



NATIONAL ASSISTANCE SYSTEM
FOR VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

SEMIANNUAL REVIEW

1 January — 30 June 2023

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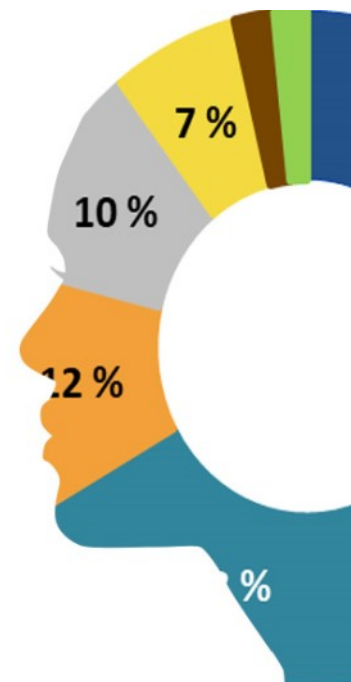
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FIRST STATISTICS

SINCE THE LAW CHANGED

The renewed legislation on assistance to victims of human trafficking came into force on January 1st 2023. The Reception Act* regulates the functions of the National Assistance System for Victims of Human Trafficking (NAS).

The most prominent changes concerned the way victims are identified as victims of human trafficking, and the link between victim assistance and criminal process.

Becoming a client in the NAS has always been possible whether or not the victim wants to report the crime of human trafficking to the police. However, up until the end of 2022, clients who did not eventually want the crime against them to be reported, could face removal from the NAS.

From the start of 2023, a NAS client will no longer have to report the crime in order to continue receiving assistance for as long as they need.

However, NAS supports and encourages its clients to report the crime, and can assist the client in making the report as well as providing them with comprehensive support during criminal process.

Continuation of assistance is no longer linked to whether or not the crime(s) against the client are investigated as human trafficking or a related / other crime.

From 1 January 2023, a victim admitted as a NAS client is automatically identified as a victim of human trafficking. Other authorities must take the identification into consideration when they handle matters relating to the rights of the victims.

Referrals to the NAS increased

Six months is still a very short period of time to evaluate any possible effects of the law changes. However, during the first half of 2023, a greater number of victims of human trafficking were referred to the NAS than ever before (*see chart on page 5*).

A victim was most often referred to the NAS by another authority (158 referrals). A victim sought help directly from the NAS in 38 occasions. NGOs and religious organizations made a total of 35 referrals.

More referrals from Welbeing Services Counties

Out of the list of authorities referring victims to the NAS, there has been a noticeable increase in the referrals made from the public social services (Welbeing Services Counties) and the police. While in the first half of year 2021, there were only 3 referrals from public social services, the number had increased to 7 the following year and reached 14 in the first half of 2023.

Better statistics are coming!

Statistics collection and reporting in the NAS is currently getting a proper overhaul. TILDA-project, short for Digital Tools and Statistics in the Assistance System for Victims of Human Trafficking, is an 18-month project coordinated by NAS. It was set up in April 2023 to improve and develop statistics collection in the NAS and to modernize work processes in the NAS through digitalization.

The project will change the way statistics are collected in the NAS, creating more accurate statistics that are comparable with the statistics collected by other authorities.

TILDA receives funding from the European Union Internal Security Fund (ISF).

More information about TILDA:

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**Co-funded by
the European Union**

* Act on persons seeking international protections and on identifying and assisting victims of human trafficking (746/2011)

Statistics from the Assistance System
for the first half of 2023

FORCED LABOUR KEEPS ITS TOP POSITION

In the first 6 months of year 2023, the National Assistance System for Victims of Human Trafficking (NAS) admitted **152 new clients**. Half of them, that is 76 persons, were exploited in human trafficking in Finland. On the following pages is an overview of the first half of 2023: referrals, new clients, new clients exploited in Finland and all clients in the NAS on 30 June 2023.



Forced labour in Finland: 47 victims

47 new clients reported being exploited in forced labour in Finland. Exploitation took place in several fields, most commonly in cleaning, forestry, construction, beauty and wellbeing, mining, restaurants and catering, domestic work and work in green houses.



Forced marriages in Finland: 13 victims

For the purposes of these statistics, a forced marriage is counted as having taken place in Finland if it starts or continues in Finland.

New clients exploited in this category were mainly under 18 years old when they had been married. All had faced significant physical, mental, spiritual and sexual violence. Many forced marriage included grave economical violence and exploitation, even financial crimes and benefit fraud carried out in the victim's name.



Human trafficking related to sexual exploitation in Finland: 12 victims

The amount of new clients in this category remains fairly small. Of the 12 clients, half had experienced exploitation in prostitution, whereas the other half had been subjected to other forms of sexual exploitation, sometimes resembling sexual slavery. The ability of victims of sexual exploitation to seek help or to report the exploitation to authorities is significantly lower than, for example, victims of forced labour.



Other forms of human trafficking in Finland: 4 victims

In the first half of 2023, the NAS also admitted as clients persons exploited in forced criminal activity and persons subjected to inhumane conditions. Alkuvuonna New clients admitted in the period did not include any victims of other forms of human trafficking, such as exploitation in begging, organ trade or child soldiers.



The NAS received calls and messages from various potential victims of human trafficking, as well as from persons trying to help them. They told the NAS about their circumstances and received information about victims' rights and available help. However, where the victim was being coerced with threats to their loved ones, their welfare, health or residence, they found it impossible to leave their situation and opted not to accept assistance.



New clients exploited in human trafficking outside Finland: 76 victims

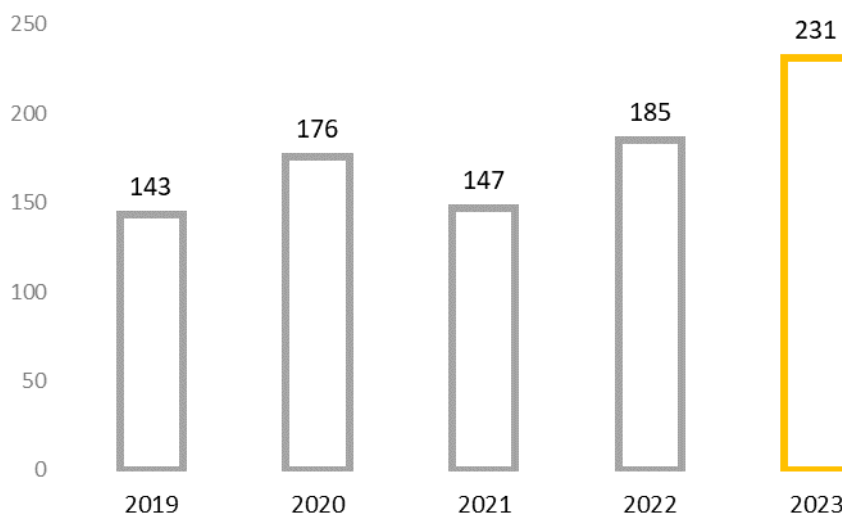
A victim of human trafficking who has been exploited outside Finland, may also be admitted as a client in the NAS, if they require assistance due to their experiences. 76 persons, that is 50 per cent of new clients admitted in the first half of 2023, were exploited outside Finland.

17 of them were exploited in another European Union member state, and four of them were exploited in Turkey. They were mostly exploited in forced labour or exploitation in prostitution.



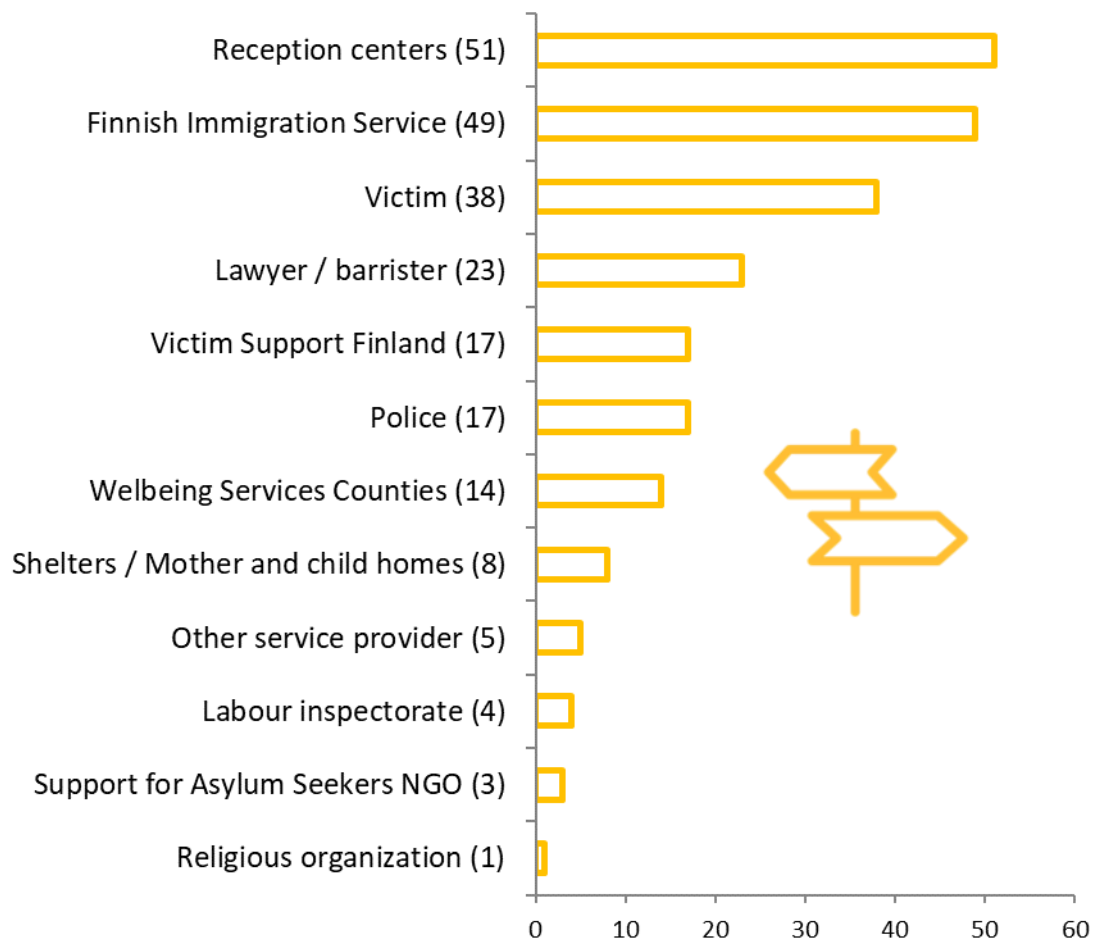
55 persons reported to have been exploited in their country of origin or in another country where they were legally staying. The exploitation had normally begun with the victim being a child, and continued for several years. The exploitation was often described by the victims as extremely violent and coercive. Most of the victims originated from current conflict zones, where the lack of secure structures and networks made them especially vulnerable to human trafficking. No victims of organ trafficking came to the NAS's attention.

Referrals to the Assistance System during the first six months 2019 - 2023

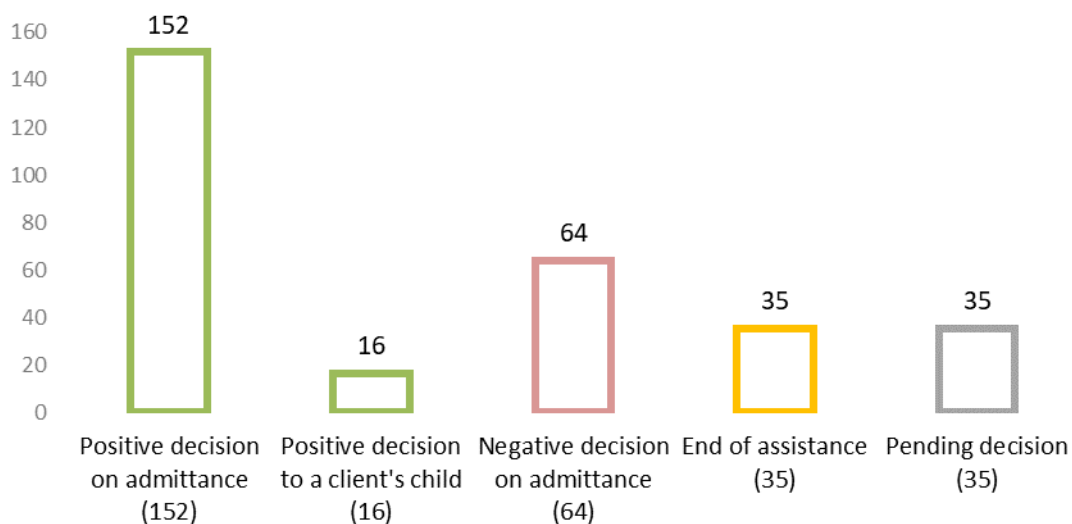


In the first half of 2023 the NAS received significantly more referrals than in previous years. Of the 231 persons referred in the start of 2023, 152 were admitted as clients. 35 referrals awaited decision on 30 June. The NAS receives 350—450 referrals per year.

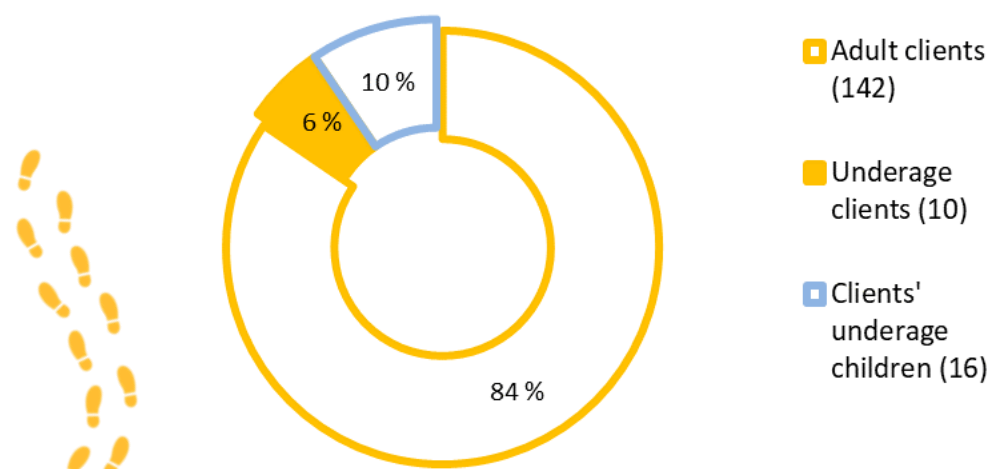
They referred victims of human trafficking into the Assistance System during the first half of 2023 (231 referrals)



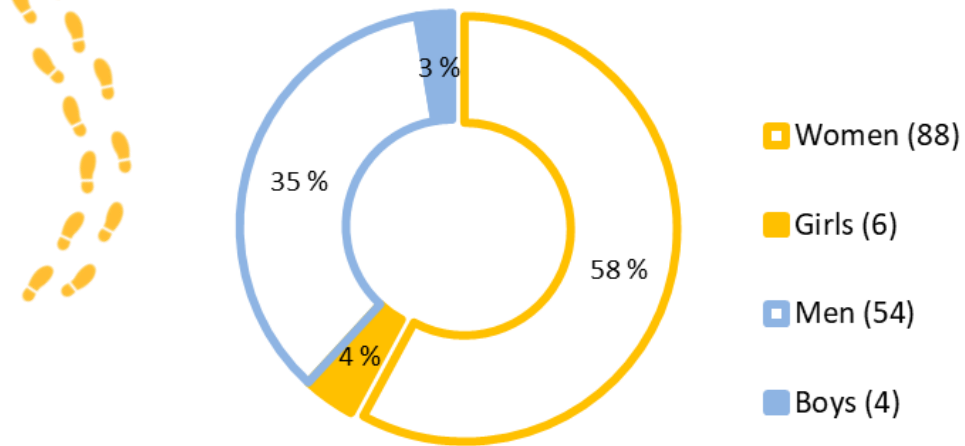
A victim was most likely to be referred to the NAS by another authority. 38 victims sought assistance on their own. Out of the 231 persons referred to the NAS, 152 were admitted as clients along with their 16 underage children. No statistics are, however, collected or published of clients' children. Heistä ei kuitenkaan kerätä eikä julkaista tarkempia tilastoja. 35 referrals awaited decision on 30 June 2023.



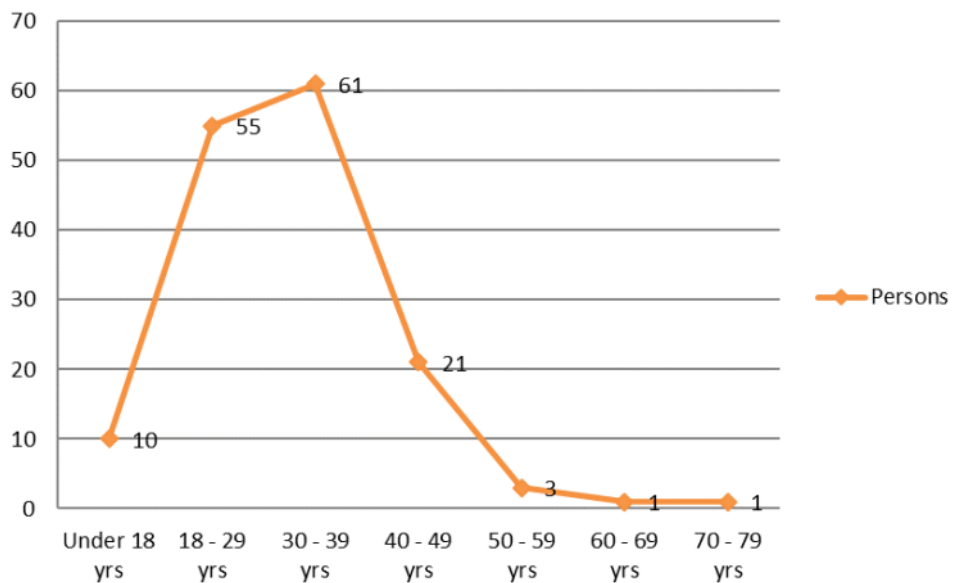
New clients (152 + 16)



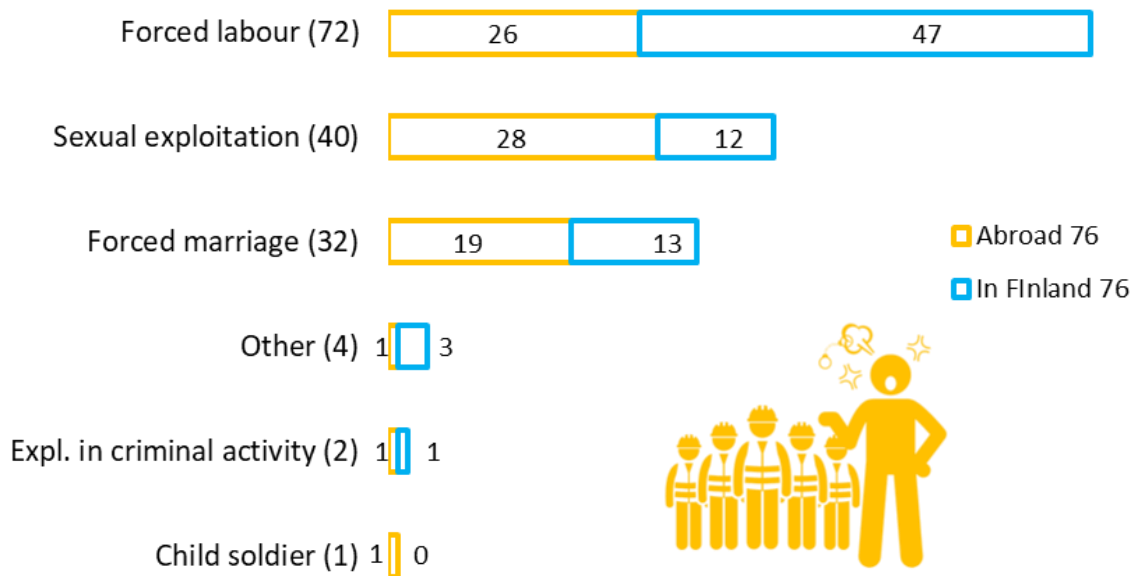
New clients (152) by age and gender



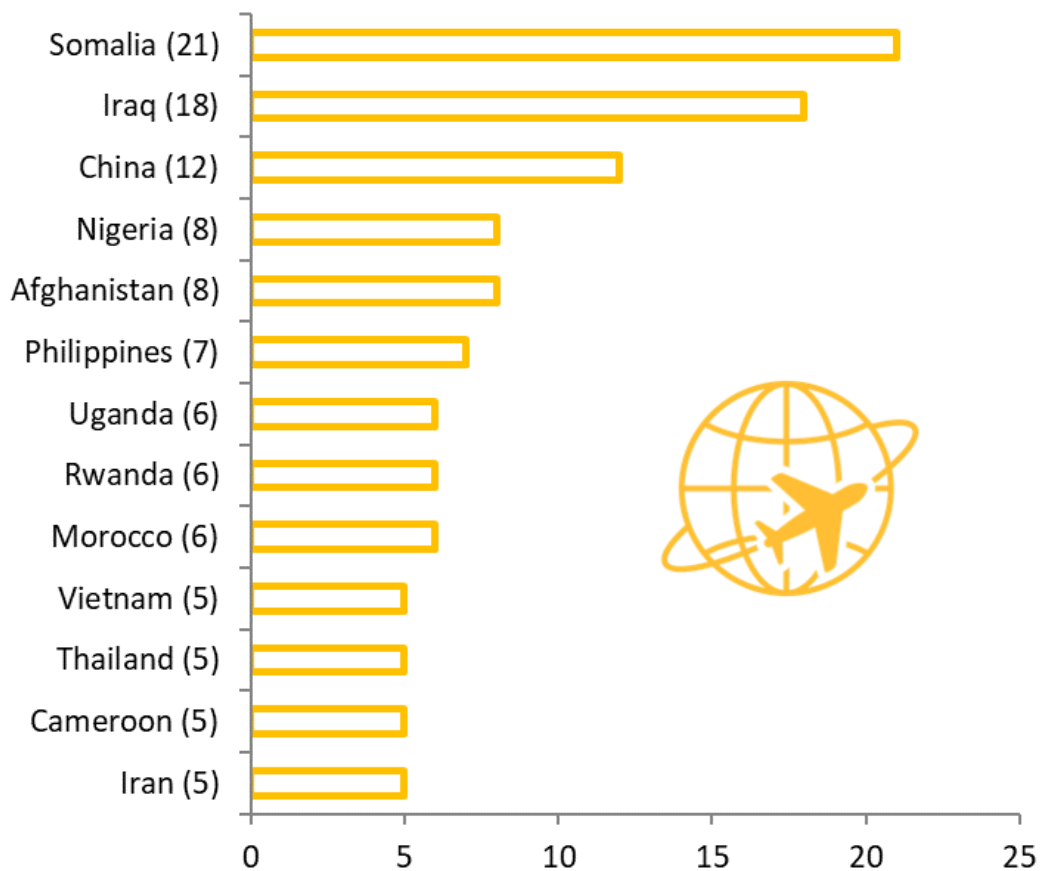
New clients (152) by age group



New clients (152) by form and place of human trafficking

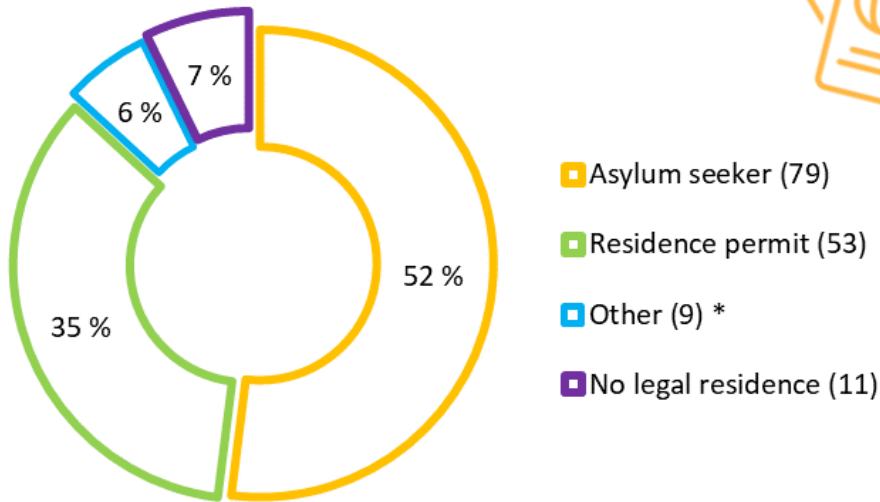


New clients (152) by most common* nationalities



New clients represent 36 different nationalities. *The chart displays groups of nationalities represented by five or more clients.

New clients (152) by residence status

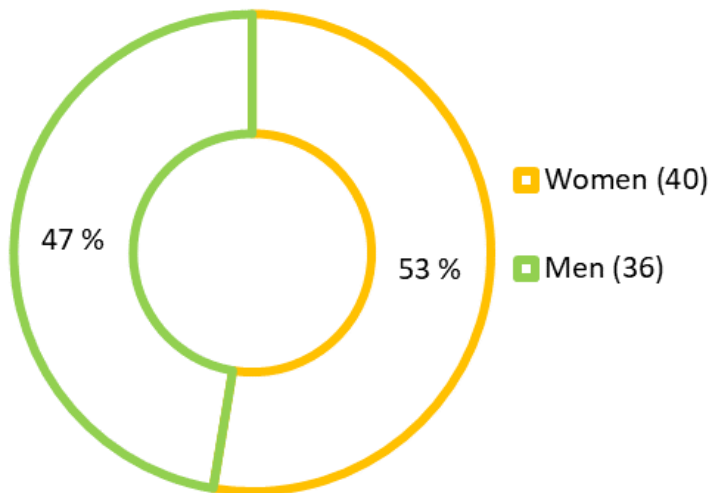


*The category "Other" includes Finnish nationals, other EU-nationals, persons exempt from visa requirements, and persons staying in Finland with a visa.

New clients who were exploited in Finland

1 January—30 June 2023

New clients exploited in Finland (76) by gender



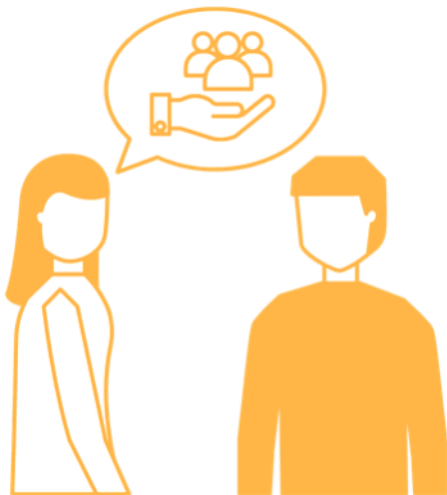
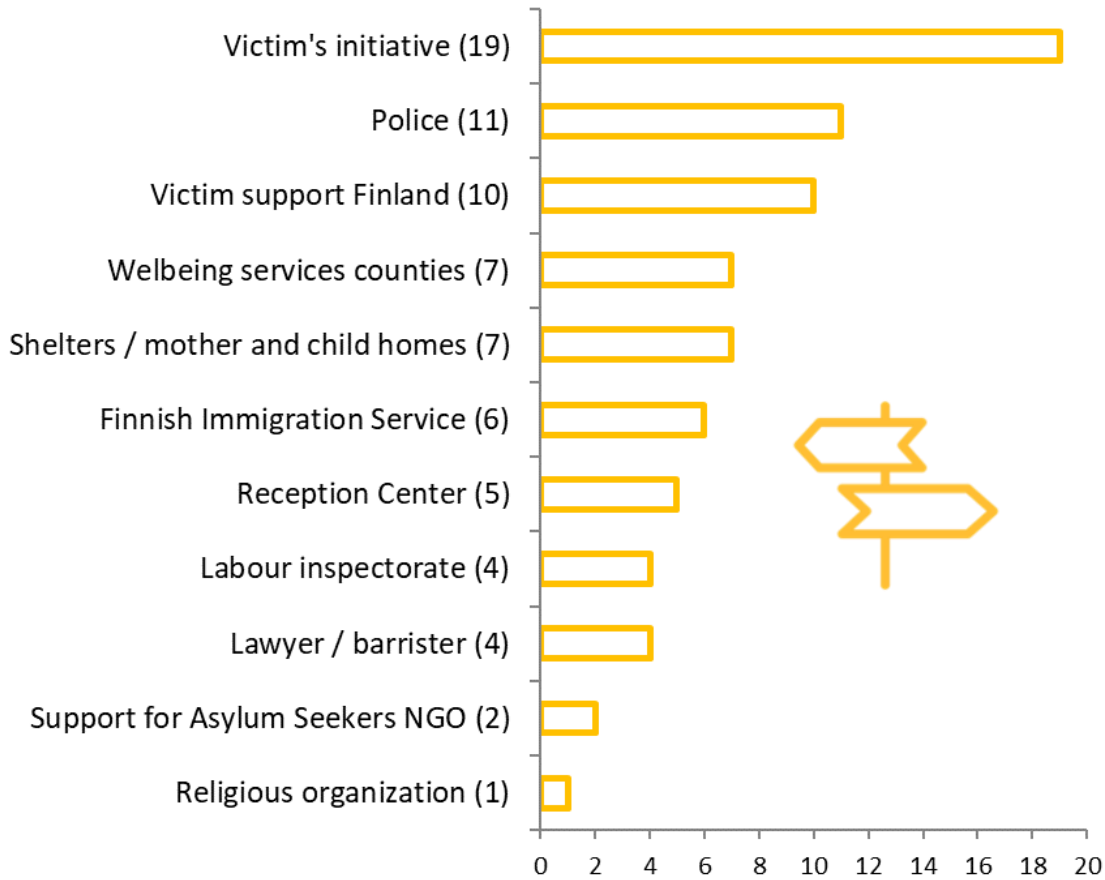
Half of all new clients had been exploited in human trafficking in Finland. More than half of them were women. One client was still a child.

Nearly 60 per cent of those exploited in Finland resided in the country with a residence permit issued for work or family reasons. Forced labour and forced marriage were accordingly the most often observed forms of exploitation suffered by this group of clients.

On the following pages are statistics about the 76 new clients who were exploited in Finland.



This is how the 76 people who were exploited in Finland found their way into the Assistance System (NAS)



Information and directions on how to refer a victim of human trafficking to the Assistance System can be found at:
www.ihmiskauppa.fi/esitys.

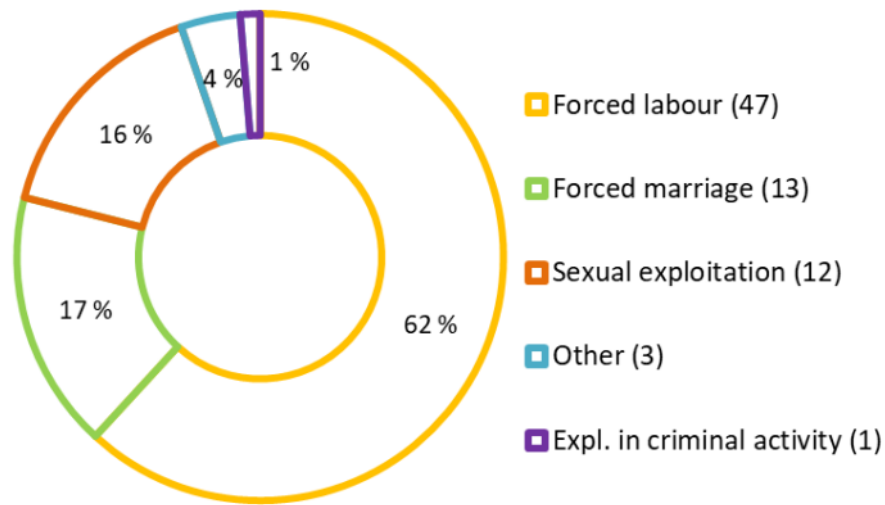
Referred by an authority: 38. A person exploited in human trafficking in Finland was most likely to be referred to the NAS by an authority, such as the police, wellbeing services counties (social services), shelters for victims of domestic violence, the Finnish Immigration Service, reception centers for asylum seekers or the labour inspectorate. 38 victims who were exploited in Finland and who were consequently admitted in the NAS were referred there by authorities.

Victim seeks help: 19. Even though the NAS does not do outreach work, an increasing number of victims seek assistance from the NAS directly. Victims normally find information on the ihmiskauppa.fi-website and contact the NAS. 19 persons exploited in human trafficking Finland contacted the NAS and entered assistance services.

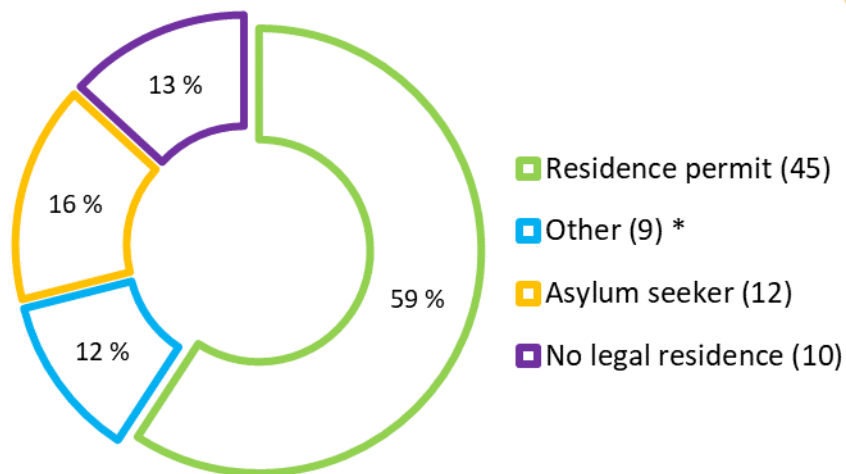
Referred by an NGO: 16. Non-governmental organizations such as Victim Support Finland, Monika-Naiset Liitto (3 clients), the Finnish Refugee Advice Center (1 client) and Support for Asylum Seekers NGO, referred to the NAS 16 of the 76 new clients who had been exploited in Finland.

Please, notice: this chart only refers to persons who were admitted to the NAS by June 30 2023, who were exploited in Finland.

New clients exploited in Finland (76) by form of exploitation

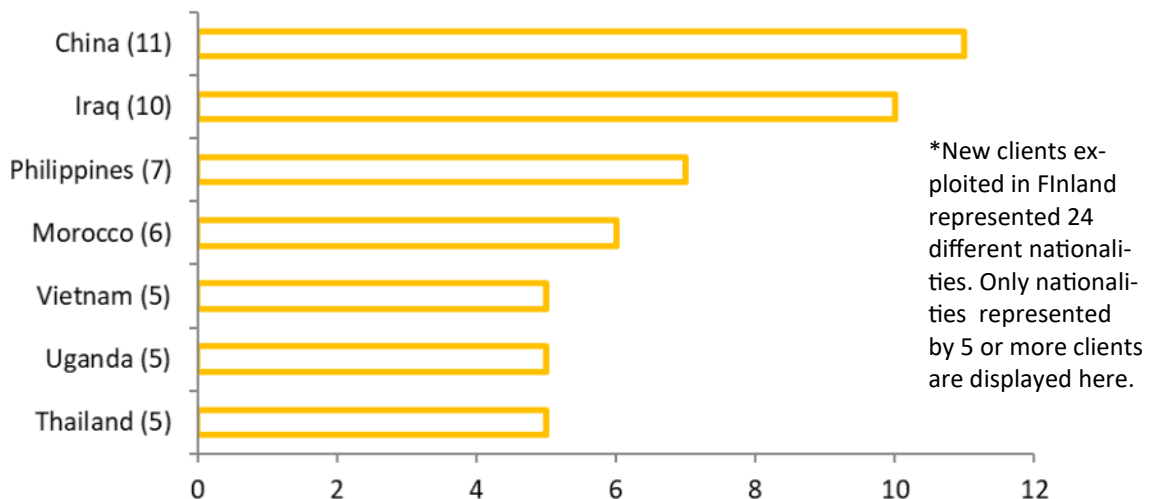


New clients exploited in Finland (76) by residence status



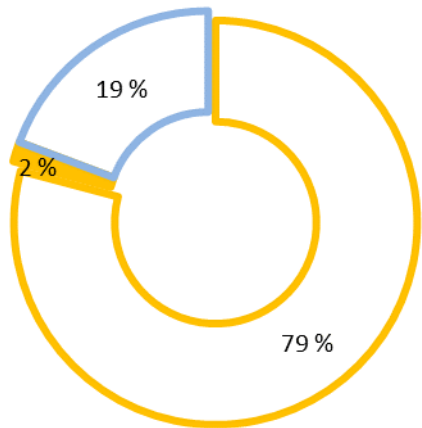
*The category "Other" includes Finnish nationals, other EU-nationals, persons exempt from visa requirements, and persons staying in Finland with a visa.

New clients exploited in Finland (76) by most common nationalities*



All clients in the Assistance System (NAS) on 30 June 2023

All clients (1167 + 279 = 1446)



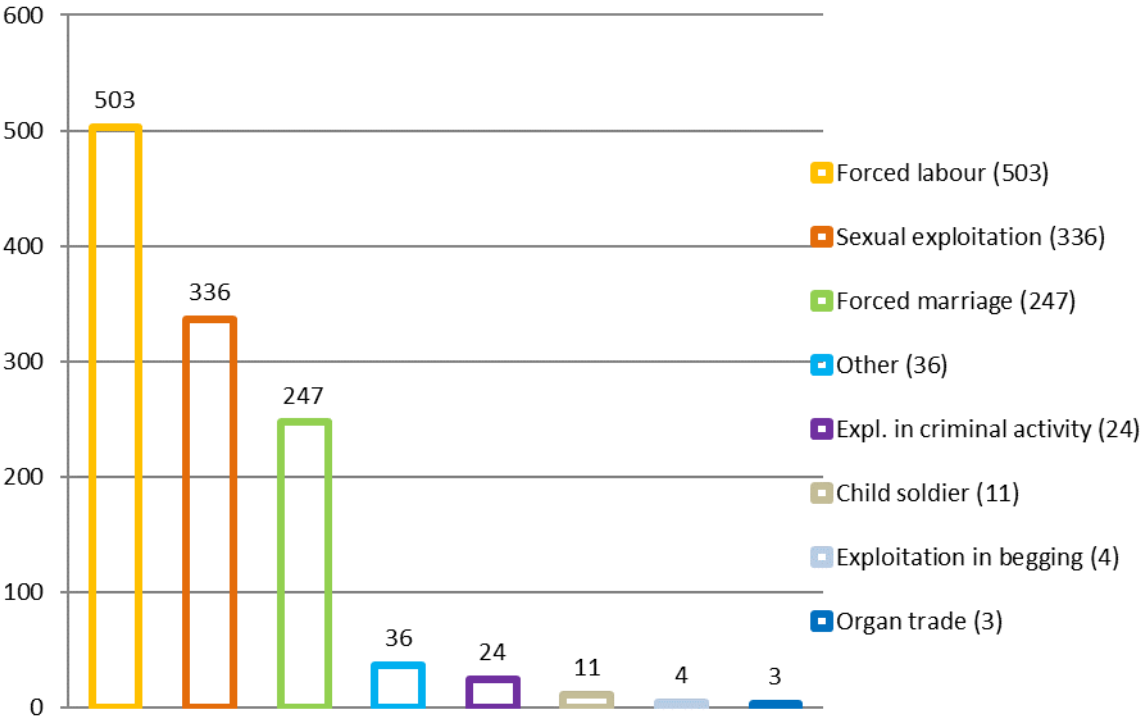
- Adult clients (1144)
- Underage clients (23)
- Clients' underage children (279)



The Assistance System assists victims of human trafficking, persons assisting in a criminal process relating to human trafficking, and their underage children. On 30 June there were 279 clients' children in the Assistance System. No statistics are collected of these children, and they are not included in the statistics below.

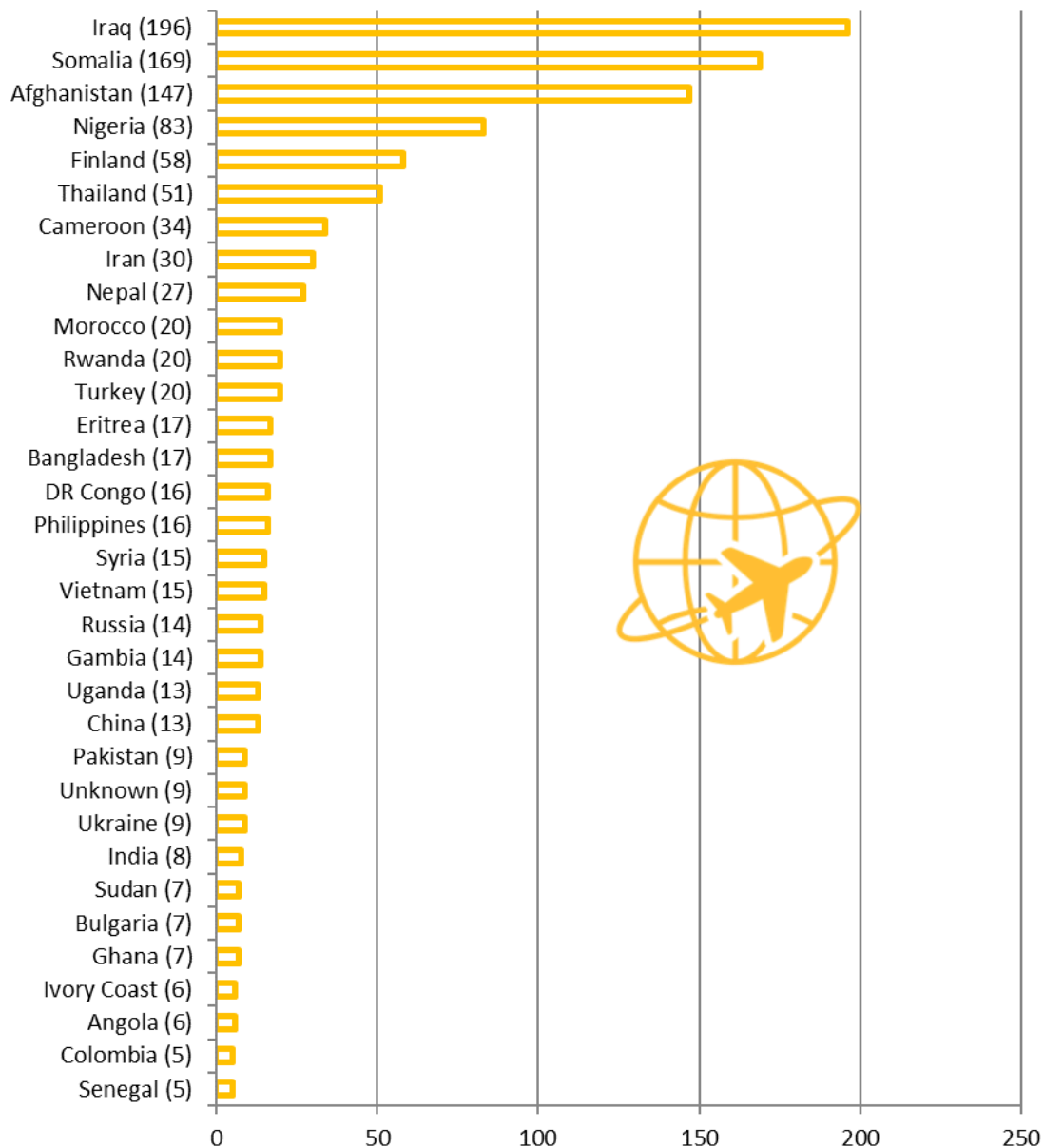
695 of the clients are women and girls, and 472 are men and boys. 103 clients were admitted while they were children, i.e. under 18 years old. 23 clients are still under 18 years old on 30 June 2023.

All clients (1167) by form of exploitation



There are currently three clients in the Assistance System who were admitted as clients based on their acting as witnesses in ongoing criminal investigations into human trafficking crimes.

All clients (1167) by most common nationalities*



Clients in the Assistance System represent 77 different nationalities. 9 clients' nationality is unknown. *The chart only displays groups of nationalities represented by five or more clients.



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