

Global Demographics of Human Traffickers

(Based primarily on data from the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2022)

The War That Is Slavery

Overall Gender Patterns

- Men are the majority of traffickers globally.
 - Approximately **58% of convicted traffickers are men**.
 - **Women account for roughly 40–42% of convictions**, which is a much higher share than in many other crimes.
 - Women are often involved in **recruitment, supervision, or control of victims**, particularly in sexual exploitation networks.
-

Age Patterns

- Many traffickers fall into the **middle-aged category**.
 - Research commonly finds traffickers **between approximately 39–48 years old or older**.
 - Trafficking networks frequently include multiple roles:
 - Recruiters
 - Transporters
 - Controllers
 - Financiers
-

Gender Roles Within Trafficking Networks

Women frequently appear in specific operational roles such as:

- Recruiters who build trust with victims
- Caretakers or guardians controlling victims
- Former victims who later become involved in trafficking networks

This pattern helps explain why **female conviction rates are higher than in many other organized crimes**.

Regional Trafficking Patterns

- Around **90% of trafficking victims are trafficked by people from their own region.**
- Trafficking networks often rely on **shared language, culture, or nationality** to recruit victims.

Europe

Country of Origin/Nationality:

In Europe, traffickers are frequently **not nationals of the country where they operate**, but often **share the nationality of the victim.**

Common Source Countries Mentioned in Research

- Romania
- Bulgaria
- Ukraine
- Russia
- Nigeria
- China
- Colombia
- Ecuador

Trafficking Into the United States

Labor trafficking involving men from:

- Mexico
- El Salvador
- Honduras
- Guatemala

These groups are often exploited in industries such as:

- Agriculture
- Construction

- Hospitality
- Domestic work

Additional note

- Mexico/Central America: Major source of traffickers operating in North America, particularly targeting the U.S.
-

Trafficking Within Europe

Research frequently notes **Romanian trafficking networks operating across Western Europe**, especially toward:

- Germany
 - Italy
-

Regional Variations

Gender ratios can differ dramatically by region.

Example

- In **Central Asia**, about **85% of trafficking convictions in 2020 involved women**.

This shows that **local trafficking structures and recruitment methods can significantly affect gender patterns**.

Key Takeaways

- Human trafficking networks are **predominantly male-led globally**.
 - However, **women play a larger operational role than in many other crimes**.
 - **Traffickers frequently share nationality or cultural ties with victims**.
 - **Regional patterns vary significantly**, so global averages do not always reflect local realities.
-

Modern Sex Trafficking Trends

Modern sex traffickers arrested are predominantly male, although women are also involved in these criminal networks. Data indicates that male traffickers often use violence and, in some cases, act as part of organized crime groups.

Gender Profile of Traffickers

- **Predominantly Male:** Research has shown that in specific contexts, such as a **2017 analysis of child sex traffickers in the United States**, roughly **75.4% of traffickers were male**, while **24.4% were female**.
- **Global Trends:** UNODC data from **2020** indicated that **58% of people convicted of human trafficking offenses globally were male**, though female participation is higher in trafficking than in many other crimes.
- **"Lover-boy" Method:** Male traffickers frequently use **"lover-boy" or "Romeo" tactics**, which involve feigning romantic interest to coerce victims, particularly in **Europe and the United States**.

Country of Origin and Operation

Human trafficking is a **global phenomenon** where individuals are often trafficked from **lower-income areas to higher-income regions**.

Traffickers arrested or implicated often originate from or operate within **countries known for high organized crime activity or regions with high migrant movement**.

Examples

- **Romania:** Frequently identified as a major source country for traffickers and victims within Europe.
- **Mexico:** Identified as a significant country of origin and transit for traffickers targeting North America, particularly for sex tourism and exploitation of women.
- **Vietnam:** Traffickers of Vietnamese origin have been identified coordinating smuggling and trafficking operations in Europe, particularly targeting Germany.
- **Nigeria:** Identified by Europol as a major origin point for traffickers operating within the EU.
- **Other Regions:** Traffickers are frequently of local origin in:
 - Eastern Europe (Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria)
 - Southeast Asia (Thailand, Philippines)

Key Locations of Operation

Europe

High concentration of trafficking investigations involving:

- Romanians
- Bulgarians
- Ukrainians

Targeting nations such as:

- Italy
- Germany
- The United Kingdom

United States

Traffickers are often **local**, but there is a **significant presence of transnational traffickers**, particularly from:

- Central America
- Mexico

Southeast Asia

Traffickers operating in:

- Myanmar
- Thailand
- Cambodia

Often operate in **large syndicates targeting victims for both sexual exploitation and forced cyber scams**.

Profile of Traffickers in the United States

- A study of child sex traffickers found that **71.7% were African American**, while **20.5% were Caucasian**.
- **Undocumented individuals from various countries**, including:
 - Mexico
 - El Salvador

- Vietnam

have also been heavily targeted in recent **ICE operations**.

Union of Saints finds the current political climate concerning.