-202107091440_noticia.html?ref=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F

Use case No51

Title: Online advertisement

Incident description: The Court of Malaga judged a man accused of forcing women to practice prostitution in through online false caregiver contracts. The defendant used his home to prosecute the women in irregular administrative situation in exchange for payments.

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation

Profile of the victim: Women in irregular administrative situation, some of them minors

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 1 detainee, online recruitment through fake online offers of contract Prostitution Apartment in Malaga

Online platform in which the incident took place: Online websites

Trend identification: Fake offers on websites to force them into prostitution.

<https://www.lavanguardia.com/local/sevilla/20230521/8983407/tribunales-juzgan-hombre-enganar-mujeres-ejercer-prostitucion-ofreciendoles-contratos-falsos.html>

Use case No52

Title: Recruitment Online and Online advertisement

Incident description:

A sexual THB scheme who recruited young girls from Nigeria, was operating for years creating a network of criminal activities to exploit Nigerian girls. They were falsely promised to be hired in foreign countries via social networks, and then threatened with voodoo practices to force the girls into joining their prostitution businesses.

Type of exploitation: Sexual exploitation

Profile of the victim: Young Nigerian girls, economic needs

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: Nigerian contractors who extort young girls after promising false labour conditions and opportunities abroad. Once the girls have accepted, they gained a debt with the fake contractors which they would have to return by sexual exploitation in countries such as Spain or Norway. The Nigerian criminal would cohort the liberty of the girls by threatening them with voodoo practices and other ritual to her or her families. Prostitution Centers from Spain, Norway, Denmark and Italy

Online platform in which the incident took place: The criminal network would use fake Facebook accounts to recruit the young girls, WhatsApp for communicate and extort them, and the online platforms for the payment. They would also use countermeasures to clean their operations such as AppLocks, DiskDigger or private VPN so they could erase the digital trail.

Trend identification:

Sexual exploitation and sexual THB cases in Spain are very common inside this criminal sector dynamics. Sub-Saharan girls who falsely join labour opportunities and then enter into trafficking network for their sexual slavery in Spain, is one of the three largest trends of THB in Spain. According to the Europol reports, the other two most relevant routes are the ones coming from Latin America and East Europe. Also, taking advantage of vulnerable young foreign girls by family threats and debt-bonded are common modus operandi for regular prostitution centers in Spain. SENTENCE no.1/19 of the National High Court Spain, (also used at the BIGOSINT project).

Often voodoo magic is used to exploit women that come from Nigeria in Africa. These women are also controlled by other women. This trend can also be seen in Italy. It is common to both countries of arrival. This shows the need for gender sensitive policies around trafficking <https://unicri.it/trafficking-nigerian-girls-italy>

Traffickers commonly send victims to Italy, Spain, and the UK for sex trafficking. According to reports, 80 percent of women in Spain's unlicensed brothels are victims of sex trafficking, with Nigerians forming a large percentage of that population. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-trafficking-in-persons->

[report/nigeria#:~:text=Traffickers%20commonly%20send%20victims%20to,large%20percentage%20of%20that%20population.](https://www.ondacero.es/emisoras/castilla-la-mancha/toledo/noticias/policia-nacional-detiene-tres-personas-prostituir-mujeres-toledo-avila_2021122061c06b37272e17000161fd7c.html)

Use case No53

Title: The use of social media to exploit South American women in Spain

Incident description: The Spanish National Police discovered the existence of a criminal group allegedly dedicated to human trafficking. The method they used to recruit the women consisted of contacting, through a well-known social network, women of South American origin, mainly from Peru and Venezuela, who were in a clearly vulnerable situation - labour, economic or family - in their countries of origin. They gained their trust by maintaining constant contact with them and with small money transactions that they sent them as help, to end up offering them a job as careers for the elderly in Spain. The criminal network also offered to cover travel expenses and advised the victims to travel to Spain with a tourist visa. Once the visa expired, the women were left in an irregular situation, which facilitated their sexual exploitation. The victims captured by the criminal group landed at Adolfo Suarez Madrid-Barajas Airport, where their passports were immediately taken away, as well as the cards and cash with which they were travelling, and they were taken to a brothel where they were forced to work as prostitutes and thus pay off the debt contracted.

Type of exploitation: Sexual Exploitation

Profile of the victim: Young Latin American (from Peru and Venezuela) with economic needs

Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator: 3 Spanish men. Criminal organisation Prostitution Centers at Toledo and Avila

Online platform in which the incident took place: Facebook

Trend identification: Sexual exploitation and sexual THB cases in Spain are very common inside this criminal sector dynamics. Latin American girls who falsely join labour opportunities and then enter into trafficking network for their sexual slavery in Spain, is one of the three largest trends of THB in Spain. According to the Europol reports, the other two most relevant routes are the ones coming from West Africa and Eastern Europe.

https://www.ondacero.es/emisoras/castilla-la-mancha/toledo/noticias/policia-nacional-detiene-tres-personas-prostituir-mujeres-toledo-avila_2021122061c06b37272e17000161fd7c.html

5. Use cases analysis

The methodology followed for the trend analysis is based on the use cases data collected. Due to the heterogeneity of qualitative and quantitative data provided, it was decided to proceed with a data aggregation per case in order to conclude in a trend elicitation on THB recruitment and online advertisement.

5.1 Type of THB exploitation

Trafficking in human beings is considered a grave violation of human rights, as defined in Article 2 of the Directive 2011/36/EU and it can have many exploitative purposes. According to the 53 cases, the prevailing type of exploitation is the sexual exploitation covering almost half of the cases with a percentage of 49% (27 cases). While, in 17 cases with a percentage of 31% multiple types of exploitation are reported. The type of Forced Criminal activities is coming third with a percentage of 11% (6 cases), while the rest types, Migrant Smuggling and Forced labour exploitation (in industrial and agricultural sector) cover 9% (3 and 2 cases respectively).

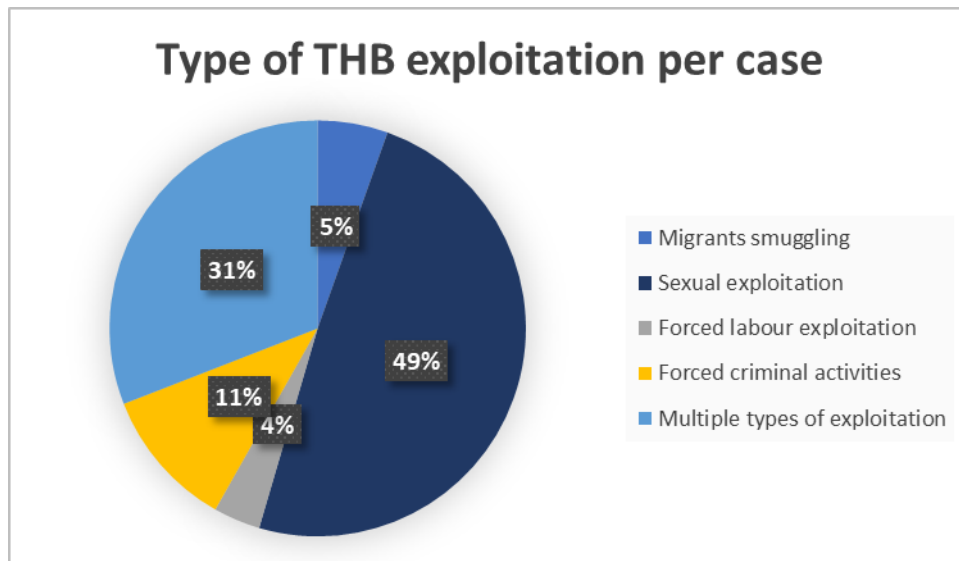


Figure 1 Type of THB exploitation per case

Regarding the Multiple types of exploitation, we are referring to cases where two or more different types of exploitation are reported. Based on the given use cases, the most frequent “interconnection” was the Sexual exploitation with the Forced labour exploitation in 6 out of 17 cases. While, as it is presented in the graph below, it is remarkable that almost all types of THB exploitation are inter-linked.

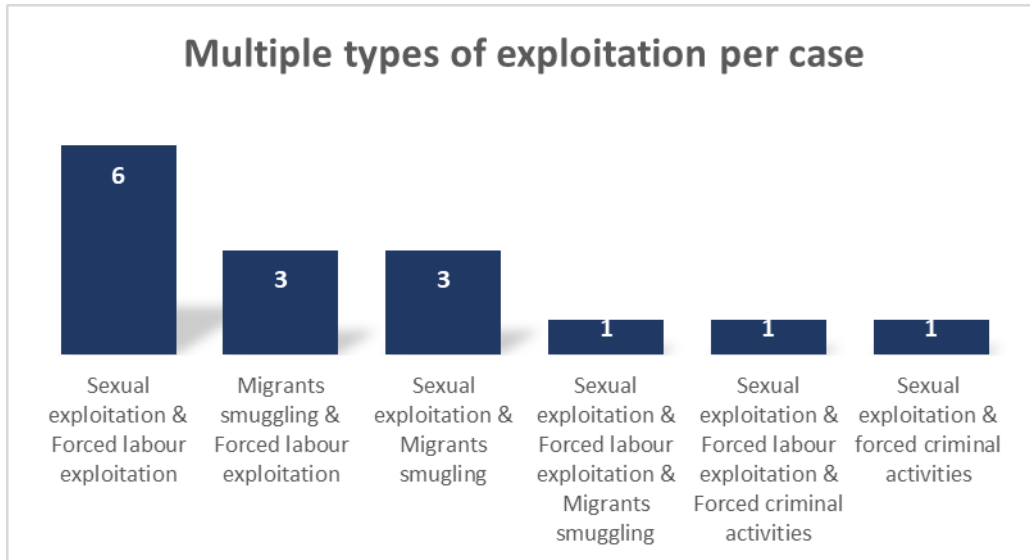


Figure 2 Multiple types of exploitation per case

5.2 Actions of THB

In the graph below, it is reflected the actions of THB based on the 53 cases. According to this, it is interesting that the action of recruitment is the most frequent (in 30 out of 53 cases), followed by the action of aiding (10 cases out of 53). It is also noted that in some cases, more than one action of THB could have taken place (e.g. recruitment, then cross-border transfer, then aiding).

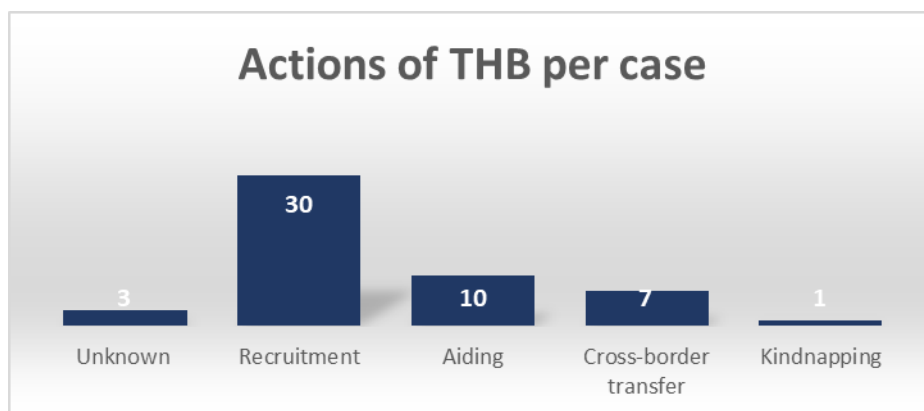


Figure 3 Actions of THB per case

5.2.1 Means of THB recruitment

The graph below depicts the means used for the method of THB recruitment. It is obvious that the methods of fraud and reinforcement are the most usual, considering them the most effective as a means of recruiting at the same time (27 cases each of fraud and 14 cases of reinforcement).

In all instances under consideration, it is apparent that the perpetrator engaged in a deliberate act of deceiving the victims. It is imperative to note that within this broader category of deceit, we have undertaken a nuanced differentiation, focusing on cases categorized as fraud, in which the victims were lured with the promise of alternative employment opportunities and improved living conditions, only to be confronted with a starkly contrasting reality. For instance, some victims found themselves coerced into providing sexual services against their will. Similarly, within the dataset of 53 cases, we have identified the exploitation of vulnerable circumstances in ten (10) instances. It is noteworthy that, in numerous instances, deception and the exploitation of vulnerability are inextricably linked. Specifically, the victims often share a common denominator – a disadvantaged socio-economic status. Furthermore, it is important to highlight that while instances of reinforcement are less frequent, the victims, upon the sudden onset of the new reality, were not afforded the opportunity to make a choice regarding this new life. Consequently, it can be asserted that they were forced to endure this precarious situation against their will.

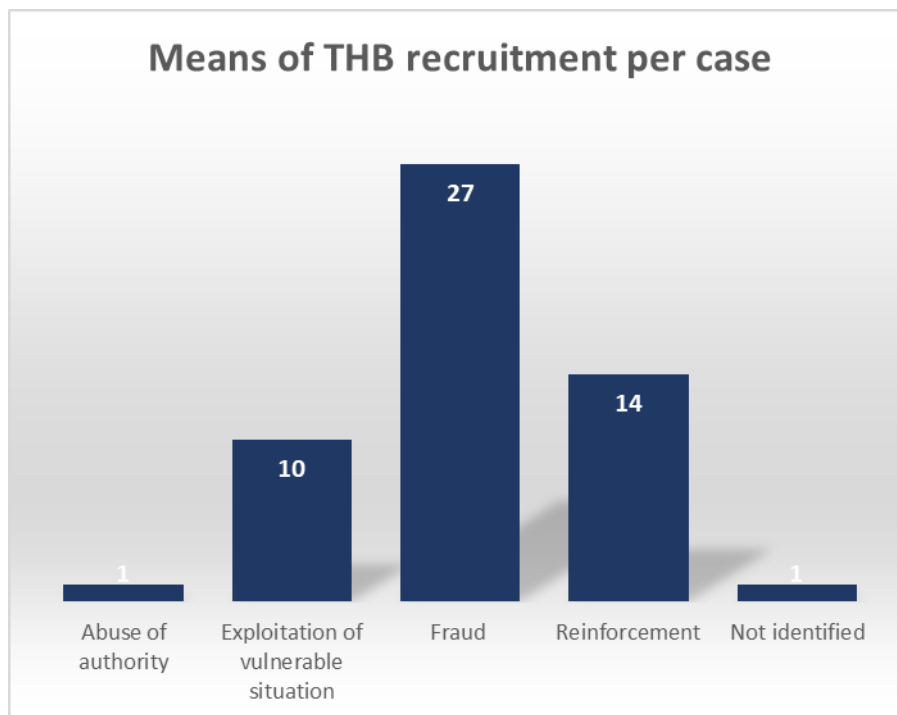


Figure 4 Means of THB recruitment per case

5.2.2 Place of THB recruitment

In 28 out of 53 cases, the victim has been recruited in a European country, while in 9 out of 53 cases the victim has been recruited in its country of origin. The “other” category includes Switzerland and Libya.

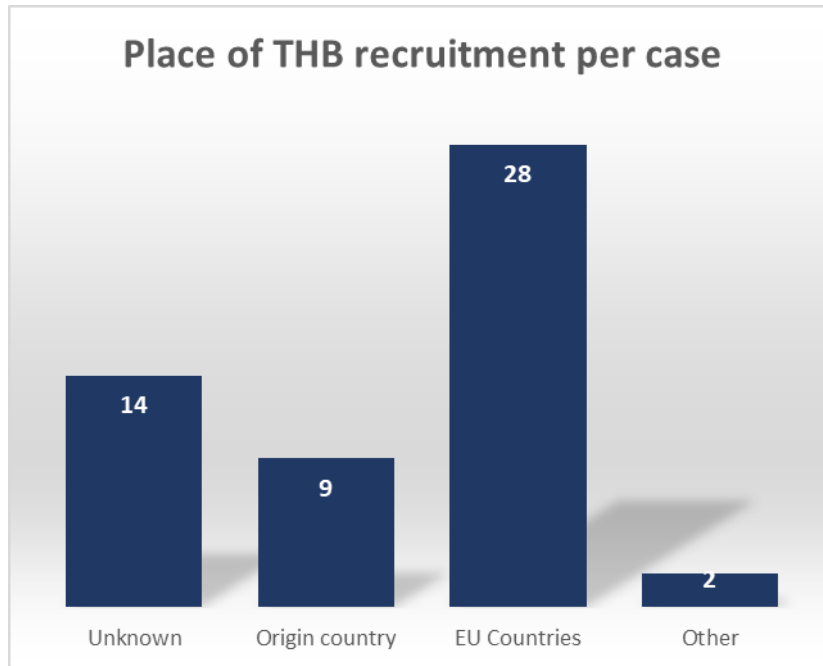


Figure 5 Place of THB recruitment per case

5.3 Online dimension

5.3.1. Initial contact

In 40 of the 53 cases examined, the initial interaction between either the perpetrator or the victim reaching out to the perpetrators/purchasers, occurred in an online environment (Figure 6). In several instances, the perpetrator either initiated contact with the victim online through grooming tactics, or the victim themselves engaged with the perpetrator, often through deceptive means such as counterfeit job offers.

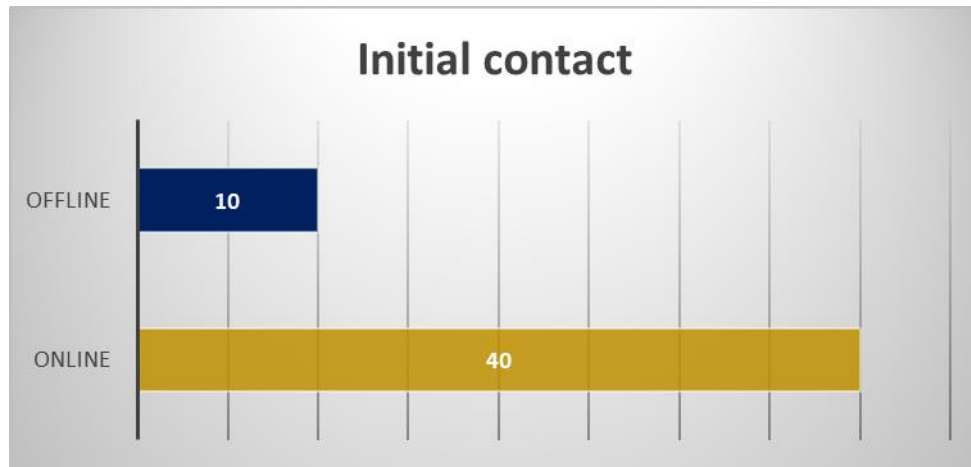


Figure 6 Means of initial contact

5.3.2 Means of Initial Contact

In 16 out of the 40 cases examined, the initial contact occurred through social media applications, notably Facebook, constituting 40% of the total cases analysed. Within this context, victims were enticed through either counterfeit job offers or the application of the "lover boy" strategy. The remaining three categories each represent nearly equivalent proportions. For instance, victims being lured through specific job advertisement pages accounted for 20% of the cases. Similarly, messaging applications such as WhatsApp, Viber, Telegram, and Signal represented 17.5% of the cases. It is noteworthy that in a significant portion, specifically 22.5%, there is no mention of how the initial contact was established (Figure 7). Furthermore, in some instances, such as Case No. 52, perpetrators employed a dual approach by initially recruiting victims through social media and subsequently engaging with them through messaging applications for further communication.

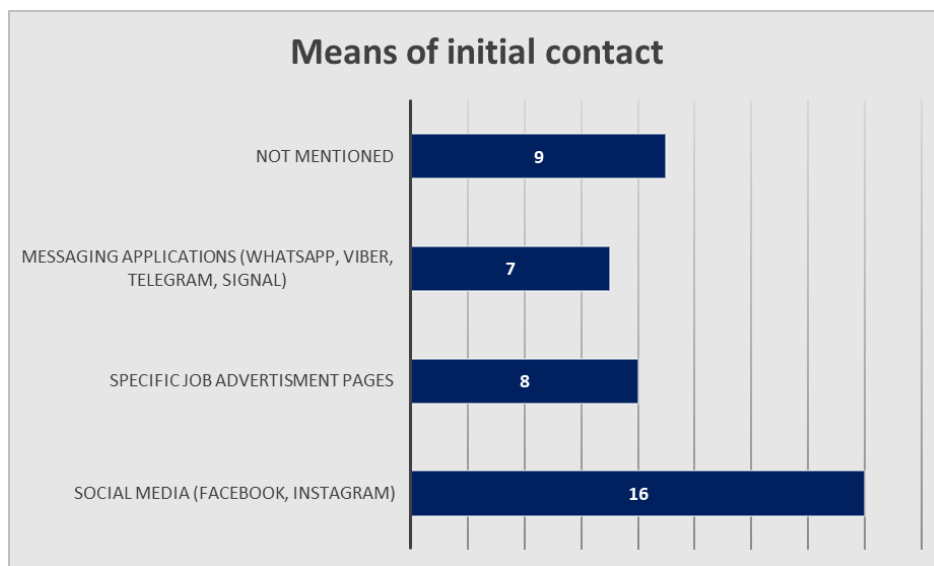


Figure 7 Means of initial contact online

5.3.3. Reasons of luring the victims online

In the graphical representation provided below, a significant observation emerges pertaining to the strategies employed by perpetrators in the initial contact with their victims. First and foremost, it is evident that a substantial majority, accounting for 65% of the total cases analysed, involved victims being enticed by counterfeit job offers. This method stands out as a predominant approach utilised by perpetrators to initiate contact and gain the trust of their victims. In contrast, the "lover boy" method, where perpetrators establish a romantic connection with the victims, often promising marriage, is observed in a more limited context, specifically in 10% of the total cases. Furthermore, it is important to note that in 25% of the cases examined, the precise reasons behind the initial contact remained unspecified. This absence of information underscores the complexity and diversity of tactics used by perpetrators in engaging with their victims, emphasizing the need for further research and investigation in this domain.

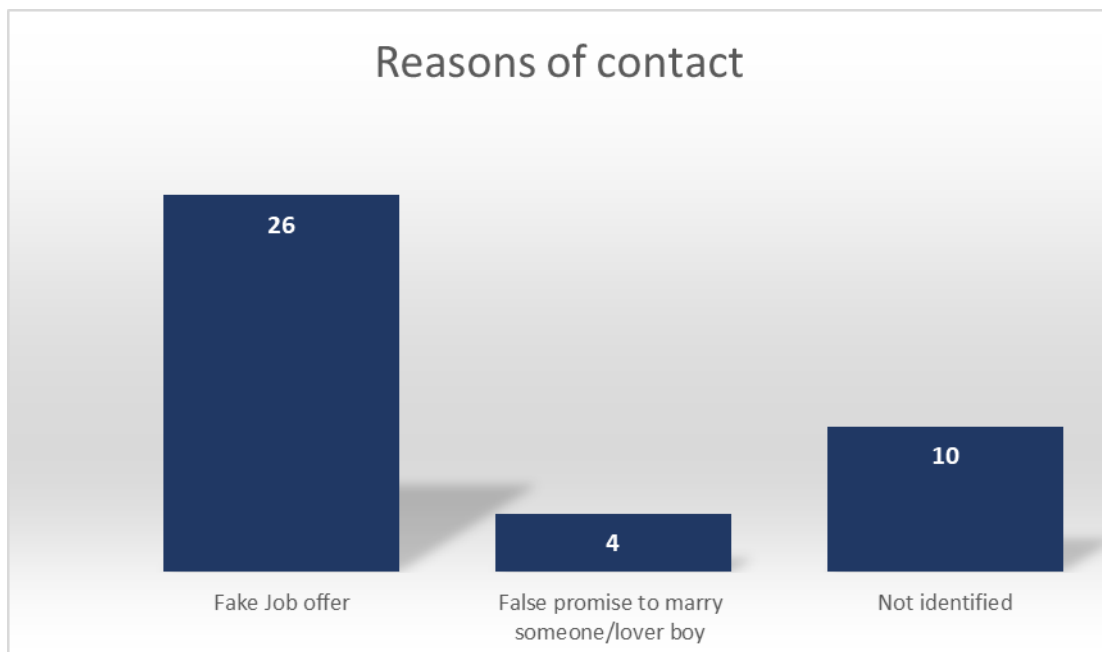


Figure 8 Reasons of Contact

5.4 Demographic data of THB victims

5.4.1. Gender

In the graph below, it is depicted the gender (biological sex) of THB victims. In 41 out of 53 cases, the victims are Females with a percentage of 77%, having the great majority, while only a 2% are Males (1 case). A significant percentage of 10% remains unknown (10 cases). In 2% of the cases, victims were individuals of both genders, both male and female.

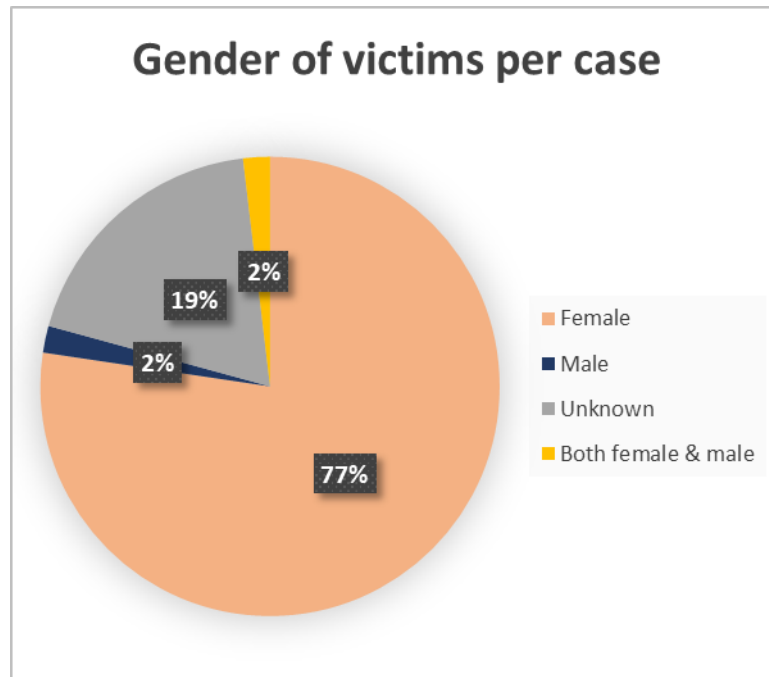


Figure 9 Gender of victims per case

5.4.2. Age

In the context of victim age analysis within our dataset, it is imperative to acknowledge certain limitations.

In 24 out of the 53 cases examined, the age of the victims remains unknown, posing a significant challenge to our comprehensive understanding of the demographics involved. A noteworthy consideration is the ambiguity surrounding the term "young" when used by authors to describe the victims. This descriptor can encompass a wide range of ages, including individuals under 18 years old or those aged between 17 to 25 years. Consequently, to maintain consistency in our categorization, the authors of this deliverable made the decision to classify such cases as "unknown.". Conversely, when authors explicitly identified victims as minors, they were categorized under the age group "0-16 y/o." This classification was applied consistently in cases such No. 47 and 48. Moreover, instances where multiple victims fell into different age categories were handled by calculating the mean age among them. For example, if a use case involved victims aged 19, 24, and 26 years, the mean age of 23 led to its placement within the "17-25 y/o" age group.

Upon scrutinizing the remaining cases, a predominant pattern emerges, with 19 cases indicating victim ages between 17 and 25 years old. In contrast, only four cases featured victims under the age of 16 years. Notably, only one case documented victims exceeding the age of 35 years.

It is crucial to emphasize that, due to the extensive range of ages and the substantial proportion of cases with unknown victim ages, the graphical representation of this data yields limited interpretative value. Consequently, any conclusions drawn from the graphical representation should be approached with caution, recognising that they are based on incomplete information and can provide only preliminary insights into the age demographics of the victims involved in the examined cases.

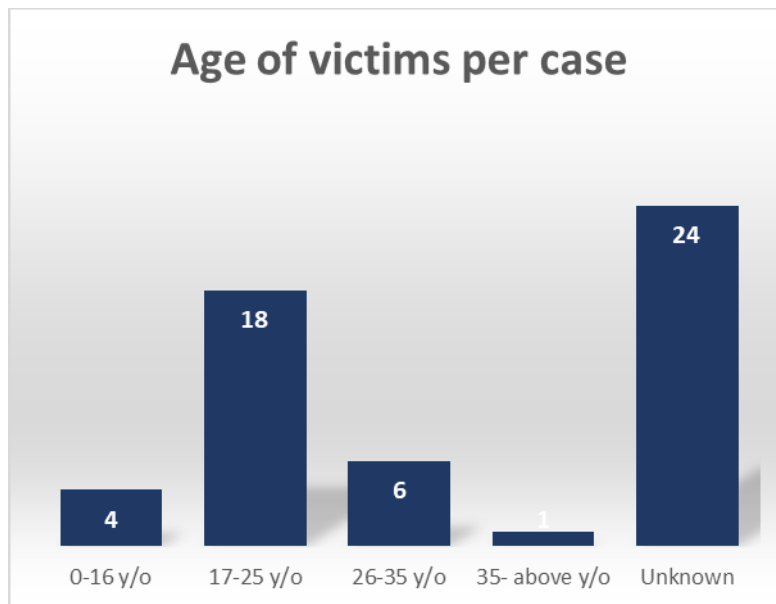


Figure 10 Age of victims per case

5.4.3. Origin Country of victims

In 11 out of 53 cases, the origin country of the victim is a Sub-Saharan country, while in 13 out of 53 cases the victim comes from an EU country. In addition, regarding the 3 cases belonging to 2 different country categories, the victims are coming from China and Senegal in the first case, in the second case the victims are coming from EU Countries and Turkey and in the third from Ukraine, Russia, and Uzbekistan.

Please note the following:

EU Countries include	Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Germany, Poland, Greece, Spain
Non-EU Countries include	Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova
Sub-Saharan Africa Countries include	Uganda, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa
Asian Countries include	Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Kurdistan, Bangladesh, China, Pakistan, Afghanistan
South America countries include	Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, Venezuela

Table 1 List of countries in the report/graph below

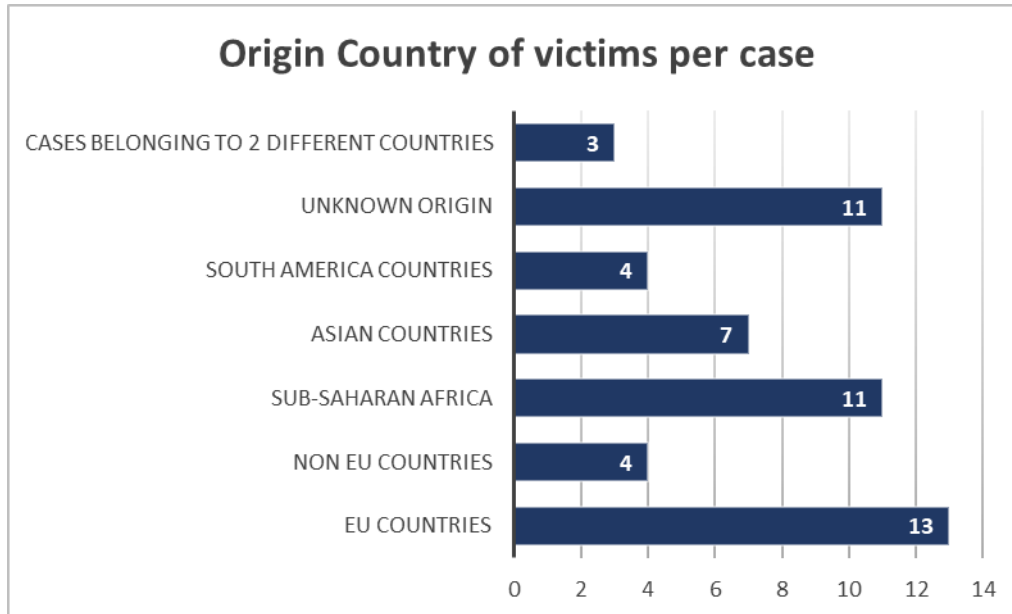


Figure 11 Origin country of victims per case

5.5 Demographic data of purchasers/perpetrators

5.5.1. Gender

In the following graph, a comprehensive analysis of the gender (biological sex) of purchasers/perpetrators within the dataset is presented. It is evident that the overwhelming majority of cases exhibit male individuals as purchasers or perpetrators, constituting a staggering 35 out of 53 cases, which equates to an astonishing 66% of the total cases. Furthermore, our analysis reveals that in 4 instances, both female and male individuals are jointly identified as purchasers/perpetrators. In contrast, the category denoting lone female involvement registers a percentage of 0%, signifying that there are no instances within our dataset where a solitary female is solely responsible as a purchaser/perpetrator. Nonetheless, it is vital to acknowledge the presence of a substantial portion of cases in which the gender of purchasers/perpetrators remains unidentified, amounting to 10% of the dataset. This underscores the need for further investigation and data refinement in order to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the gender dynamics in these cases.

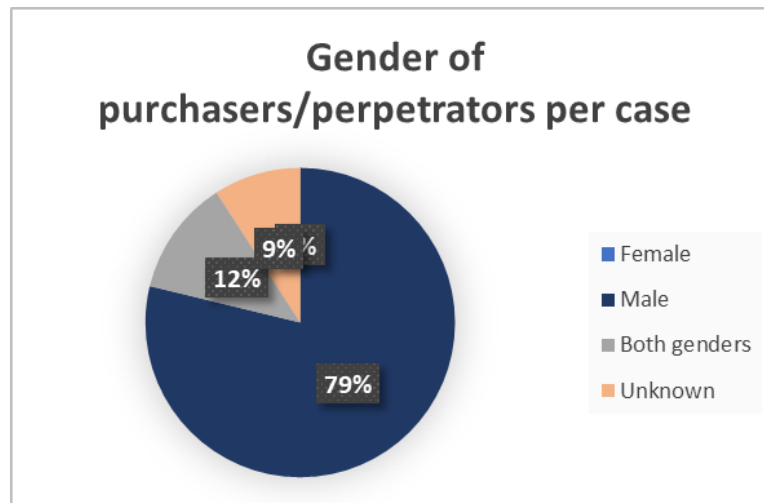


Figure 12 Gender of purchasers/perpetrators per case

5.5.2. Age of purchasers/perpetrators

In the graph below, it is depicted the age of the purchasers/perpetrators. Even in the majority of cases, the age of the purchasers/perpetrators is unknown (32 cases), based on the 16 cases out of 53, it comes that most of the purchasers/perpetrators age 30 – 55 years old. In 5 cases out of 53, the purchasers/perpetrators are under 30 years old.

In the context of this study, it is acknowledged that certain cases may involve multiple individuals who have experienced adverse outcomes. However, for the purpose of maintaining the homogeneity and consistency of the sample, each case has been treated as a singular offender. This approach has been adopted to ensure that the analysis and interpretation of results remain methodologically robust, and that potential bias is minimised. As mentioned under Chapter 5.4.2. It is crucial to emphasize that, due to the extensive range of ages and the substantial proportion of cases with unknown victim ages, the graphical representation of this data yields limited interpretative value. Consequently, any conclusions drawn from the graphical representation should be approached with caution, recognising that they are based on incomplete information and can provide only preliminary insights into the age demographics of the victims involved in the examined cases.



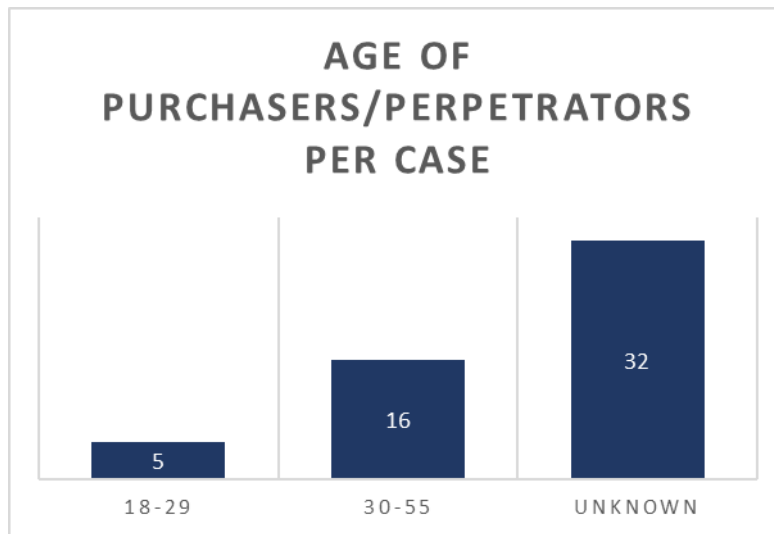


Figure 13 Age of purchasers/perpetrators per case

5.5.3. Origin country of purchasers/perpetrators

According to the majority of cases (18 out of 53 cases), it is worth noting that the origin country of purchasers/perpetrators is a European country. In 10 out of 53 cases, the origin of the purchasers/perpetrators belongs to more than 2 different country categories. For e.g., in one case the purchasers/perpetrators come from Nigeria and Lithuania, in another the purchasers/perpetrators come from Italy, Romania and Bangladesh, and in another case the purchasers/perpetrators come from Nigeria and Turkey. Last, the African countries come forth with 6 out of 53 cases. As in the previous graphs, the origin of the purchasers/perpetrators that remain unknown is high, in 8 cases out of 53.

Please note the following:

EU Countries include	Italy, Lithuania, Romania, Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovakia, Spain, France, Greece
Non-EU Countries include	Russia, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine, Albania
Africa Countries include	Nigeria, Egypt, Libya, Guinea, Kenya
Asian Countries include	Iraq, Kurdistan, Bangladesh, China, Pakistan, Lebanon, Uzbekistan
South America countries include	Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela

Table 2 List of countries in the report/graph below

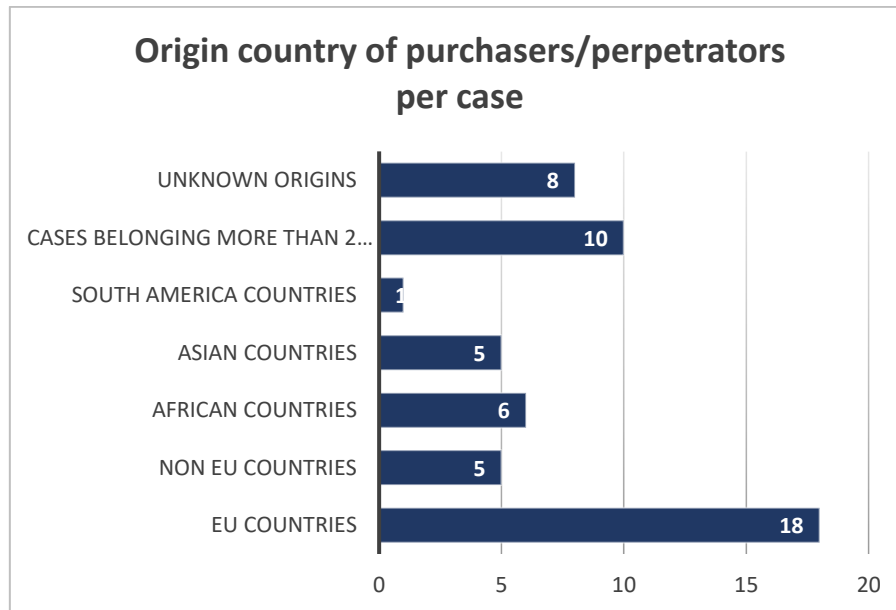


Figure 14 Origin country of purchasers/perpetrators per case

5.6 Relations of victims and purchasers/perpetrators

5.6.1. Nationality

In the graph below, it is depicted the identification of victims' and purchasers'/perpetrators' nationality. In 26 out of 53 cases (49%), it is ascertained that recruitment usually happens in the origin country, as the victim and the purchaser/perpetrator have the same nationality. Based on this finding, one could state that the method of recruitment in the origin country could be deemed an easier approach method of the victim by the purchaser/perpetrator of same nation.

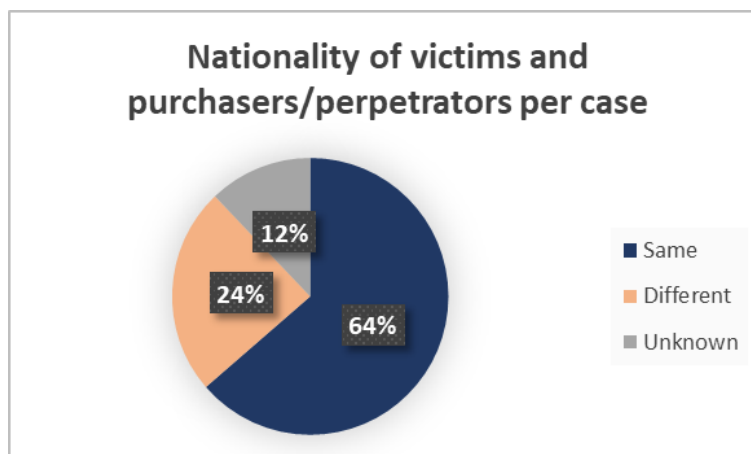


Figure 15 Nationality of victims and purchasers/perpetrators per case

6. Conclusions

Combatting THB remain a high priority on the EU agenda. The efficiency of the fight against THB could be further enhanced by improving the situational awareness and reaction capabilities of the relevant competent authorities. Due to the complexity and dimensionality of the THB phenomenon, to better assist and further support victims of human trafficking, it is vital for the first-line practitioners to be better aware and gain new knowledge on the arising trends of THB. In addition, due to the lack of a structured national database, the data collection on THB incidents remains limited, posing barriers to targeted proactive measures and preventive actions.

Furthermore, the online dimension of THB has allowed traffickers to get easy access to potential victims through the online platforms posing a major challenge for LEAs. More specifically, according to INTERPOL, large-scale human trafficking where victims are lured through fake job ads to online scam centres and forced to commit cyber-enabled financial crime on an industrial scale is a growing trend worldwide. This new dimension highlights the need for prompt detection and investigation, by enhancing the digital capabilities of LEAs to better leverage online evidence.

According to the use cases provided by INTERCEPTED partners, most of the (potential) victims identified are women originated from EU countries, having the same nationality with their perpetrators. Additionally, sexual exploitation is the main form of THB, where fraud and deception are the main means of victims alluring. In parallel, the majority of identified purchasers/perpetrators are males coming from EU countries as well.

The above findings ascertain that THB remains a major problem in EU requiring robust collaborative efforts for an effective response to all forms of trafficking.

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Annex I: Use case template



WP2: Analysis and Co-creation Task 2.1 Case study analysis –Recruitment

This case study template is related to the Task 2.1 Case study analysis which is implemented as a part of Work Package 2, coordinated by KEMEA with all partners' contribution.

The main aim of this task is to gather 50 use cases in which victims of trafficking have been recruited **online** or subjects of attempted recruitment **online**, as well as how different online platforms are used for the recruitment of VoTs and the advertisement of their services.

Short definitions

Online recruitment cases: Cases showing how victims are being targeted and recruited or attempted to be recruited via online platforms/services e.g. social media and online dating platforms, where personal information and details of people's locations are readily available.

Online advertisement cases: Cases where human traffickers trick people with fake job offers (main tactic) or through other online trafficked services and then exploit them for profit, taking advantage of online technologies for every step of their criminal activities.

General directions for the selection of use cases:

- **14 cases per Consortium country** should be chosen (Italy, Greece, Germany, Spain). Partners from same countries, it is suggested to collaborate on identifying and providing the use cases: Italy -> PROSTS-JUDPOL & AGENFOR
Greece -> KEMEA & HPOL
Germany -> HFOV
Spain -> FUNDEA
- **Please provide 7 use cases on the Recruitment procedure online and 7 use cases on the online advertisement per Consortium country.**



- Temporal scope (preferred): past 10 years
- The following template should be filled in for each use case.
- Please try to answer all sections required, being as specific as possible.
- Please do not use any personal data when developing the use cases (use of anonymized or pseudonymized data)

Deadline: 15 June 2023

Template to fill in for use cases analysis:

USE CASE ANALYSIS	
Use case categorization	<i>Please indicate if the use case is related to online recruitment or online advertisement (or both).</i>
Incident description	<i>Detailed description of the incident: what happened, who was involved, who was affected by the incident, what was the modus operandi of perpetrators (how did they conduct their operation, when did this take place, where, what was their criminal business model) or any other relevant information.</i>
Type of exploitation	<i>Please describe the type of exploitation (e.g. sexual, labour, and if labour, in what sector, e.g. agriculture, textile, construction).</i>
Profile of the victim	<i>Please describe the age, gender and nationality, disability or/and other specific characteristics of the victim(s) involved in this case.</i>
Profile of the purchaser/perpetrator	<i>Please describe the age, gender, nationality and/or other specific characteristics.</i>
Online platform in which the incident took place	<i>Please describe which online platform was used for the recruitment of victims of trafficking and the advertisement of its services.</i>
Trend identification	<i>Does this use case depict a specific trend / a visible criminal pattern in your country? If yes, please provide information on the context (e.g. specific vulnerable targeted group, common tactics etc).</i>





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