

2023 r.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING REPORT



Ministry of the Interior and Administration
Republic of Poland

Department for Public Order

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1. Introduction

This report aims to provide an up-to-date analysis of the phenomenon of human trafficking in Poland, summarise the actions taken and identify key challenges. It presents the efforts of state institutions, law enforcement agencies and non-governmental organisations in counteracting human trafficking, protecting victims and prosecuting perpetrators.

2023 brought significant challenges in the area of counteracting human trafficking in Poland. The prolonged armed conflict in Ukraine and ongoing tensions at the Polish-Belarusian border continued to affect migration patterns in the region. Due to its geographical location and the aid measures taken, Poland remained the key transit and destination country for people seeking security and better living conditions.

At the same time, Poland remains a country of origin for victims of human trafficking, with Polish citizens recruited for forced labour, begging or prostitution abroad. This complexity of the phenomenon requires a comprehensive approach and international cooperation.

An increase in the number of identified victims of human trafficking was recorded. According to the data of the National Public Prosecutor's Office, 1,043 victims were registered in 2023, including 11 minors, which represents an almost four-fold increase compared to 277 people in 2022. Citizens of Poland and Latin American countries, mainly from Colombia, Guatemala and Venezuela, prevailed among the victims. The most common forms of exploitation included forced labour and other forms of exploitation such as, among others, forcing people to obtain social benefits.

In response to these challenges, Polish institutions have intensified prevention and detection measures. Particular emphasis was placed on combating forced labour, both by active prosecution of perpetrators as well as conducting extensive information and educational campaigns.



Systemic changes were also introduced, such as elevating the Anti-Human Trafficking Team to the Inter-Ministerial level, which was a response to the need to increase the effectiveness of governmental measures undertaken under the circumstances triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the related refugee crisis. As an advisory body to the Prime Minister, the Inter-Ministerial Team helps to strengthen and improve the current system for combating and counteracting human trafficking as well as victim support and protection.

When confronted with a dynamic geopolitical and migration changes, effective counteracting of human trafficking requires continuous adaptation of strategies, strengthening inter-institutional cooperation and raising public awareness. This report summarises all of the activities undertaken in 2023.

2. Organisation of the anti-human trafficking system in Poland

2.1. National Action Plan



The National Action Plan against Human Trafficking (hereinafter referred to as NAP) is a main document describing how the system for combating and preventing human trafficking in Poland works. It is a government document adopted by the Council of Ministers, which obliges its addressees to perform certain tasks in order to counteract human trafficking. The addressees of NAP are individual units of the central administration and other institutions and NGOs that are voluntarily involved in anti-human trafficking activities in Poland. NAP's main goal is to provide conditions necessary to effectively counter human trafficking in Poland and support the victims of this crime. In this context, the detailed objectives of the NAP are as follows:

- to raise the awareness of the problem of human trafficking;
- to raise the standards of support provided to the victims of human trafficking (including minor victims of human trafficking);
- to improve the effectiveness of the institutions responsible for prosecuting the crime of human trafficking by improving the legal tools and the structures, and implementing best practices;
- to improve the skills of the representatives of institutions and organizations involved in counteracting human trafficking and supporting victims of this crime;
- to extend the knowledge of the problem of human trafficking and to improve the effectiveness of the actions taken;
- to strengthen international cooperation.

On 17 November 2021, the Council of Ministers adopted the NAP for 2022-2024. This is a government plan, effective as of January 1, 2022, which defines the directions of the activities in the area of counteracting human trafficking.

2.2. Institutions involved in the system for combating and preventing human trafficking

The Inter-Ministerial Team for Counteracting Trafficking in Human Beings



The Inter-Ministerial Team for Countering Trafficking in Human Beings is an auxiliary body of the Prime Minister appointed pursuant to the Ordinance of the Prime Minister No. 392 of 18 September 2023 on the appointment of the Inter-Ministerial Anti-Human Trafficking Team (M.P. 2023, item 1036). The Team is composed of representatives from central offices, law enforcement agencies, state institutions, and non-governmental organizations. It coordinates the entire policy related to counteracting and combating the trafficking of human beings in Poland, shaping it in the form of national anti-trafficking programmes/plans. The following working groups operate within the Team:

- Working Group for Monitoring the Implementation of NAP

- Working Group for the Support of Victims of Human Trafficking

and ad hoc groups are established to perform a task indicated by NAP.

2.2.1. Institutional level

Ministry of the Interior and Administration



**Ministerstwo Spraw
Wewnętrznych i Administracji**

Within the structures of the Department of Public Order of the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, the Division for Counteracting Trafficking in Human Beings, Hate Crimes and Supporting Actions in the area of EU Internal Security

Policy operates, which is responsible for, amongst others:

- monitoring work related to the implementation of tasks from the National Action Plan Against Human Trafficking;
- proposing tasks in subsequent editions of the National Action Plan;
- monitoring performance of public tasks concerning support for and protection of victims of human trafficking commissioned by the Minister of the Interior and Administration, (currently the task appears under the name “Running the National Intervention and Consultation Centre for Victims of Human Trafficking”);
- supporting the work of the Anti-Human Trafficking Team and the Working Groups;
- raising awareness in the area of human trafficking.

Office for Foreigners



The Office plays an important role in the preliminary identification of possible victims of human trafficking among foreigners seeking international protection in Poland. As part of the proceedings granting refugee status, the Office's employees can obtain information indicating that a foreigner has been a victim of human trafficking. A part-time human trafficking coordinator responsible for coordinating activities and ensuring proper flow of information was appointed at the Office.

Police



The decision of the Chief Commander of the Police of 22 January 2014, established the Anti-Human Trafficking Department of the Criminal Service Office (now Criminal Office) of the National Police Headquarters. The Department's main tasks primarily include combating crime related to human trafficking, paedophilia and child pornography, as well as crime against sexual freedom and decency. Human Trafficking Department cooperates with judiciary authorities, public administration and state audit institutions, non-governmental organisations, community organisations, and public service companies. In addition, the Unit carries out international activities through operational and investigative cooperation with the law enforcement agencies from other countries. The work of the Anti- Human Trafficking Department includes supervision and coordination the work of anti-human trafficking units established by the

Order of the National Police Headquarters¹ in the criminal departments of provincial police headquarters. The tasks of the anti-human trafficking units include, in particular, detection of human trafficking, supervision and coordination of the tasks performed by district Police headquarters and their subordinate Police units in detecting human trafficking, identification and support of the process of identification of victims of human trafficking, participation in international operations, in particular in joint investigation teams formed to detect human trafficking, non-police cooperation, as well as organisation and conducting in-service training classes for criminal service officers in the field of detecting human trafficking. Representatives of the Anti-Human Trafficking Department participate in the works of international teams/working groups/expert groups, i.a. as:

- national coordinator/expert of the Europol Analysis Work File AWF SOC - AP Phoenix focused on combating the crime of human trafficking;
- national coordinator/expert of Europol's analytical working project AWF SOC - AP Twins (combating sexual exploitation of minors and child pornography);
- national coordinator of the EU priority EMPACT THB (European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats – Trafficking in Human Beings), which is the implementation of the tasks set by the Ministry of the Interior and Administration and one of the elements of the EU Security Policy for 2021-2023;
- national coordinator of the EU priority EMPACT CSE (European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats - Child Sexual Exploitation) "cybercrime - combating sexual exploitation of children" as part of the EU Security Policy Cycle in the area of combating serious and organized crime for 2021 - 2023.

Border Guard



The Border Guard plays a specific role in the fight against human trafficking with regard to foreigners. The Border Guard officers very often are the ones who make the first contact with victims of this crime and, consequently, they often identify these victims. Similarly to all the institutions described herein, the Border Guard participates in carrying out the tasks included in NAP. The Operational and Investigative Board of the National Headquarters of the Border Guard coordinates the performance of projects arising from NAP, as well as substantively supervises the activities of the organisational units of the Border Guard that involve combating and

preventing human trafficking in Poland.

In addition, the structures of the Operational and Investigative Board of the National Headquarters of the Border Guard include Section I, existing within Department I, which focuses on illegal migration and human trafficking and is responsible for *inter alia*, coordination of and supervision over the actions taken by the Border Guard with the aim to counteract human trafficking. In each Border Guard unit, a part-time anti-human trafficking coordinator was appointed within the Operations and Investigations Department to coordinate efforts and collaborate with relevant units of the Border Guard, the Police, and other institutions involved in combating human trafficking.

¹ Order no. 14 of the Chief Police Commander of 22 September 2016, on the performance of certain tasks by the Police in the detection of human trafficking (Official Gazette of NPH, item 61).

Public Prosecutor's Office



PROKURATURA KRAJOWA

The Department for Organized Crime and Corruption is responsible for combating human trafficking at the National Public Prosecutor's Office. The unit coordinates the actions taken by the Public Prosecutor's Office in prosecuting human trafficking. A special prosecutor-coordinator for human trafficking was appointed. Since 2007, the former Appellate Public Prosecutor's Offices and now each of the Regional Public Prosecutor's Offices and Circuit Public Prosecutor's Offices have appointed prosecutors to act as consultants on human trafficking. In 2014, the *Guidelines for Conducting Proceedings in Human Trafficking Cases* were given to prosecutors handling human trafficking cases.

Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy



Ministerstwo Rodziny, Pracy i Polityki Społecznej

Social assistance plays an important role in supporting victims of trafficking by providing crisis intervention. The Ministry of Family, Labor, and Social Policy (MRPiPS), in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior and Administration (MSWiA), the Border Guard, and non-governmental organizations, conducts an annual series of training sessions for employees of social assistance organizations. These sessions focus on supporting victims of human trafficking and include guidelines and information on cooperation with the National Intervention and Consultation Centre. MRPiPS provides participants of a specialised training course on 'Supporting victims of human trafficking' with a training resource - a document titled *Safe shelter standards for victims of human trafficking*. It has been developed in the Team for Counteracting Trafficking in Human Beings as part of the implementation of the task called *Implementation of standards to be met by institutions capable and entitled to provide assistance to victims/witnesses of trafficking in human beings, as well as facilities where victims of trafficking may be placed*. The safe shelter standards presented are not binding standards but merely guidelines for possible use, and MRPiPS and MSWiA recommend them.

State Labour Inspection



The State labour Inspection (PIP) is a body established to monitor compliance with labour law regulations, including occupational health and safety laws, and the legality of employment. PIP's tasks include activities aimed at identifying cases of work performed in violation of applicable laws. Labour inspectors of PIP, within the scope of their competences authorising them to enter work premises at any time, obtain information from employees and other persons on the workplace's premises. Entitled to inspect recruitment and temporary employment agencies and the users' employers, they are able to identify potential victims of human trafficking for forced labour and notify the competent authorities that combat this type of crime. Since foreigners are often the victims of human trafficking for forced labour, the PIP's inspections are conducted - in justified cases - in cooperation with the Border Guard officers. This cooperation is based, *inter alia*, on the provisions of an agreement on the principles of cooperation between the State labour Inspection and the Border Guard from 10th December 2018 (which replaced the previous agreement of 12 May 2015). The agreement provides not only for the performance of joint inspections concerning the legality of employment of foreigners, but also for joint informational and educational activities addressed both to entities that employ foreigners and to foreigners who work in Poland. Thanks to this

cooperation, the Border Guard can investigate human trafficking cases identified for the forced labour. At the central level, representatives of the State Labour Inspection participate in the work of the Inter-Ministerial Team for Countering Trafficking in Human Beings. PIP's bodies perform - both centrally and at the local level - the tasks included in the National Action Plan against Human Trafficking. The cooperation of the National Labour Inspection with other institutions and organizations within the Voivodeship Teams for Counteracting Trafficking in Human Beings and cooperation with the LA STRADA Foundation are also important for the implementation of PIP's tasks in the area of preventing and combating trafficking in human beings for forced labour.

Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy



Ministerstwo Funduszy
i Polityki Regionalnej

In 2023, the Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy (MFIPR) was the leading institution working on a draft of the Directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence (CSDDD). It propagated the problems of due diligence in

human rights (a part of which are the measures to reduce the risk of forced labour in the supply chain) through the organisation of webinars and briefings with a wide range of stakeholders and it also established a Working Group on Due Diligence to spread the knowledge of the issue. The activities of the Polish OECD National Contact Point for responsible business, which operates in the MFIPR, also serve to promote due diligence of enterprises in the field of responsible business activities. KPK OECD disseminates Polish versions of the "OECD Guidelines on Due Diligence for Responsible Business Conduct" and the sector-specific due diligence guidelines through its website.

2.2.2. Regional level

Voivodeship Teams for Counteracting Trafficking in Human Beings



The Voivodeship Teams include representatives of various public institutions, law enforcement agencies, and NGOs operating at the regional level. The participation of representatives of individual institutions depends on the decision of the Voivode. In the works of teams established so far, participate primarily the representatives of Voivodeship offices, the Police, the Border Guard, the public prosecutor's offices, labour inspections, labour offices, local authorities, educational offices and institutions, and non-governmental organisations.

The representatives of the institutions participating in the work of regional teams improve the effectiveness of their activities through the ongoing exchange of information and coordination of all undertakings, including those of a preventive nature.

2.2.3. Level of non-governmental organisations

Non-governmental organisations provide support for state authorities and institutions in their efforts to combat human trafficking, assist victims and educate the public.

Nation-wide Network of Non-Governmental Organisations Against Human Trafficking



Non-governmental organisations involved in combating human trafficking form the Nation-Wide Network of Non-Governmental organisations Against Human Trafficking, which was established in July 2014 as part of the implementation of a project funded by the Norwegian Fund. Currently, the Network brings together 19 non-governmental organisations. The main intention of the Network is to create a highly specialized network of anti-human trafficking organisations in order to improve the quality and efficiency of their work, professionalize their activities, and strengthen their potential. Doing so makes it possible for them to become partners of public institutions and law enforcement agencies in joint activities aimed at preventing human trafficking and supporting the victims of this crime. The Network's activities include, among other things, strengthening Voivodeship Teams, developing standards for the provision of services to victims of trafficking, especially in the areas of security and privacy, with respect for the victims' choices, and organising a series of workshops on human trafficking for the non-governmental organisations. Thanks to the Network's activities, selected NGOs from all over Poland are being prepared to work with victims of human trafficking.

La Strada Foundation Against Human Trafficking and Slavery



The goal of the Foundation, established in 1996, is to promote the respect of human rights, combat human trafficking, slavery, and forced labour, and to counteract the exploitation of prostitution, as well as crimes against the freedom and health of individuals. The Foundation has been actively working to help victims since its inception. In 2022, the La Strada Foundation won a competition organised by the Ministry of the Interior and Administration to run the National Intervention and Consultation Centre for Victims of Human Trafficking in 2023, providing specialised staff and a shelter for victims in Warsaw.

The "Po MOC" Mary Immaculate Association for Women and Children



Po MOC
Stowarzyszenie

The mission of the Association, established in 1998, is to provide comprehensive assistance to women in crisis by providing them with safe shelter, supporting them in the process of personal development, and conducting preventive and educational activities on violence, human trafficking, and forced prostitution. The main goal of the Association is to help women and their children at risk of or affected by sexual, physical, and psychological violence, victims of trafficking in women and their families. The Association is involved in the operation of the National Intervention and Consultation Centre within which it runs a shelter for disadvantaged women and women with children in Katowice.

Empowering Children Foundation



The Empowering Children Foundation (formerly named Nobody's Children Foundation), which has been in operation since 1991, supports children and their families by providing assistance in cases of abuse. Its facilities offer a psychological and legal assistance to children who have experienced abuse (physical violence, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, or cyberbullying) and their families. Support is also offered to parents of young children aged 0-6 who, for various reasons, are unprepared to provide safe care and conscious upbringing to their children. The Foundation's goal is to support children in overcoming the traumas caused by the harm they experienced. The Foundation actively cooperates with the Police in combating crimes related to sexual abuse of children. It runs the Helpline for Children and Adolescents (tel. no. 116 111), and is the initiator of the stopseksurstytcie.fdds.pl website, where incidents of sexual abuse of children can be reported directly to the Police.

ITAKA Foundation - Centre for Missing People



This NGO, established in 1999, deals with the problem of missing persons in Poland. The Foundation is a public benefit organisation. Itaka finds missing persons, helps their families, and prevents disappearances. It maintains an online database of missing persons, a 24/7 support line for missing persons and their families, and the *Missing Child Helpline*. Itaka's assistance is free of charge. The Foundation cooperates with the National Police Headquarters and is a member of the Missing Children Europe Federation.

You Can Free Us Polska (Czas Wolności)



Czas Wolności is an organisation whose main goal is to counteract the problem of human trafficking and forced labour, to bring freedom to those who have become victims of slavery, forced prostitution, violence, the oppressed, enslaved, and exploited, and to provide them with assistance, care, protection, rehabilitation and development opportunities.

It should be noted that the list of the above non-governmental organisations is not complete. Assistance to victims of human trafficking is additionally provided by dozens of other entities, including Caritas, the Polish Red Cross, the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, St. Brother Albert's Aid Society, that provide various forms of support to victims, including those affected by the crime of human trafficking.

2.3. Institutional support

National Intervention and Consultation Centre for Polish and foreign victims of human trafficking



The National Intervention and Consultation Centre for Victims of Human Trafficking (hereinafter referred to as KCIK) is a public task implemented and financed by the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, addressed to Polish and foreign victims of human trafficking. Each year, the Ministry of Interior and Administration announces an open contest to run KCIK. In 2023, the Centre was run by the La Strada Foundation Against Human Trafficking and Slavery and Mary Immaculate Association for Women and Children.

KCIK was established to help victims of human trafficking in Poland. Its tasks include identification of human trafficking victims, intervention, preventive counselling, consultation for institutions and organisations, and running a specialised shelter for victims. The staff from KCIK provide counselling not only to victims of human trafficking, but also to their relatives, organisations, and institutions involved in counteracting human trafficking and aiding the victims, and people at risk of human trafficking.

Crucial in assisting victims of human trafficking is the initial identification, which in most cases, is done by law enforcement agencies. Once a victim is identified, it is necessary to ensure their safety, isolate them from the perpetrators, and place them in a safe place. This is the most important objective of the work carried out by KCIK: comprehensive assistance to victims of the crime, provided by NGOs. The person who benefits from the assistance can count on full support, including safe accommodation, medical and psychological care and legal aid.

National Office of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Warsaw



The International Organisation for Migration (IOM), based on the Agreement concluded in 2005 with the Minister of the Interior and Administration and annexed in November 2011, implements a programme of assistance in voluntary return and reintegration. Under the program, people identified as victims of human trafficking can receive support in returning to their country of origin and reintegration assistance. IOM provides, among other things, return counselling to facilitate a well-informed return decision, individualised return risk assessments, medical assistance, assistance in obtaining travel documents, and help with organising the necessary return formalities. IOM offers accommodation and meals before and during the trip, as well as the organization and financing of the return trip. After returning to their country of origin, beneficiaries can receive reintegration assistance aimed at meeting their most urgent needs, support in taking up employment or starting business and vocational training.

3. Statistical picture of the problem

European Union



In recent years, significant changes have been observed in the dynamics of human trafficking in the European Union. Eurostat data indicates a noticeable increase in the extent of the phenomenon, with a record of 10,093 registered victims in 2022, an increase of 41.1% compared to the previous year. This is the highest value recorded in the period 2008-2022.

Sexual exploitation and forced labour continue to prevail among forms of exploitation, each accounting for approximately 41% of cases. It is worth noting that the percentage of forced labour cases reached its highest level in 2022 during the analysed period. Women and girls still account for the majority of victims (62.8% in 2022), although this is the lowest share recorded since 2008. It means that the share of men and boys is gradually increasing.

New technologies are playing a bigger role in human trafficking, with the growing use of online platforms and social media to recruit victims and organise crime. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the dynamics, increasing the vulnerability of some groups to exploitation and making it more difficult to identify victims.

The increase in the share of minors among victims of human trafficking raises concerns. It is particularly visible in the context of online sexual exploitation. Perpetrator profiles are also changing, with an increasing share of females among suspects (23.2% in 2022). At the same time, despite an increase in the number of identified victims, the number of convicts fell by 16.7% in 2022, indicating the difficulties in effective prosecution of perpetrators.

Cases of human trafficking for the purpose of social benefits fraud are being identified with increasing frequency. This applies especially to those countries that have well-developed social welfare systems. There is also a growing awareness of the problem of forced labour in European societies, especially in sectors such as agriculture, construction and domestic services. The fine line between what can be understood as a violation of labour law and what is forced labour does not facilitate the prosecution of this form of exploitation. At present, many countries of the European Union, especially those where sexual exploitation has been a traditionally recorded form of exploitation in human trafficking, face the challenge of defining a clear legal framework addressing the phenomenon of forced labour.

Conflicts and humanitarian crises, such as the war in Ukraine, increase the risk of human trafficking among refugees. Difficulties in identifying victims, especially among migrants and in cross-border contexts, are still diagnosed, despite continuous efforts undertaken to mitigate them. In this area, a role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) is growing, complementing the work of state institutions in identifying victims and providing them with support.

In summary, trends in human trafficking in the EU demonstrate the increasing scale and complexity of the problem. Effective counteracting requires an integrated approach that takes into account the changing dynamics of the phenomenon, with special emphasis on the use of new technologies, combating forced labour and protecting the most vulnerable groups, including children and migrants.

It is also necessary to strengthen international cooperation and improve methods of prosecuting perpetrators in order to effectively limit this phenomenon throughout the European Union.

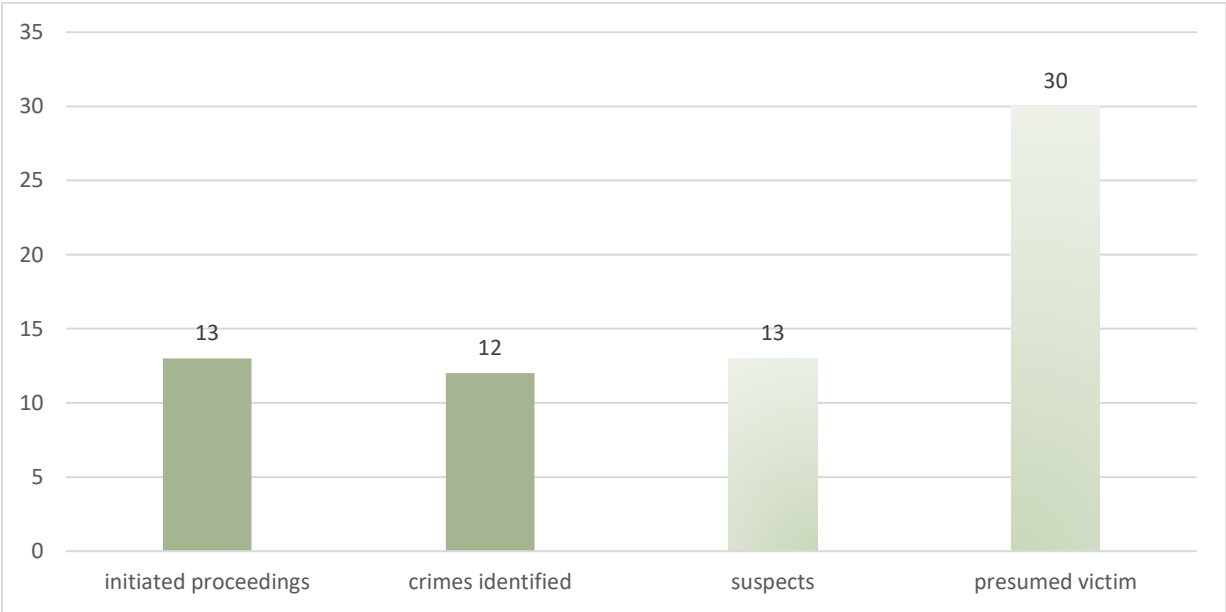
Poland

Due to the different data collection methodology adopted by entities dealing with human trafficking, the following statistics are presented separately for clarity. Information from non-governmental organisations working with law enforcement and the judiciary in supporting victims of this crime is also an important supplement to the current picture of the phenomenon.

Police

The Police, as the law enforcement agency, make every effort to detect and prosecute the perpetrators of crimes. In 2023, the activities of the Police resulted in the initiation of 13 proceedings concerning human trafficking and naming 12 crimes. 13 people were charged with the crime of human trafficking. 30 victims were identified.

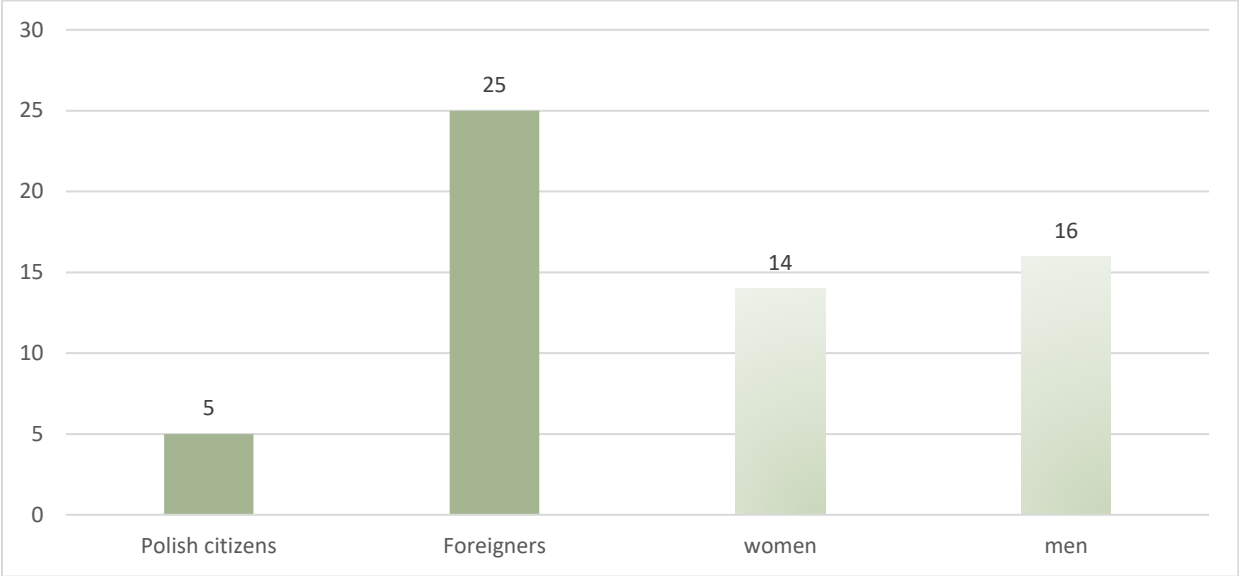
Chart 1. Human trafficking. Crime under Article 189a §1-2 of the CC in 2023.



Prepared on the basis of data provided by the National Police Headquarters.

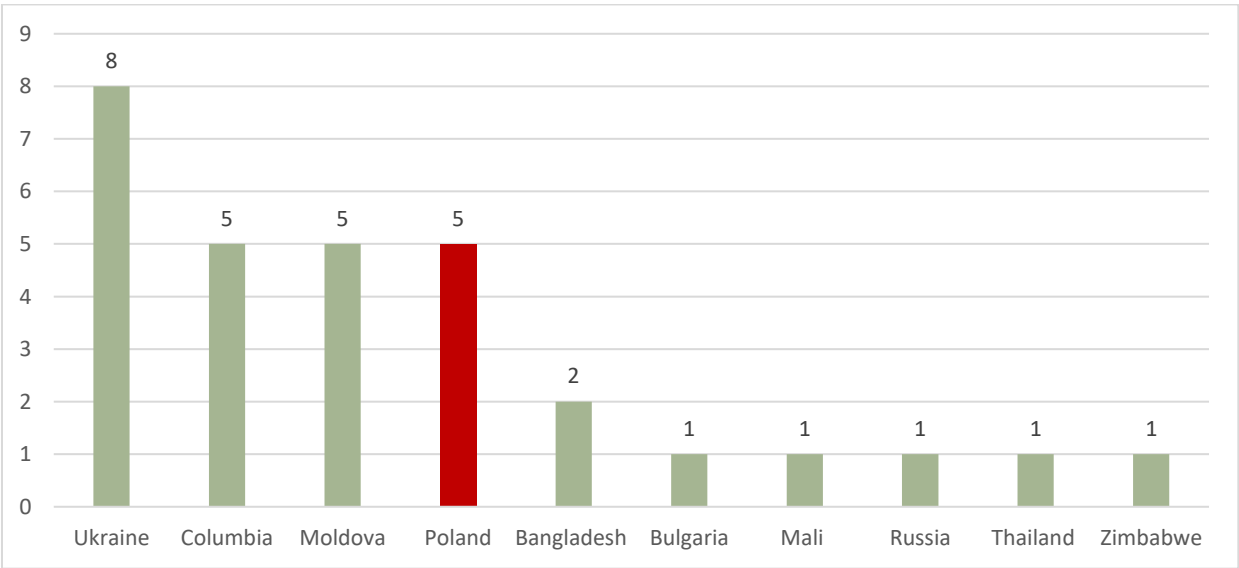
In 2023, the police identified 30 presumed victim of human trafficking in Poland. They comprised 14 women and 16 men, including six minor victims. Most of the victims identified were foreigners (25 individuals), while 5 persons were Polish citizens. In terms of forms of exploitation, 16 persons were victims of forced labour, 8 were victims of sexual exploitation and 6 experienced other forms of exploitation. Among foreign victims identified, the highest number came from Ukraine (8 persons) and Colombia (5 persons).

Chart 2. Number of alleged victims of human trafficking identified in 2023.



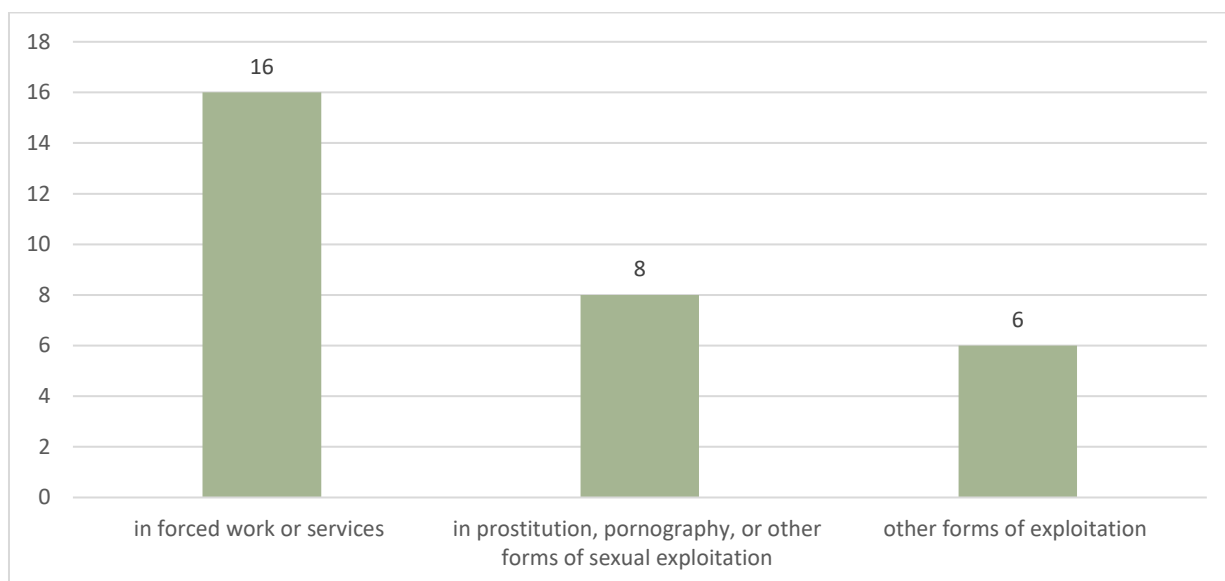
Prepared on the basis of data provided by the National Police Headquarters.

Chart 3. The nationality of potential victims of human trafficking identified by the Police in 2023.



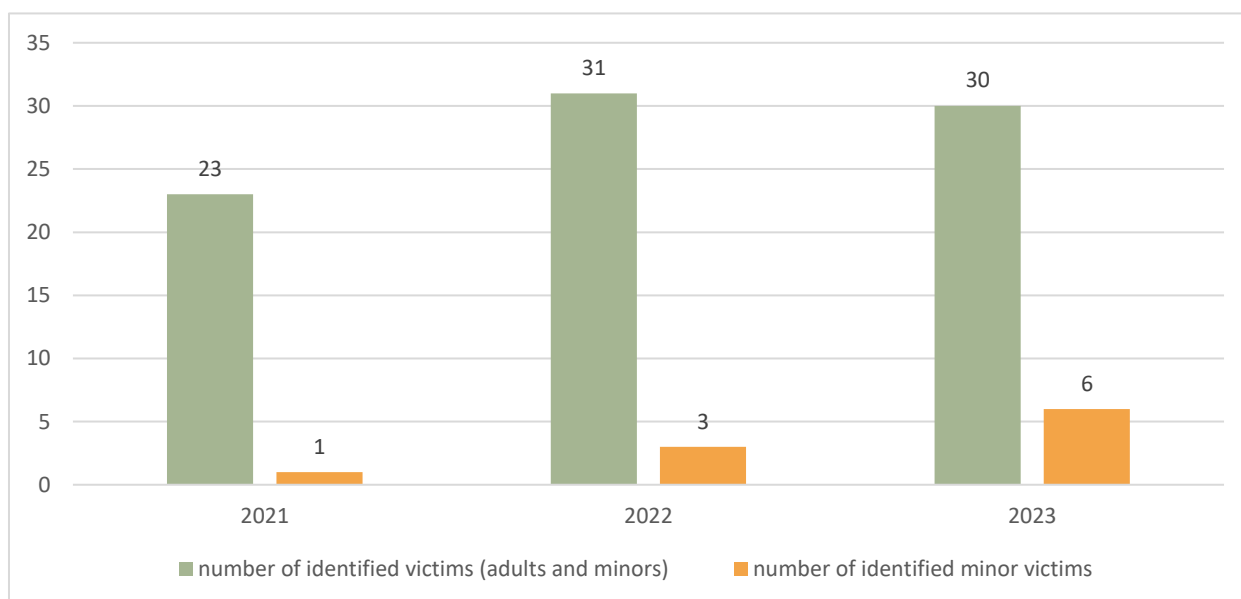
Prepared on the basis of data provided by the National Police Headquarters.

Chart 4. The nature of exploitation of potential victims of human trafficking in 2023.



Prepared on the basis of data provided by the National Police Headquarters.

Chart 5. The number of potential victims of human trafficking identified in 2021 - 2023.



Prepared on the basis of data provided by the National Police Headquarters.

Example proceedings/investigation:

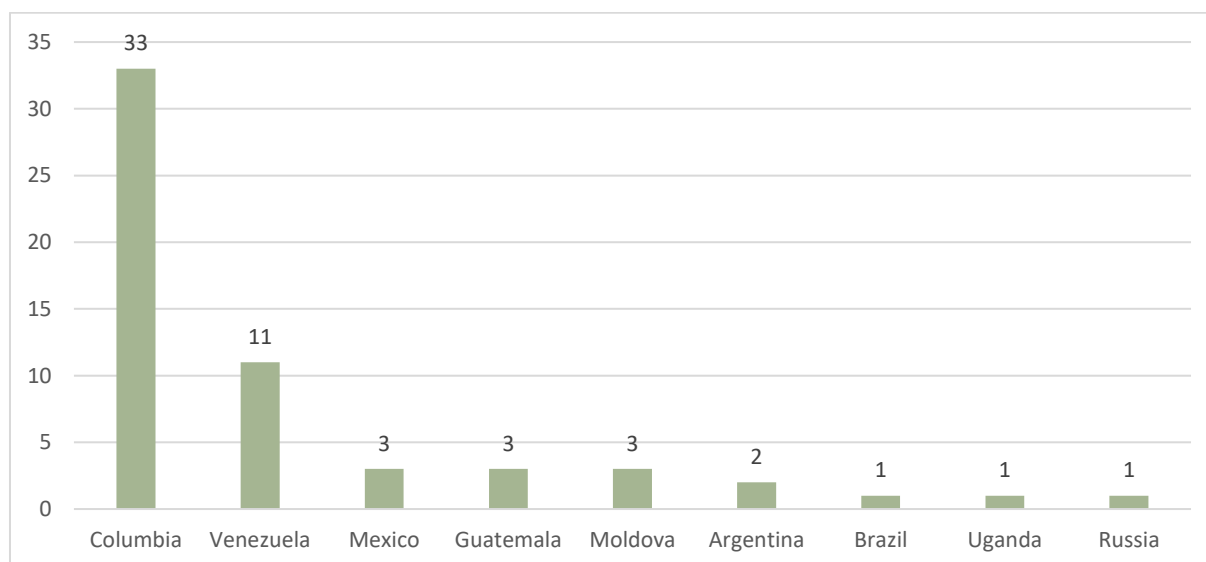
“...Police officers, in the course of continuing their activities in the operational case, dismantled an organised criminal group aiming to commit crimes against freedom, sexual freedom and morality, in particular human trafficking and pimping. The group consisted of Bulgarian nationals who, with the aim of gaining a financial benefit by taking advantage of her critical position and misleading her about the conditions of the work offered by declaring that she would provide work as a nanny, using physical violence in case of disobedience, blackmail of leaving her destitute, supervising the work, recruited the woman and subsequently during the period transported her to various locations while providing accommodation, hairdressing services, clothing, medicine and condoms in order to use her, with her consent, in prostitution, and then led to her sale for the amount of PLN 5,000....”

Source: National Police Headquarters

Border Guard

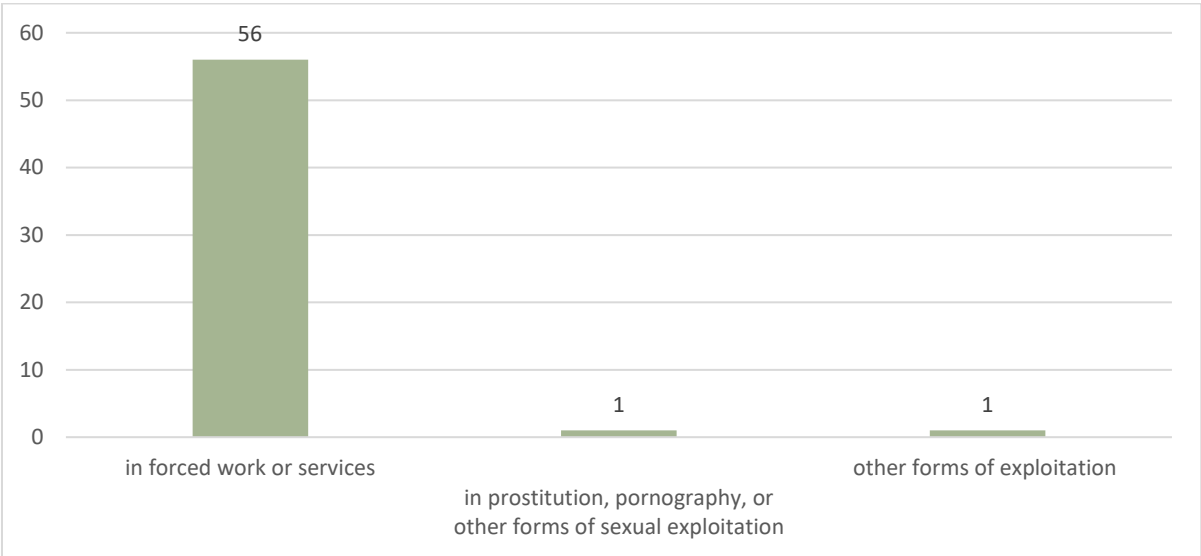
In 2023, the Border Guard identified 58 victims of human trafficking in Poland. Among them were 20 women and 38 men. No minor victims were identified during this year. The vast majority of victims identified were foreigners. In terms of forms of exploitation, as many as 56 people were victims of forced labour, while only one person was a victim of sexual exploitation and one experienced other forms of exploitation. Among the foreign victims identified, most came from Latin American countries, including Colombia (33 persons), Venezuela (11 persons) and Mexico (three individuals). These statistics indicate that in the cases identified by the Border Guard, human trafficking primarily affects men and is closely associated with forced labour. A significant portion of the victims consists of foreigners from South America.

Chart 6. The nationality of potential victims of human trafficking identified by the Border Guard in 2023.



Prepared on the basis of data provided by the National Headquarters of the Border Guard.

Chart 7. The nature of exploitation of potential victims of human trafficking in 2023.

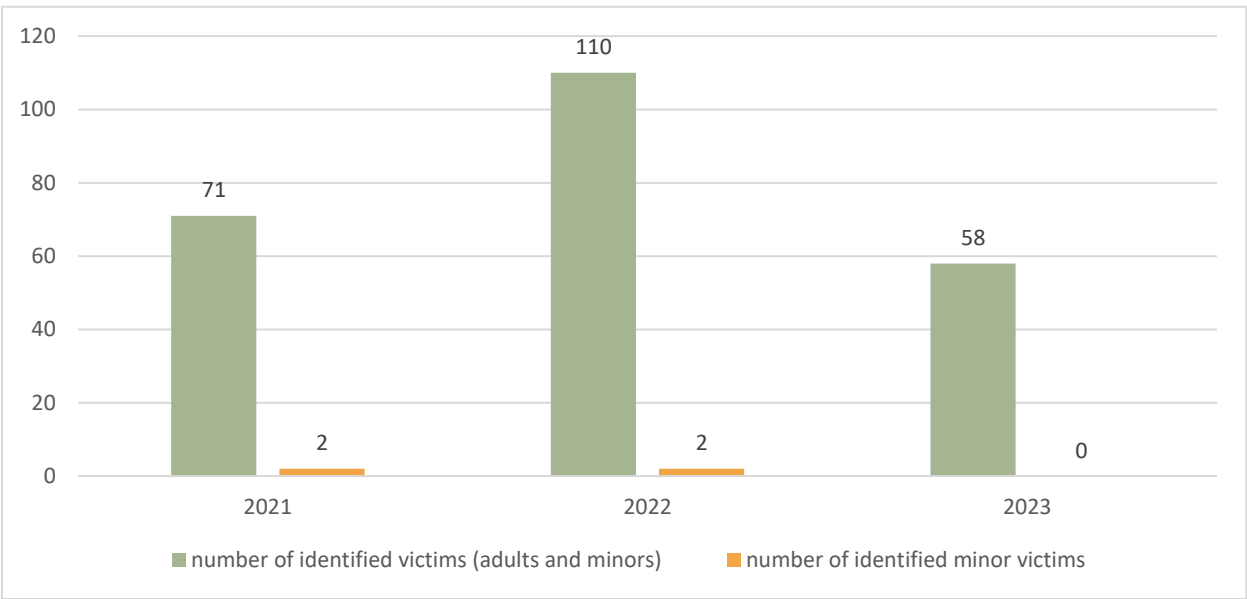


Prepared on the basis of data provided by the National Headquarters of the Border Guard.

In 2023, 7 new preparatory proceedings in cases of human trafficking were initiated: 3 from the domain of exploitation for forced labour, 2 from the domain of forced begging, 2 from the domain of sexual exploitation.

Following the analysis of the collected statistical data, a decline in the number of human trafficking victims disclosed was observed compared to 2022, when 110 alleged victims of human trafficking were identified. According to the assessment of the Chief Command of the Border Guard, the undertaken information and prevention campaign in the countries of origin and on the territory of Poland may have influenced the above. Additionally, the issue of human trafficking has also been addressed in publicly available media.

Chart 8. The number of potential victims of human trafficking identified in 2021 - 2023.



Prepared on the basis of data provided by the National Headquarters of the Border Guard.

Example proceedings/investigation:

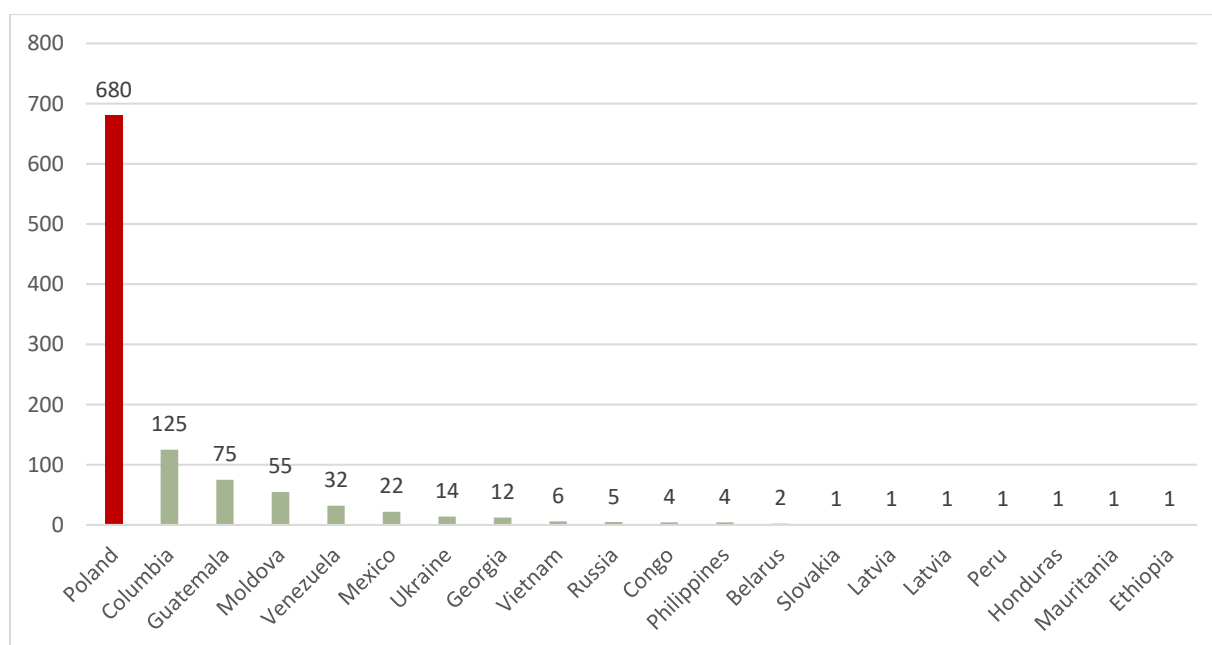
“...Criminal proceedings against a Moldovan female national who, between 8 March and 23 May 2023 in various locations of the province....., acting with the aim of gaining pecuniary benefits, having previously misled three Moldovan nationals as to her intention to obtain as to the intention to obtain documents for them to stay and work on the territory of the Republic of Poland recruited and transported them under the guise of taking up legal employment, where, taking advantage of the caused forced position of the victims and their helplessness resulting from their stay in a foreign country, without knowledge of the local language, as well as without the financial means necessary to meet their basic living needs and to reimburse the travel expenses and the cost of the accommodation she rented for them at the same time, in order to use them in forced labour.....”

Source: Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Border Guards

Public Prosecutor's Office

In 2023, the National Prosecutor's Office recorded 1,043 victims of human trafficking in Poland, which means a significant increase compared to previous years. The group of identified victims included 11 minors. In terms of forms of exploitation, 341 persons were victims of forced labour, 22 were victims of sexual exploitation and 680 experienced other forms of exploitation. A significant part of the victims identified were Polish citizens - 680 persons. The most numerous group of foreign victims comprised citizens of Guatemala (75 persons), Venezuela (32 persons) and Colombia (125 persons). In 2023, 45 suspected perpetrators of human trafficking were recorded.

Chart 9. The country of origin of adult victims in 2023.



Prepared on the basis of data provided by the National Public Prosecutor's Office.

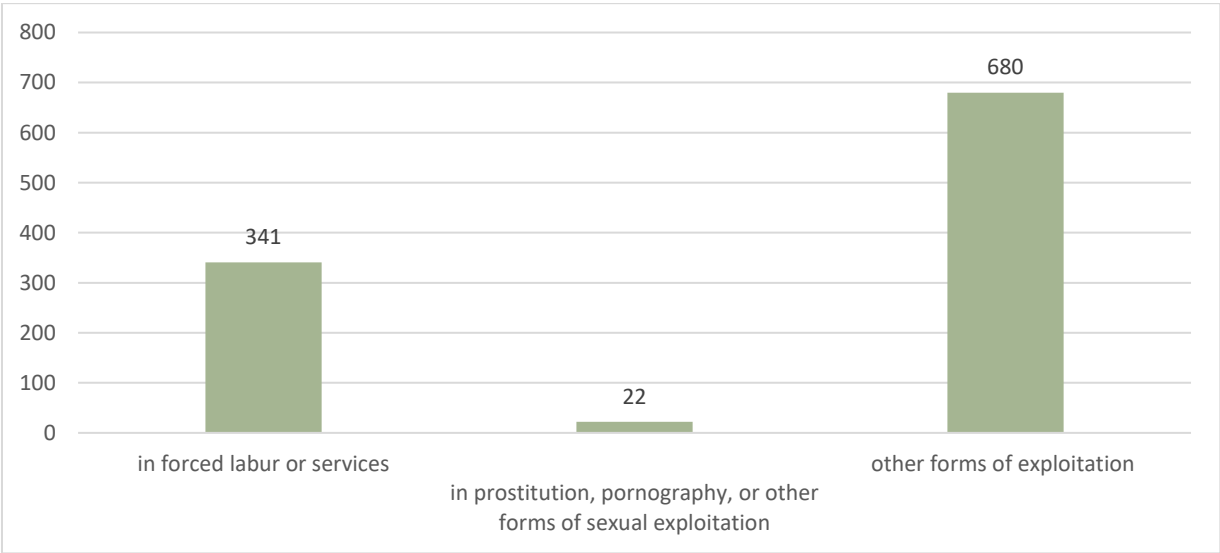
In 2023, the National Public Prosecutor's Office recorded a significant increase in the number of identified victims of human trafficking, which was associated with ongoing investigations concerning the use of Polish nationals to extort social benefits in the United Kingdom.

Criminal groups forced their victims to submit false applications for social welfare benefits. Criminals took control of the victims' documents and bank accounts, depriving them of the ability to make free decisions about themselves.

This case has contributed to a significant increase in statistics, especially in the category of “other forms of exploitation”, where 680 victims were recorded, majority of whom were Polish citizens. This shows that human trafficking can take many forms, not necessarily limited to forced labour or sexual exploitation.

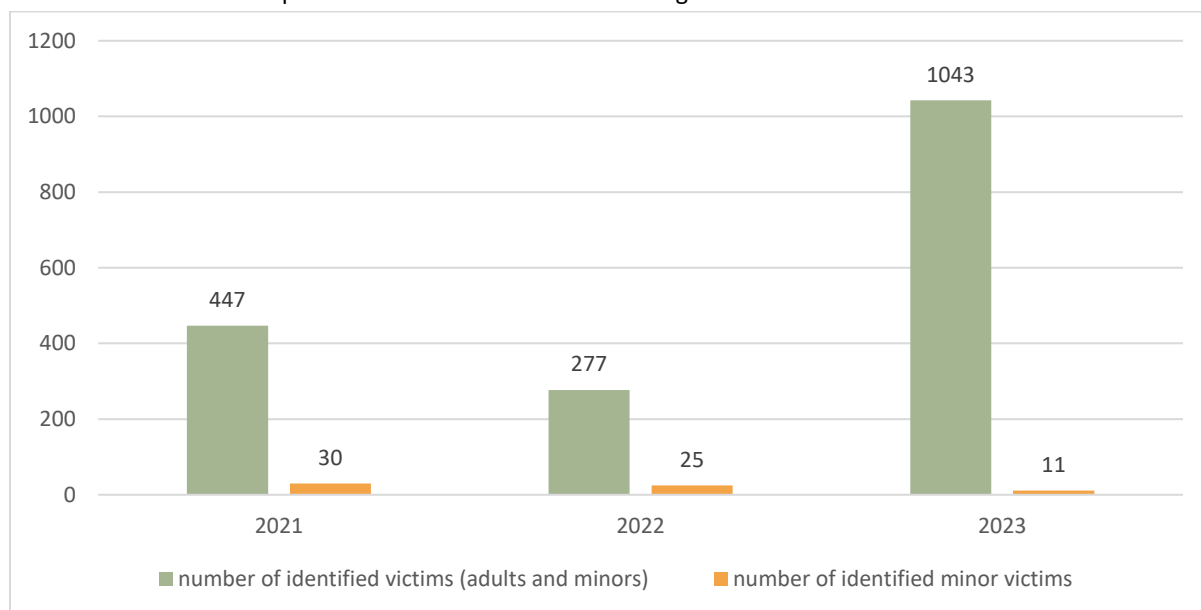
This case highlights the need to raise awareness of the various forms of trafficking and to strengthen international cooperation in combating this type of cross-border crime.

Chart 10. The nature of the exploitation of victims in 2023.



Prepared on the basis of data provided by the National Public Prosecutor’s Office.

Chart 11. The number of potential victims of human trafficking identified in 2021 - 2023.



Prepared on the basis of data provided by the National Public Prosecutor's Office.

Ministry of Justice

According to data provided by the Ministry of Justice, in 2023, the Justice Fund granted 21 victims affected by the crime of human trafficking assistance.

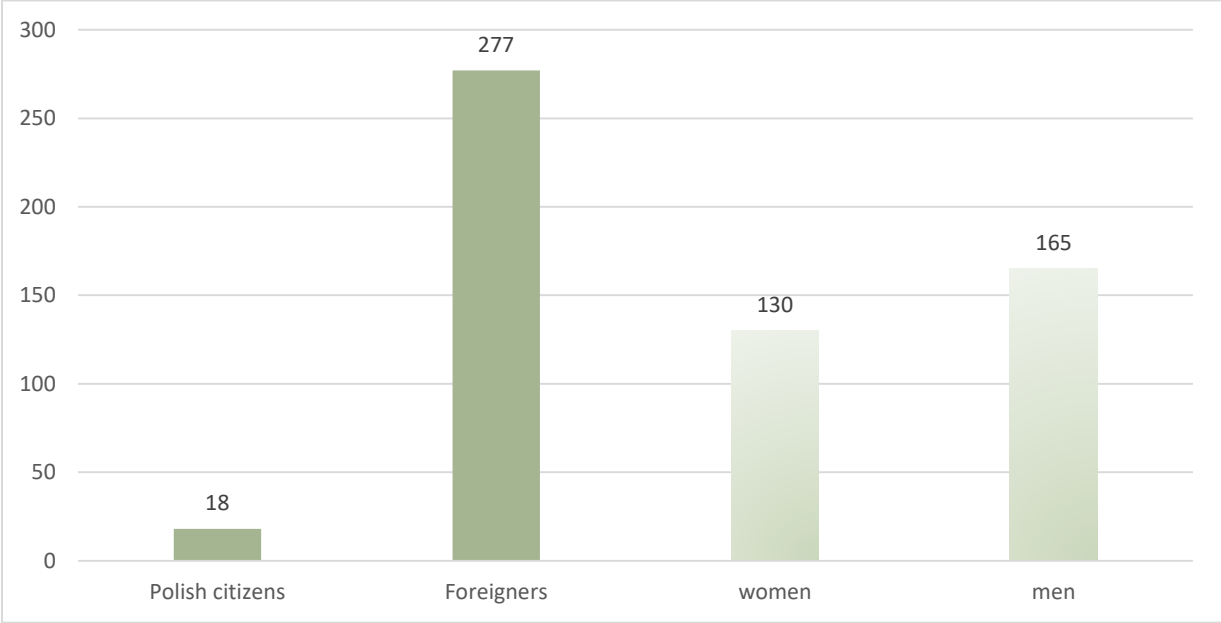
The assistance included:

- legal aid in the amount of 87 hours,
- psychiatric, psychological, psychotherapeutic and support group assistance - the total of 68.5 hours,
- material assistance in the total amount of PLN 6,653.00.

National Consulting and Intervention Centre for the Victims of Trafficking

According to the data provided by KCIK for victims of human trafficking, 295 people (18 Polish citizens and 277 foreigners), including 15 minors, benefited from the centre's support in 2023. 130 women and 165 men were supported.

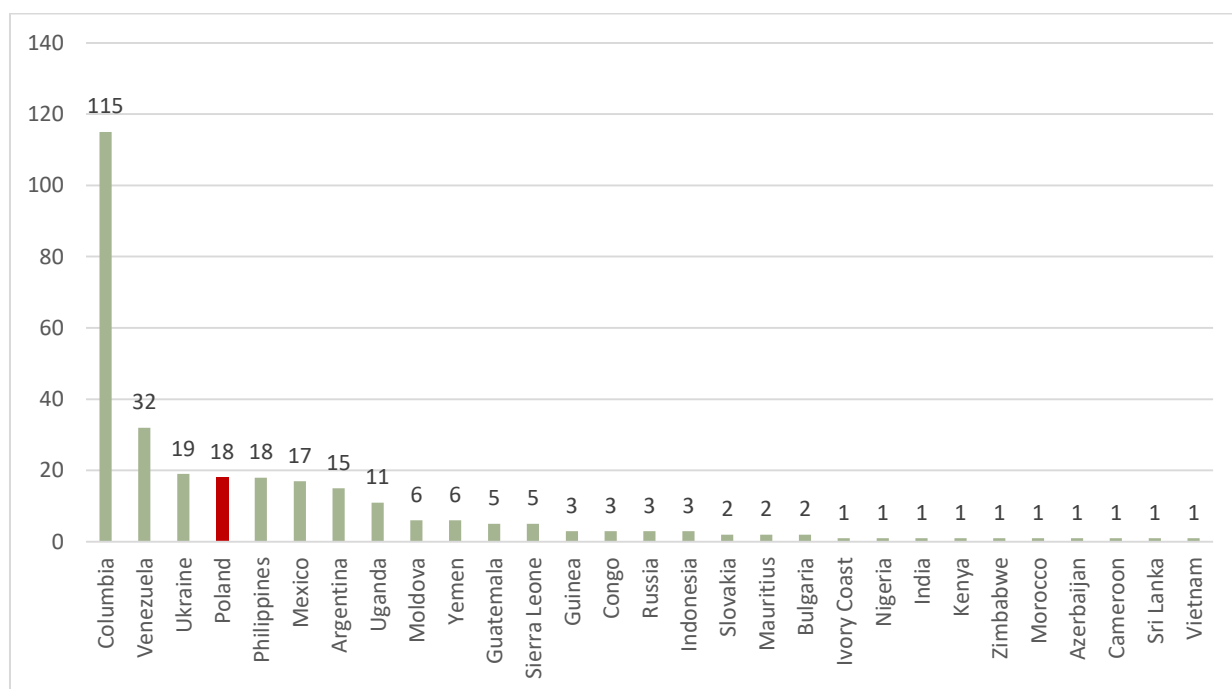
Chart 12. The number of people assisted by KCIK in 2023 divided by citizenship and gender.



Prepared on the basis of data provided by KCIK.

In 2023, KCIK assisted victims coming from many different countries. The largest group came from Latin America, particularly Colombia (115 persons), Venezuela (32) and Mexico (17). Citizens of Ukraine (19 individuals) and Poland (18) constituted a significant group. The victims were also people from African countries (e.g. Uganda, Sierra Leone, Guinea) and Asian countries (Philippines, India). These figures show the global nature of the human trafficking problem and the fact that Poland is both a destination and a transit country for victims of this crime. The diversity of the victims' countries of origin confirms the complexity of the phenomenon and the need for international cooperation in the fight against human trafficking. The activity of KCIK plays a key role in providing the support and protection to victims, regardless of their nationality or country of origin.

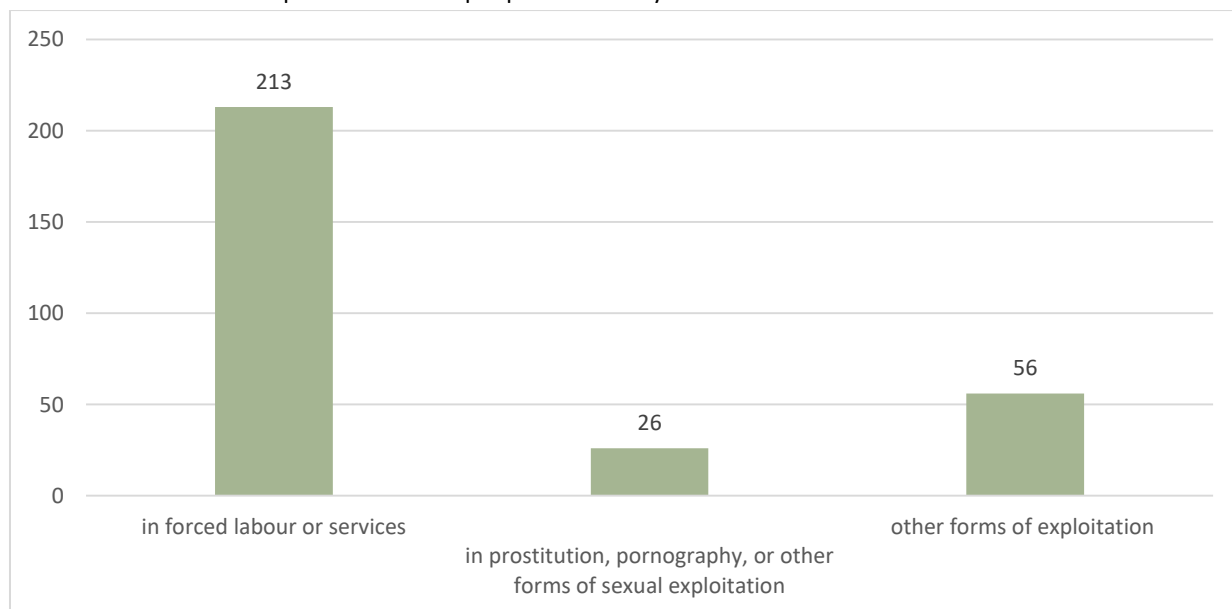
Chart 13. The number and country of origin of the people assisted by KCIK in 2023.



Prepared on the basis of data provided by KCIK..

The prevailing forms of exploitation were forced labour and sexual exploitation. Individuals were also used for domestic slavery, forced marriages or begging.

Chart 14. The forms of exploitation of the people assisted by KCIK in 2023.



Prepared on the basis of data provided by KCIK.

According to the statistical data at the disposal of the Department of Social Assistance of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy (published in the departmental report MRiPS-03), in 2023, due to the need to protect victims of trafficking in human beings, social assistance covered 99 families.

Pursuant to Article 5a of the Act of 12 March 2004 on social assistance, 27 foreign victims of trafficking in human beings were supported in 2023, including:

- 27 foreigners received a purpose-specific benefit in the form of cash,
- 2 foreigners received assistance in kind (shelter, meal, necessary clothing).

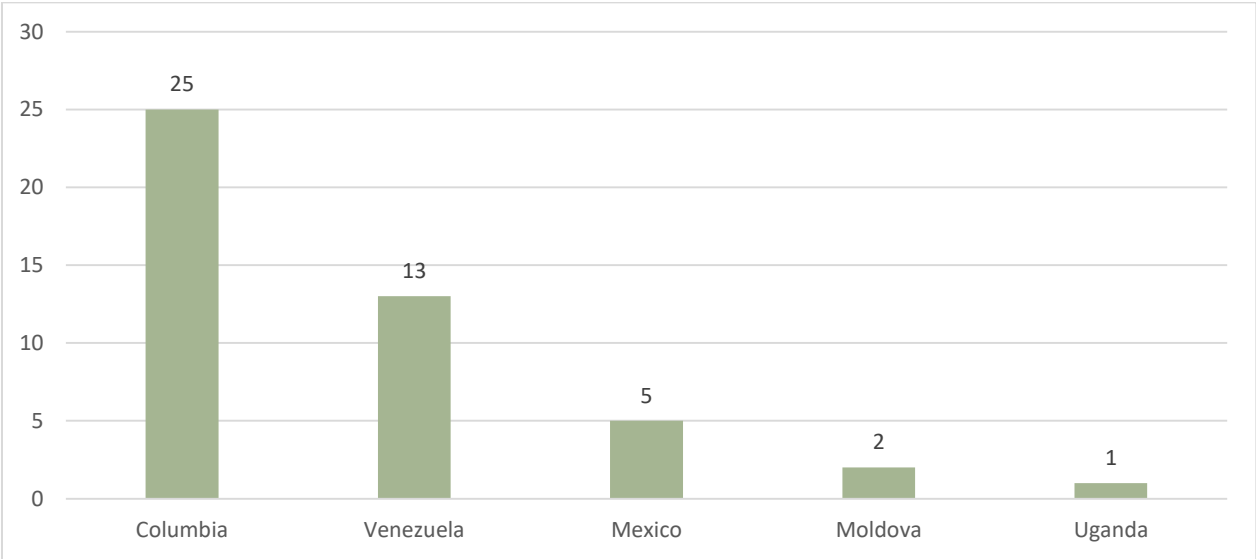
As of 31 December 2023, there are 170 crisis Intervention Centres in Poland (OIKs), of which 27 OIKs are prepared to receive victims of trafficking in human beings.

Office for Foreigners

“Procedure for Employees of the Office for Foreigners Processing Applications for International Protection in Cases of Preliminary Identification of a Foreigner as a Victim of Trafficking in Human Beings” applies in the Office for Foreigners. The procedure regulates the proceedings in the case of identification of a victim of human trafficking by both the employees processing the aforementioned applications and the employees of the Department of Social Welfare.

While the employees of the Office have tentatively identified 12 individuals as potential victims of human trafficking, competent authorities have not yet confirmed that they were officially identified as victims of human trafficking. These persons are nationals of Cameroon, Guinea and Ukraine (gender: 4 men and 8 women).

Chart 15. Number of persons who have been granted a temporary residence permit under Article 176 of the Act on Foreigners for victims of human trafficking in 2023.



Compiled from UdsC data.

4. Informational and educational activities implemented in 2023.

In 2023, the activities of the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, other ministries, state institutions and non-governmental organisations were largely affected by the consequences of the Russian aggression against Ukraine. In response to this situation, a number of coordinated initiatives targeting various audiences have been implemented. They comprised war refugees from Ukraine as well as people from South America and the general Polish population. Special attention was paid to social and professional groups that are more exposed to the risk of human trafficking. These groups included teenagers, the unemployed and foreigners searching for work in Poland. The aim of these activities was to raise awareness of the threat of human trafficking and to provide adequate protection and support to potential victims, especially in the context of increased migration caused by the armed conflict.

4.1. Selected important projects

Information and education campaign on the Internet

In the period from 16 October to 2 November 2023, the Ministry of the Interior and Administration conducted an online information and education campaign aimed at raising public awareness of the phenomenon of human trafficking, particularly in the area of forced labour. The campaign consisted of broadcasting of a 30-second clip on the topic of human trafficking with information on where to seek help on social media (YouTube, Facebook, Instagram ,Twitter/X). The campaign was targeted at 16-45 year olds, citizens of Poland, Ukraine and Latin American countries. The campaign reached an audience of more than 2 million people.

Escape room

In 2023, the Border Guard, in cooperation with the Dutch Embassy, the University of Wrocław, the Dutch Police and the National Police Headquarters, participated in the project developed in the framework of the established Human Trafficking Research Centre. The project was carried out in 3 cities Warsaw, Cracow and Wrocław with the participation of the media, secondary school students, the Police and Border Guard officers. It was primarily aimed at educating the public on how to prevent becoming a potential victim of human trafficking, increasing knowledge of the crime, and experiencing the same emotions as victims of human trafficking. The issue was presented in the form of an escape room prepared on a special truck designed for this purpose.



Photo: Police, Escape truck, Warsaw

Preventive actions taken in the regions

Provincial Anti-Human Trafficking Teams regularly organised events addressed to the general public or to particular professional and social groups. Details of activities undertaken in regions can be found in the report on the implementation of the National Action Plan Against Human Trafficking (NAP) in 2023 at:

<https://www.gov.pl/web/handel-ludzmi/krajowy-plan-dzialan-przeciwko-handlowi-ludzmi-na-lata-2022-2024>

5. Legal grounds

National law



Poland has developed a number of national law regulations related to countering human trafficking. The Polish legal grounds for combating human trafficking include:

The concept of human trafficking has been captured as a three-element definition, which consists of: the manner of action of the perpetrators, the means and methods used by them and the purpose of exploitation of a person.

Pursuant to Article 115 §22 of the Criminal Code (hereinafter referred to as CC):

“Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, delivery, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of a person using:

1. violence or an unlawful threat;
2. abduction;
3. deception;
4. misinformation or the exploitation of a mistake or the inability to properly comprehend the action taken;
5. abuse of a relationship of dependence, taking advantage of a critical position or a state of helplessness;
6. giving or accepting a material or personal benefit, or the promise thereof to or from a person having custody of, or supervision over, another person;

- for the purpose of exploitation of that person, even with their consent, particularly in prostitution, pornography, or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, begging, slavery, or other forms of exploitation that are degrading to human dignity, or for the purpose of obtaining cells, tissues, or organs in violation of law.

If the perpetrator’s behaviour involves a minor, it constitutes human trafficking, even if the methods or means listed in points 1 - 6 are not used.”

On the other hand, the last paragraph of the cited legal regulation refers only to situations where the victim is a child. Accepting the need to provide special protection to minor victims, the legislator has limited the legal qualification of the perpetrator’s act to the aim of their action only. Thus, in the case of minor victims, the second element of the definition (relating to the methods and means) does not have to be identified for an act to qualify as human trafficking.

In Poland, according to Article 189a of the Criminal Code:

§ 1 Whoever commits trafficking in human beings shall be punished with imprisonment from 3 to 20 years.

§ 2 Whoever makes preparations for the commission of the crime specified in § 1 shall be subject to the penalty of imprisonment for 3 months to 5 years.

Human trafficking is one of the crimes that do not occur on its own, but coexist with others, i.a.:

- against sexual freedom and morality;
- violation of bodily integrity, bodily harm;
- against the rights of persons engaged in gainful employment;
- participation in and leadership of an organised crime group;
- fraud;
- against freedom;

- against the reliability of documents;
- illegal border crossing;
- simple and violent theft.

Act on Foreigners (Journal of Laws 2024, item 769)

The legal act that ensures compliance with the law applicable to, among others, counteracting human trafficking is the Act on Foreigners of 12 December 2013.

The Act on Foreigners (hereinafter referred to as AOF) defines the rules on the entry, transit, and stay of foreigners in the territory of the Republic of Poland, as well as the departure of foreigners from that territory. The Act specifies the procedure to be followed and the authorities competent in these matters. It indicates, among others, that:

- a foreigner who is presumed to be a victim of human trafficking within the meaning of Article 115§22 of the CC shall be issued a certificate confirming the existence of such a presumption [Article 170 of the AOF];
- the stay in the territory of the Republic of Poland of a foreigner presumed to be a victim of human trafficking shall be considered legal for the period of validity of the certificate referred to in Article 170 of the AOF issued to that foreigner. The stay of a foreigner to whom the certificate has been issued shall cease to be considered legal as soon as the minister competent for the interior records information in the relevant register that the foreigner: actively, voluntarily, and on their own initiative, re-established contacts with persons suspected of committing the crime of human trafficking (Article 189a§1 of the CC) or crossed or attempted to cross the national border in violation of the law;
- the certificate issued by the authority competent to prosecute the crime of human trafficking (Article 189a§1 of the CC) shall be valid for a period of 3 months from the date of its issuance, and in the case of a minor foreigner - for a period of 4 months from the date of its issuance [Article 172 of the AOF];
- a temporary residence permit for a foreigner who is a victim of human trafficking shall be granted after all of the following conditions have been met: they reside in the territory of the Republic of Poland; they have cooperated with the authority competent to prosecute the crime of human trafficking (Article 189a§1 of the CC) and in the case of a minor foreigner, they have been granted the status of a victim in a case concerning the crime of human trafficking (Article 189a§1 of the CC); and they have severed contacts with persons suspected of committing the crime of human trafficking (Article 189a§1 of the CC). [Article 176 of the AOF];
- the minimum validity period of a temporary residence permit shall be 6 months [Art. 177 of the AOF];
- a permanent residence permit shall be granted to a foreigner for an indefinite period of time in response to their application, if: they are a victim of human trafficking within the meaning of Article 115§22 of the CC and: they have resided in the territory of the Republic of Poland immediately before applying for the permanent residence permit for a period of no less than 1 year on the basis of a temporary residence permit for victims of human trafficking, have cooperated with law enforcement authorities in criminal proceedings in a case concerning the crime of human trafficking (Article 189a§1 of the CC) and has a well-founded fear of returning to their country of origin [Article 195(1)(5) of the AOF].

Article 68. 1. If an application for international protection concerns a person who may be vulnerable, in particular a person being:

6) a victim of human trafficking

- the Head of the Office shall assess whether that person is vulnerable in international protection or social assistance proceedings.

2. The applicant or the person on whose behalf the applicant is acting is considered to be vulnerable in terms of social assistance where there may be a need for:

1) accommodating them at a centre that:

a) is adapted to the needs of persons with disabilities;

b) provides accommodation in single rooms;

c) is intended exclusively for women or women with children;

2) placing them in a nursing and treatment facility, a nursing and care facility, or a hospice;

3) placing them in foster care that corresponds to the psycho-physical situation of these persons;

4) adjusting the diet according to their health status.

3. The Head of the Office, in order to assess whether the person referred to in section 1 is vulnerable, may order medical or psychological examinations, the cost of which shall be covered by the national budget from the part at the disposal of the minister competent for the interior, from the funds at the disposal of the Head of the Office.

4. If the Head of the Office does not order the medical or psychological examination referred to in section 3, they shall inform the person who may be vulnerable that they may, on their own initiative and at their own expense, undergo such an examination.

5. A person who has not consented to the medical or psychological examinations referred to in section 3 shall be considered a person who is not vulnerable.

6. The Head of the Office shall make the assessment referred to in section 1 immediately after the submission of an application for international protection and at any time until the completion of the proceedings, in case new circumstances concerning the applicant or the person represented by the applicant are revealed.

Article 69. 1. In the case of a foreigner who is a vulnerable person, the activities in the proceedings concerning granting of international protection shall be performed:

1) in conditions that ensure the foreigner's freedom of expression, in a manner tailored to their psycho-physical condition;

2) within a timeframe appropriate to their mental and physical state, designated taking into account the dates for the foreigner's use of the health services;

3) at the foreigner's place of residence, where it is justified by their health condition;

4) with the participation of a psychologist, a physician, or an interpreter, if necessary.

2. At the request of a foreigner who is a vulnerable person, in cases justified by their needs, the activities carried out in the proceedings concerning granting of international protection:

1) shall be performed by a person of the same sex;

2) shall be performed with the participation of a psychologist, a physician, or an interpreter of the sex indicated by the foreigner.

Article 69a. When providing social assistance to a foreigner who is a vulnerable person, the accommodation and food needs of such a person shall be taken into account.

Article 69b. When providing social assistance to a minor, the need to protect their interests is taken into account, in particular:

3) the safety and security matters, particularly where there is a risk that the minor is a victim of human trafficking.

Act on Social Assistance (Journal of Laws 2024, item 1283)

Another act of law that provides protection and includes the appropriate tools to meet the basic needs of Polish and foreign victims of human trafficking is the Act on Social Assistance of 12 March 2004 (hereinafter referred to as ASA).

The most important provisions of the Act that concern the issue of human trafficking state that:

- foreigners residing in the territory of the Republic of Poland on the basis of the certificate referred to in Article 170 of the AOF or on the basis of the permit referred to in Article 176 of the AOF shall be entitled to benefits in the form of crisis intervention, shelter, a meal, the necessary clothing, and a purpose-specific benefit [Article 5a of the ASA];
- social assistance shall be provided to individuals and families because of the need to protect victims of human trafficking [Article 7(7a) of the ASA];
- the tasks of the provincial governor include coordination, within the framework of the social assistance system, of the activities related to the prevention of human trafficking and the support provided to victims of human trafficking [Article 22 (15) of the ASA];

Act on the Entry into, Residence in and Departure from the Territory of the Republic of Poland of Nationals of the European Union Member States and their Family Members. (Journal of Laws 2024, item 633)

In accordance with Article 41a(1) of the Act on the Entry into, Residence in and Departure from the Territory of the Republic of Poland of Nationals of the European Union Member States and their Family Members, an EU citizen or non-EU family member who is deemed to be a victim of human trafficking within the meaning of Article 115 § 22 of the Criminal Code should receive a certificate confirming the

presumption that the person is a victim of human trafficking. The first certificate is valid for a period of 3 months, and in the case of a minor EU citizen or a minor family member who is not an EU citizen, for a period of 4 months from the date of its issuance (Article 41b(2)). According to Article 41b(3) of the aforementioned Act, another certificate may be issued for a period of at least 6 months, but no longer than for a period of 3 years, if the following conditions are met for an EU citizen or a member of their family:

- 1) they are staying in the territory of the Republic of Poland;
- 2) they have undertaken cooperation with the authority competent to conduct proceedings in the case of the offence referred to in Article 189a§1 of the Criminal Code and, in the case of a minor foreigner, they have been granted the status of a victim in proceedings in the case of the offence referred to in Article 189a§1 of the Criminal Code;
- 3) they have terminated any contacts with persons suspected of committing the offence referred to in Article 189a§1 of the Criminal Code.

These provisions are based on the relevant provisions from the Act on Foreigners, i.e. Articles 170-176.

Act on Assistance for Citizens of Ukraine (Journal of Laws 2024, item 167)

In 2022, the Act on Assistance for Citizens of Ukraine in Connection with the Armed Conflict on the Territory of that State was enacted. Its aim was creating a specific regulation providing an ad hoc legal basis for the legal stay of citizens of Ukraine who, because of hostilities, were forced to leave their country of origin and entered, with the appropriate entry authorisation, the territory of the Republic of Poland. The citizens of Ukraine referred to in paragraph 1 of this Act are recognised as persons enjoying temporary protection in the Republic of Poland within the meaning of Article 106(1) of the Act of 13 June 2003 on granting protection to foreigners within the territory of the Republic of Poland.

The regulations on human trafficking contained in the aforementioned Act are of a preventive nature and have strengthened the penalties provided for in the Criminal Code for committing this crime.

To quote the aforementioned regulations:

- Article 72. Convicting a perpetrator who, during the armed conflict on the territory of Ukraine, committed an offence referred to in:
 - 4) Article 189a §1 of the Act of 6 June 1997 - Criminal Code - the court shall impose a sentence of deprivation of liberty for 10 to 15 years or a sentence of 25 years of imprisonment.

Legislative Changes concerning Human Trafficking

The problem of human trafficking has recently become more and more visible, also affecting Poland. In response to this situation, the Ministry of Justice has decided to tighten the sanctions for this type of crime. On 1 October 2023, new legislation came into force significantly increasing the extent of penalties in the Criminal Code. The aim of these changes is to tackle human trafficking more effectively.

Pursuant to the new regulations:

Article 189a. §1. Whoever commits trafficking in human beings shall be subject to the penalty of imprisonment [for a term not shorter than 3 years] for a term from 3 to 20 years (previously the upper limit of the penalty was 15 years).

When those guilty of trafficking are proven to have acted with particular aggravation, the penalty can range from 5 to 25 years of imprisonment.

The European Commission initiated the process of modifying EU anti-trafficking regulations in 2022. The aim was to amend Directive 2011/36/EU which includes regulations on prevention and combating trafficking in human beings, protection of victims and further harmonisation of Member States' legislation by, among others, introducing the offence of knowingly using services provided by victims of trafficking in human beings and extending the definition of trafficking to include, among others, forced marriage and illegal adoption. Work on the amendment was continued in 2023, with the active participation of Poland. After the adoption of the directive Poland, as a member of the EU, will be required to amend its legislation accordingly to comply with the new rules.

Internal procedures

In order to increase the effectiveness of the activities carried out by authorities dealing with the crime of human trafficking, baseline procedures have been developed such as:

- Algorithm of Conduct of Law Enforcement Officers in Case of Revealing a Crime of THB,
- Algorithm for Identifying and Dealing with a Minor Victim of Human Trafficking for the Police and Border Guard officers,
- The procedure for employees of the Office for Foreigners processing applications for international protection in case of preliminary identification of a foreigner as a victim of human trafficking,
- Guidelines for labour inspectors with an accompanying list of indicators for identifying potential victims of human trafficking for forced labour.



International law

Poland is one of the numerous countries that actively counteract human trafficking; moreover, it also provides assistance and support for people who became the victims of this crime. It is a party to international law regulations, including:

[Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings](#)

[Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims](#)

[Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime](#)

[Council Directive 2004/81/EC of 29 April 2004 on the residence permit issued to third-country nationals who are victims of trafficking in human beings or who have been the subject of an action to facilitate illegal immigration, who cooperate with the competent authorities](#)

[Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly](#)

[Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly](#)

[United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others](#)

6. Summary



Poland faces the complex challenge of curbing human trafficking, which requires a comprehensive and multidimensional approach. Key measures should focus on strengthening prevention, improving the victim identification system and enhancing the prosecution of perpetrators.

In the area of prevention, it is essential to intensify informational and educational campaigns, targeting both the general public and vulnerable groups at risk of exploitation. These campaigns should take into account the specific nature of various forms of human trafficking, with particular emphasis on forced labour, which is the prevailing form of exploitation in Poland. It is also important to raise awareness among employers and recruitment agencies of their role in counteracting human trafficking.

Improvement of the victim identification system requires further training of law enforcement officers, social workers, labour inspectors and medical personnel. These trainings should cover the latest trends in human trafficking, victim identification methods and ways of providing support to them. Particular attention should be paid to identifying victims among migrants and refugees who are particularly vulnerable to exploitation.

In terms of prosecuting perpetrators, international cooperation needs to be strengthened, especially in the context of the cross-border nature of human trafficking. Poland should seek closer cooperation with the countries of origin of the victims, especially with Latin American countries, where a considerable number of the identified victims comes from. It is also important to increase efficiency in the prosecution of perpetrators through specialised training for prosecutors and judges and the use of modern investigation tools.

One of the major challenges facing Poland is the rapidly evolving geopolitical landscape and migration situation. The continuing conflict in Ukraine and tensions on the border with Belarus create new risks related to human trafficking. The large number of refugees and migrants increases the risk of their exploitation by criminal groups. In this context, it is crucial to develop effective mechanisms to protect individuals particularly vulnerable to exploitation.

Another major concern is the increasing use of new technologies by perpetrators of human trafficking. The internet and social media are increasingly being used to recruit victims and organise this practise. Poland needs to enhance its capacity in the scope of monitoring and counteracting these threats, which requires investment in modern technology and specialised training for law enforcement agencies.

Providing adequate support and protection to victims of human trafficking also remains a challenge. It is necessary to increase the availability of specialised shelters, medical and psychological services as

well as social and professional reintegration programmes. Particular attention should be paid to the support for minor victims of trafficking whose number is increasing.

Summing up, effective reduction of the phenomenon of human trafficking in Poland requires an integrated approach, combining prevention activities, effective identification of victims, efficient prosecution of perpetrators and comprehensive support for victims. It is also crucial to adapt the operating strategy to changing trends and risks, which requires continuous monitoring of the situation and a flexible response to new challenges. Only through the coordinated efforts of all institutions and organisations involved can Poland effectively counteract human trafficking and protect the rights of persons at risk of exploitation.

This report does not describe all the actions taken by institutions to combat human trafficking, therefore we encourage to read the report on the implementation of the NAP 2022-2024, available at:

<https://www.gov.pl/web/handel-ludzmi/krajowy-plan-dzialan-przeciwko-handlowi-ludzmi-na-lata-2022-2024>

7. The ABC of Help

Contact details of institutions and non-governmental organisations that provide assistance to victims of human trafficking

Ministry of the Interior and Administration

National Intervention and Consultation Centre for victims of human trafficking (KCIK)

As part of the public task entitled “Running the National Intervention and Consultation Centre for Victims of Human Trafficking” which aims to secure the needs of victims of human trafficking - Polish citizens, EU citizens, or foreigners, as well as persons at risk of becoming victims of this crime, a 24-hour helpline and preventive telephone counselling is provided.

Tel. +48 22 628 01 20

24/7 helpline

National Police Headquarters

Anti-Human Trafficking Department

Phone (22) 60-148-33 (office)

E-mail: handelludzmibsk@policja.gov.pl or call: **664 974 934**.

Police officers operate the hotline from 6 AM to 10 PM. During the night hours, reports on the crime and any information can be recorded on an answering machine and officers contact those interested in providing information.

In emergencies involving risks to life or health, the emergency numbers **112** or **997** should be called.

International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Poland

Poland has been a member of the IOM since 1992. The IOM's National Office in Warsaw has been operating since 2002 and runs projects in the scope of promoting and supporting regulated migration and integration of migrants, combating human trafficking, assistance in voluntary return and reintegration as well as information and training activities aimed at raising awareness of migration phenomena. IOM also provides direct support to persons with migration experience including those affected by the war in Ukraine.

Migrant Info Helpline: **22 490 20 44** - open Monday through Friday from 9 AM to 5 PM.

Foreigners interested in obtaining assistance with voluntary return are asked to call IOM staff at **666 34 34 66**,

or send an email message to: iomwarsawavr@iom.int

or use the online application system avr.iom.pl

Non-governmental organisations

La Strada - Foundation Against Human Trafficking and Slavery

Helpline: **+48 22 628 99 99*** (assistance, advice)

- Monday through Thursday from 9 AM to 6 PM
- Fridays from 9 AM to 2 PM

*Wednesdays from 2 to 6 PM, the person on duty speaks Russian

Telephone number for Vietnamese-speaking clients: **+48 22 621 56 18**

Foundation office: **+48 22 622 19 85** (administrative and office phone number)

E-mail: strada@strada.org.pl

<https://www.strada.org.pl/>

The "Po MOC" Mary Immaculate Association for Women and Children

Hotline: **511 801 161**

Information on possible assistance - pomoc@Po-MOC.pl

Association's Office: Phone: **+48 32 255 38 69**

E-mail: biuro@Po-MOC.pl

<https://www.po-moc.pl/pl>

Light House Foundation

E-mail: biuro@fundacjalighthouse.pl

Hotline: [+48 881 22 33 33](tel:+48881223333)

Salvation Army

E-mail: armia.zbawienia@armia-zbawienia.pl

Halina Niec Legal Aid Centre

E-mail: biuro@pomocprawna.org, porady@pomocprawna.org

Empowering Children Foundation

E-mail: <https://fdds.pl/szukasz-pomocy/>

Phone: **116 111** Child and Youth Helpline (open 24/7)

Phone: **800 100 100** – Phone number for parents and teachers on child safety

ITAKA Foundation - Centre for Missing People

Support line numbers

+48 22 654 70 70 - for calls from landline phones in Poland

+48 22 654 70 70 – for calls from abroad

+48 22 654 70 70 – for calls from cell phones

Caritas Polska

<https://caritas.pl/szukam-pomocy/>

You Can Free Us Polska (Czas Wolności)

E-mail: biuro@czaswolnosci.pl

Warsaw 2024

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Administration