



# **THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO ANNUAL REPORT ON TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (2022)**

Section 45 of the Trafficking in Persons Act Chapter 12:10 mandates the Minister with responsibility for National Security to lay before Parliament, an Annual Report on Trafficking in Persons in Trinidad and Tobago. This report examines the counter trafficking response of the country for 2022.

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## INTRODUCTION

Trafficking in Persons, commonly referred to as "*trafficking in human beings, human trafficking, or modern-day slavery*," is recognized as one of the most heinous crimes against a person. Every country in the world is affected by human trafficking, either as a source country from where victims are procured or recruited; a transit country through which victims are transported or transferred; or a destination country where victims are held and exploited by traffickers.

The Covid-19 pandemic that battered the economies of countries across the globe since 2020 increased the vulnerabilities of already marginalized populations making them more susceptible to the guiles of human traffickers. The crime of trafficking in persons and the identification of victims became more difficult to detect as traffickers moved their operations online and into private homes and apartments. More young people were lured into sex trafficking having been groomed online by traffickers who took advantage of all the social media platforms increasingly used by the younger generation.

The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, provides the first internationally accepted definition of Trafficking in Persons.

Article 3, paragraph (a) of the Protocol states that trafficking in persons "*shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.*"

Trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual exploitation (sex trafficking) or for forced labour (labour trafficking) which includes domestic servitude, continue to be the two main forms of exploitation.

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO CONTEXT

Trinidad and Tobago became a signatory to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (TIP Protocol) supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2001, and ratified the Protocol on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2007. Domestic legislation to give effect to the TIP Protocol was created through The Trafficking in Persons Act (the TIP Act), which was assented to by Parliament on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2011 and enacted on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2013 thereby making the act of trafficking in persons a serious criminal offence in this country.

Trinidad and Tobago is considered a source, transit and destination country for the trafficking of men, women and children mainly for sexual exploitation and forced labour, however, it is mainly a destination country. The data collected since 2013 show that migrants are the most vulnerable to human trafficking in Trinidad and Tobago with ninety-nine percent (99%) of all victims being foreign nationals and Venezuelan nationals being the most impacted. Sexual exploitation in the form of forced prostitution and sexual servitude has been the pervading form of exploitation and young women and girls the most exploited.

### Responding to Trafficking in Persons

Trafficking in persons is a criminal offence in Trinidad and Tobago and efforts to eliminate the exploitation of persons have been undertaken to eradicate this shameful crime. The Counter Trafficking Unit (CTU) was established on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2013 in accordance with Section 11 of the TIP Act to implement the provisions of the legislation and begin investigating cases of trafficking in persons, identifying, and assisting victims, prosecuting offenders, and raising awareness among the populace about the crime.

The National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons (NTFATIP) was established in July 2014 in accordance with Section 5 of the TIP Act. Its mandate is to develop policies, direct the strategic counter trafficking response of the country and measure and evaluate the progress of Trinidad and Tobago in preventing human trafficking, protecting, and assisting victims, prosecuting perpetrators, and assess the effectiveness of public awareness programmes.

### Reporting Requirements under the Trafficking in Persons Act

Section 45 of the TIP Act requires that an annual report on trafficking in persons be laid in Parliament by the Minister responsible for National Security. The report and shall include:

- a) The number of identified victims
- b) The number of initiated investigations
- c) The number of persons arrested
- d) The number of commenced prosecutions and their outcomes
- e) Any other pertinent matter which the Minister considers necessary.

The 2022 Annual Report on Trafficking in Persons examines Trinidad and Tobago's counter-trafficking response within the '4-P Framework'—Prevention, Protection, Prosecution, and Partnerships. The data findings in this report might be impacted by the following factors: under- or inconsistent identification of victims of human trafficking, confidentiality concerns affecting the reporting of some variables, or general lack of available information.

## PREVENTION

Preventing trafficking in persons necessitates informing and educating the population about the crime of trafficking, how it affects communities and the guiles employed by the traffickers to enslave individuals. Initiatives include public awareness campaigns through the engagement of multiple-media channels, including press, radio, and television, as well as seminars, workshops, and presentations. It also requires well-trained staff capable of identifying vulnerabilities, recognizing trafficking victims, and disrupting the operations of traffickers.

### 1.1 National Plan of Action

The National Plan of Action (NPA) for the period 2021 and beyond was still awaiting approval and implementation. The NPA included key measures for:

- Prevention of trafficking in persons and trafficking of children
- Identification, assistance, and protection of victims
- Prosecution of traffickers
- Fostering partnerships and collaboration

### 1.2 Public Outreach

The CTU continued its public outreach to keep the populace aware of human trafficking and concerned enough about eliminating the phenomenon.

In the lead up to World Day Against Trafficking in Persons celebrated on July 30th every year, staff of the CTU appeared on local television stations (TTT and CNC3) to discuss issues surrounding human trafficking. They also participated in discussions on human trafficking on radio talk show programmes at Radio 91.9 FM, Radio 103.1 FM and Radio 102.1 FM.

On World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, the CTU and other stakeholders including the Ministry of Labour, the International Organization for Migration and the Franciscan Institute hosted information booths at the Brian Lara Promenade engaging with the public to inform them about human trafficking, anti-human trafficking initiatives being undertaken, and support rendered to victims of human trafficking.

### 1.3 Sensitization Campaigns

In fulfilling its mandate of enhancing awareness on human trafficking, the Counter Trafficking Unit (CTU) conducted sensitization sessions for over twelve hundred participants at various agencies shown in Table 1:

**Table 1: Sensitization Sessions**

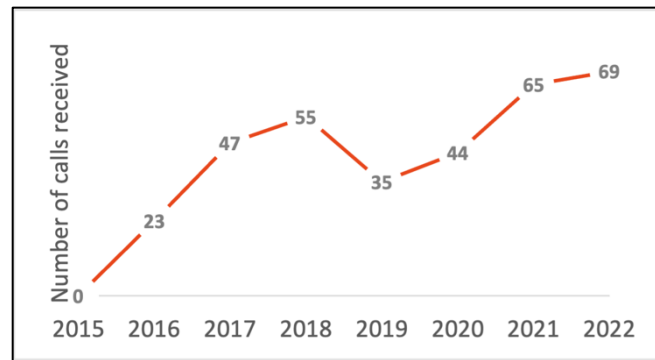
Organization	# of Participants
Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard	80
Trinidad and Tobago Police	35
Employees of State entities	219
Employees of Non-Governmental Organizations	55
Employees of the private sector	92
Secondary School	752
<b>Total</b>	<b>1233</b>

The CTU partnered with the Living Water Community and the RYU Dan Foundation to host joint training sessions with the migrant community to raise awareness about human trafficking, the red flags to look for and how to protect themselves against human trafficking.

#### 1.4 CTU Hotline 800-4CTU

The toll-free hotline 800-4CTU was launched in March 2015 to enable members of the public or victims to report suspected trafficking in persons. The hotline was designed to receive tips about potential situations of human trafficking to initiate an investigation by law enforcement. In 2022, the hotline received sixty-nine (69) calls, underscoring its purpose and intention in serving as a crucial tool in the identification and reporting of potential trafficking cases. Chart 1 shows the number of calls received since inception:

**Chart 1: Number of Calls Received by Hotline (2015-2022)**



#### 1.5 Social Media

The utilization of social media networks has become a primary means for people to engage in modern societies. The online landscape has, however, created new avenues for traffickers to identify, contact, and exploit victims through deceptive tactics.

In response, the CTU has established and actively maintains a social media presence on various platforms:

- **Facebook:** Counter Trafficking Unit TT
- **Twitter:** @CTU\_TT
- **Instagram:** @countertraffickingunit\_tt
- **YouTube:** Counter Trafficking Unit TT
- **Email (2):** [countertraffickingunit@mns.gov.tt](mailto:countertraffickingunit@mns.gov.tt) and [countertraffickingunit@gmail.com](mailto:countertraffickingunit@gmail.com).

These channels serve as vital tools for disseminating information regarding human trafficking and the activities of the CTU to the public. Moreover, they provide members of the public with opportunities to interact with the Unit, allowing them to comment, pose questions, or submit reports. In 2022, daily posts were made on anti-human trafficking initiatives, how members of the public could protect themselves against human trafficking and how to report suspected cases of human trafficking.

#### 1.6 Staff Training

The police officers attached to the CTU participated in Interpol's Awareness Raising Session on online child sexual exploitation and the Commonwealth Secretariat PCVE Strategic and Reintegration Communication Co-Design Workshop. The CTU officers had the opportunity to present at several local and international conferences hosted by the UNODC, the IOM and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

## 1. PROTECTION

Protection efforts include rescue, recognition, rehabilitation, and reintegration. It starts with identifying actual and potential victims of trafficking then providing suitable and adequate support for them. In determining if a case is one of trafficking in persons, investigators must examine if the situation experienced by the individual meets the definition of trafficking in persons. The definition of human trafficking presents three key elements, which must all be present to definitively identify a victim:

1. The **Action** which includes the recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining of an individual.
2. The **Means** through which the action takes place including force, fraud, deception, or coercion.
3. The specific **Purpose** of exploitation such as forced labor or services or commercial sex act(s) or sexual servitude.

In cases involving children under the age of eighteen (18) it is not necessary to demonstrate force, fraud, deception or coercion (the means).

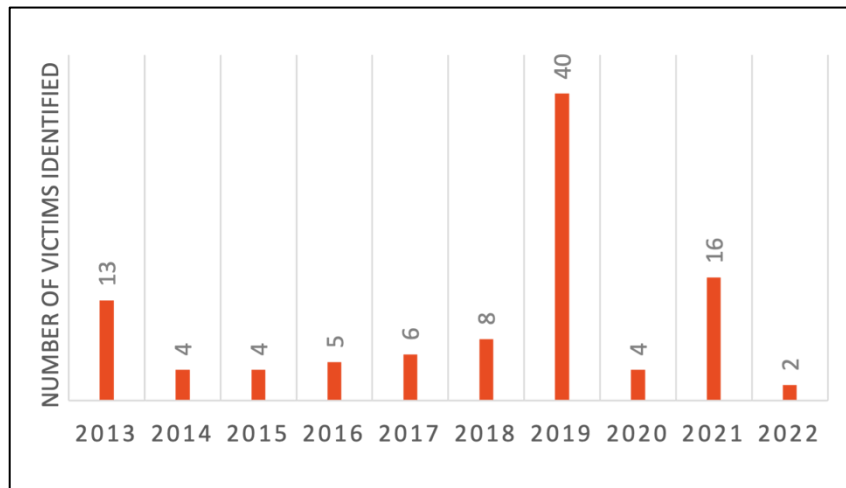
### 2.1 Investigations, Screening, and Identification of victims

In 2022, the CTU received one hundred and three (103) reports of suspected cases of human trafficking from sources including the Immigration Division, Police Stations, confidential informants, NGOs and the CTU hotline. Seven (7) exercises were conducted throughout the country based on the reports and eight (19) further investigations were initiated. During the exercises carried out across the country, forty-seven (47) persons were found in potentially exploitative situations. One hundred and twenty-six (126) persons were screened for human trafficking indicators of which fifteen (15) were deemed potential victims.

#### 2.1.1 Victim Identification

Following intensive investigations two (2) minor females from Venezuela, aged sixteen (16) and seventeen (17) were determined to be victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Since 2013 one hundred and two (102) victims of trafficking have been identified shown in Chart 2:

**Chart 2: Number of Identified Victims (2013-2022)**

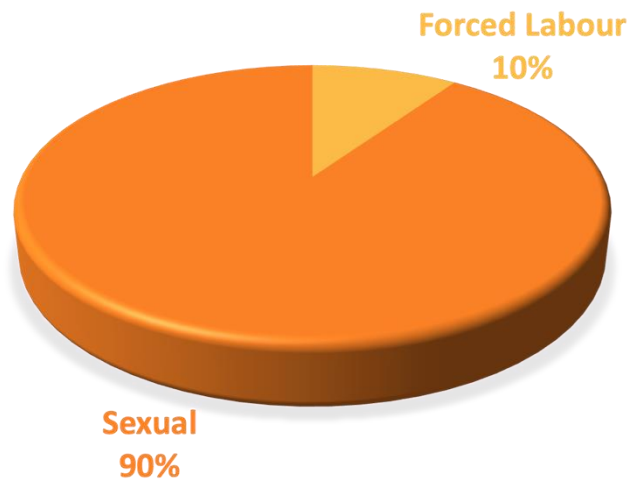




### 2.1.2 Exploitation by Type and Gender

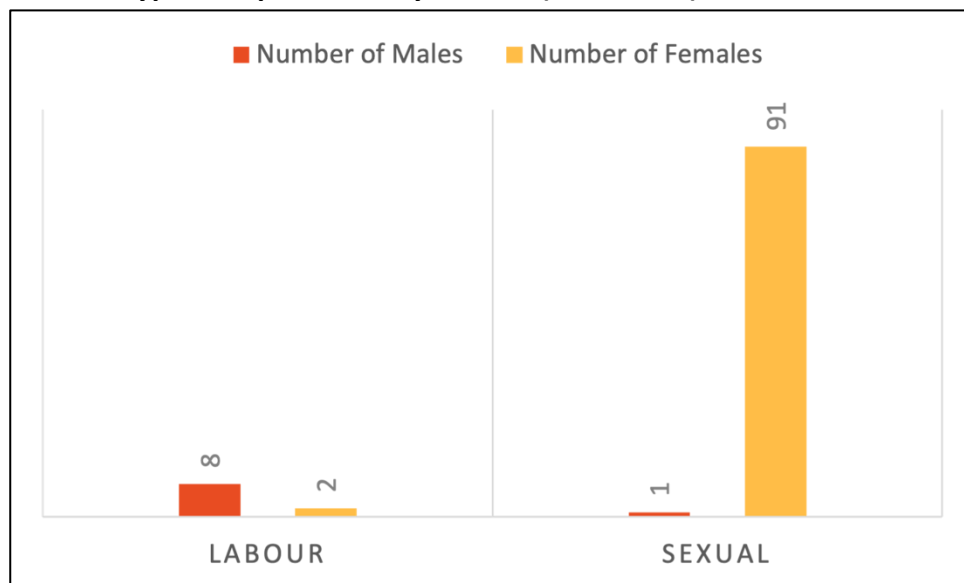
Globally, the main type of exploitation of trafficked victims is sexual exploitation and forced labour, including domestic servitude. In Trinidad and Tobago this trend of exploitation was well observed as the data showed that of the one hundred and two (102) victims identified for the period 2013-2022, ninety-two (92) have been subjected to sexual exploitation (including prostitution and sexual servitude) and ten (10) to forced labour (including two cases of domestic servitude).

**Chart 3: Type of Exploitation**



Women and girls have been the most vulnerable to trafficking as ninety-three (93) of the one hundred and two (102) victims were female- ninety-one (91) to sex trafficking and two to forced labour in the form of domestic servitude. Chart 4 shows this disturbing reality:

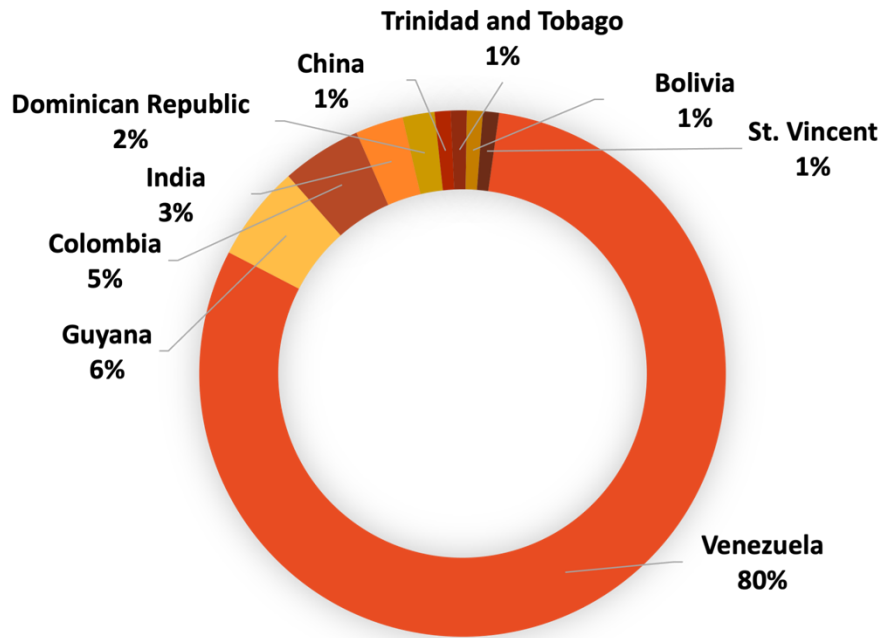
**Chart 4: Type of Exploitation by Gender (2013-2022)**



### 2.1.3 Nationality of Victims

Most detected victims of trafficking in persons are foreigners in the country of detection; migrants are more vulnerable to human trafficking with the majority trafficked regionally. This trend is observed in Trinidad and Tobago as ninety-nine percent (99%) of the victims identified have been foreign nationals shown in Chart 5. Of note is that eighty-one percent (81%) of all victims are Venezuelan nationals which can be linked to the unprecedented migration of Venezuelan nationals into Trinidad and Tobago.

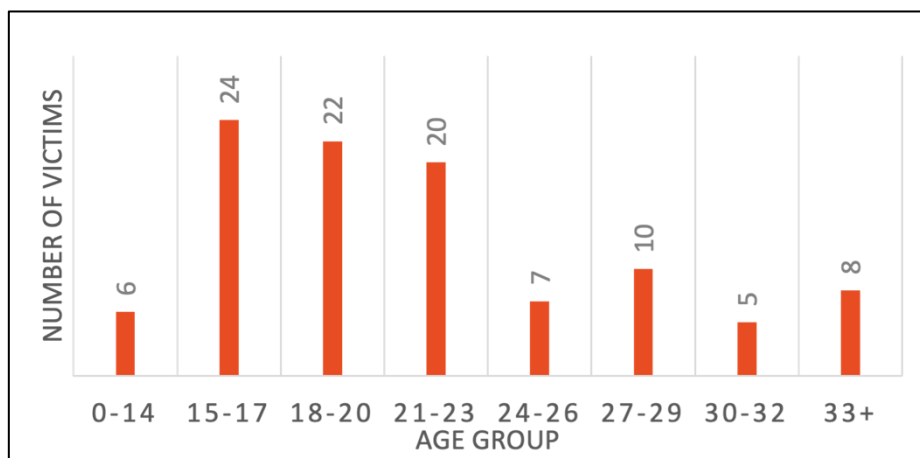
**Chart 5: Nationality of Victims**



### 2.1.4 Age of Victims

In 2022, the identified victims were aged sixteen (16) and seventeen (17) continuing the observed trend of minors being increasingly exploited in Trinidad and Tobago. Over the period 2013 to 2022, seventy-two (72) of the one hundred and two (102) victims were under the age of twenty-three (23). More disturbing is the fact that thirty (30) victims were minors with six (6) being under the age of fifteen. Chart 6 displays the age of all victims identified by the CTU since 2013:

**Chart 6: Age of Victims (2013-2022)**



## 2.2 Assistance

Providing assistance to and protecting victims of trafficking involves safeguarding their privacy and identity, as well as addressing their physical, psychological, and social needs. Key indicators such as age, gender, nationality, and the type of exploitation endured, guide the type of assistance required.

Part VI of the TIP Act sets out the assistance and protection to be provided to victims of trafficking most notably:

- all steps necessary to identify the victims of trafficking shall be taken,
- a victim of trafficking shall be given reasonable protection to prevent recapture,
- the victim shall have an opportunity to consult with an attorney-at-law or other appropriate persons or agency with respect to their rights, safety, and welfare,
- victims who are witnesses shall be eligible for witness protection,
- victims who are foreign nationals can receive appropriate housing, education, and training opportunities; psychological counselling; legal assistance and legal information; and medical assistance while they remain in T&T
- appropriate permits or other required authorization to allow the victims and dependents, to remain and work in Trinidad and Tobago for the duration of the criminal prosecution against the traffickers,
- safe return of the victims of trafficking who do not desire to remain in T&T, and any accompanying dependent children, to their countries of citizenship or lawful residence.

### 2.2.1 Accommodation

Accommodation for victims and suspected victims has been the greatest challenge for the CTU as there were no government shelters for victims of human trafficking and limited space at NGO-run facilities.

The International Organization for Migration contributed financial support specifically designated for accommodation and care supplies for forty victims. The Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (CATT) continued to care for the victims who were minors in keeping with their legal obligations and their commitments agreed to in the Memorandum of Understanding with the CTU.

### 2.2.2 Physical and Mental Well-Being

Once identified it became necessary to provide medical attention to victims and meet their personal needs including food, clothing, and intimate supplies. With most victims experiencing trauma, psychological counseling became a crucial component of rehabilitation. The Family Planning Association and various private professionals who volunteered their services to shelters and NGOs, also extended medical assistance and psychological counseling to the victims. The Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago played a vital role, providing accommodation, care, medical attention, and psychological counseling to the two minor victims of sex trafficking and sexual servitude. The Franciscan Institute donated vouchers to enable victims to personally purchase items they needed to facilitate a sense of normalcy to victims. The vouchers were for use at Xtra Foods grocery, Pennywise Cosmetics, Wonderful World and R.I.K Services.

## 2. PROSECUTION

Human trafficking is fueled by a demand for cheap labor, services, and commercial sex. Human Traffickers are those who employ force, fraud, or coercion to victimize others in their desire to profit from the existing demand. Prosecuting human traffickers is a key pillar in the fight against trafficking in persons and delivering justice to the victims. Prosecution involves identifying the perpetrators responsible for committing the crime of trafficking in persons and bringing them to justice. Perpetrators can be men and women, intimate partners, complete strangers to the victims, criminal organizations, business owners, peers, family members, diplomats, farm owners, factory operators, large or small companies, or gangs. Thorough investigation leading to the prosecution and punishment of traffickers provides justice to victims and discourages further trafficking crimes.

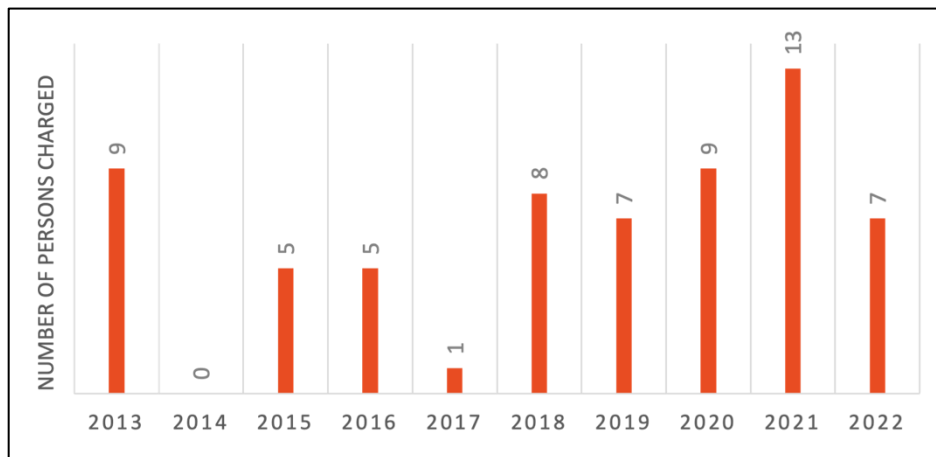
### 3.1 Arrests and Criminal Charges

In 2022, the CTU received one hundred and three (103) reports of suspected cases of human trafficking conducted seven (7) exercises throughout the country and initiated eight (8) further investigations. Twelve (12) persons were detained for questioning and seven (7) persons were subsequently charged with trafficking in children, sexual assault, and other related offences.

### 3.2 Persons Charged for Trafficking in Persons and Related Offences

The seven (7) persons charged in 2022 included one Chinese national and one Venezuelan national; the Chinese national was previously charged in 2019 for another human trafficking matter involving minors. These seven (7) brought the total number of persons charged for Trafficking in Persons and related offences since the enactment of the TIP Act in 2013 to sixty-three (63).

**Chart 7: Number of Persons Charged 2013- 2022**



### 3.3 Status of the court matters (2013-2022)

In 2022, one person was committed to stand trial at the High Court and one matter was discharged. Since 2013, nine (9) of the accused have been committed to stand trial at the High Court, seven (7) matters were dismissed, two (2) accused were killed, and one person pleaded guilty to immigration related offences in aiding and abetting a victim to enter the country illegally. All the other matters remain at the preliminary inquiry stage at the Magistrate's Court.

### 3.4 Charges Laid Against the Accused

While the Trafficking in Persons Act is the main legislation to charge perpetrators for the crime of trafficking in persons and trafficking in children, the offences committed against the victims may constitute a breach of other pieces of legislation including the Sexual Offences Act Chapter 11:28 and the Offences Against the Person Act Chapter 11:08. The nature of the charges proffered against the accused are set out in Table 2:

**Table 2: Charges Proffered**

CHARGE	LEGISLATION
Receiving for the purpose of exploitation	Trafficking in Persons Act Section 17
Receiving for the purpose of labour exploitation	Trafficking in Persons Act Section 16
Harbouring for the purpose of exploitation	Trafficking in Persons Act Section 16
Transporting for the purpose of exploitation	Trafficking in Persons Act Section 16
Recruiting a minor for the purpose of exploitation	Trafficking in Persons Act Section 18
Receiving a minor for the purpose of exploitation	Trafficking in Persons Act Section 18
Receiving a benefit for exploitation of a minor	Trafficking in Persons Act Section 26
Knowingly Receiving a benefit from exploitation of a minor	Trafficking in Persons Act Section 26
Inciting a child to engage in sexual activities	Sexual Offences Act
Sexual Penetration	Sexual Offences Act Section 19
Sexual intercourse with a female without consent	Sexual Offences Act Section 4
Sexual intercourse with a minor	Sexual Offences Act
Sexual penetration of a child	Children's Act Section 18
Grievous sexual assault	Sexual Offences Act Section 4A
Rape and indecent assault	Sexual Offences Act
Common assault	Offences Against the Persons Act Section 30
Assault of virtual complainant	Trafficking in Persons Act section 16
Keeping a brothel	Sexual Offences Act Section 22
Assisting in managing a brothel	Sexual Offences Act Section 22
Procuring a person for the purpose of prostitution	Sexual Offences Act 11:28 Section 17
Unlawful arrangement for adoption of a minor	Adoption of Children's Act Section 9 (2)
Possession of Firearm	Firearms Act- section 5 (1)
Possession of Ammunition	Firearms Act- section 5 (1)
Possession of Cocaine for the purpose of Trafficking	Dangerous Drugs Act- section 5 (4)
Possession of Marijuana	Dangerous Drugs Act- section 5 (1)
Being a Gang Leader, initiated, organized planned, financed directed and managed a gang related activity in the recruitment, transportation, transfer, received and harboured a child for the purpose of exploitation	Anti-Gang Act section 5(1)
Supporting a Gang Leader/gang in the commission of a Gang related activity namely Trafficking in children	Anti-Gang Act section 5(1)
Counselling a Gang Leader/Gang in the commission of a Gang related activity namely trafficking in children	Anti-Gang Act section 5(1)

### 3.5 Profile of the Accused: Gender, Nationality and Age

Seven persons— six men and one woman, were charged for trafficking in children and other related offences in 2022. One was a national of China, the female was a national of Venezuela and the other five were citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. Their ages ranged from twenty (20) to fifty (50) years old.

Since 2013, sixty-four (64) persons—twelve (12) females and fifty-two (52) males, have been charged for trafficking and other related offences.

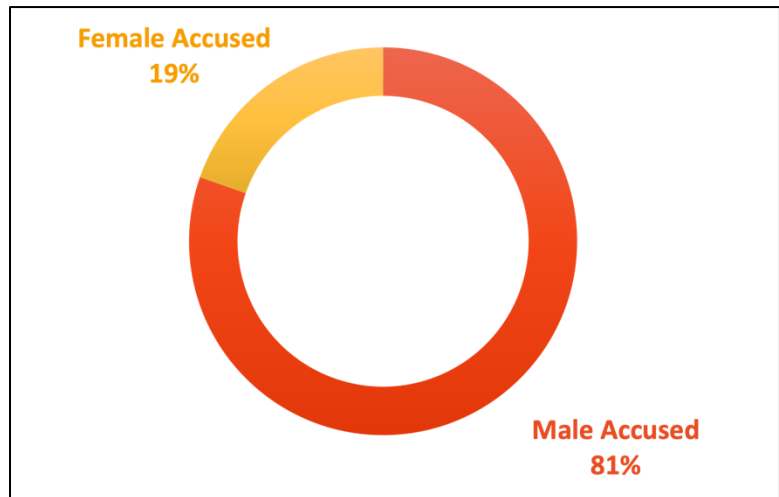


Chart 8: Gender of Accused (2013-2022)

Of the sixty-three (63) accused, three (3) were nationals of China, eleven (11) were nationals of Venezuela and forty-nine (49) were citizens of Trinidad and Tobago. Global findings show that traffickers are predominantly citizens of the country where the exploitation of victims takes place. In Trinidad and Tobago seventy-eight percent (78%) of the accused were citizens of this country.

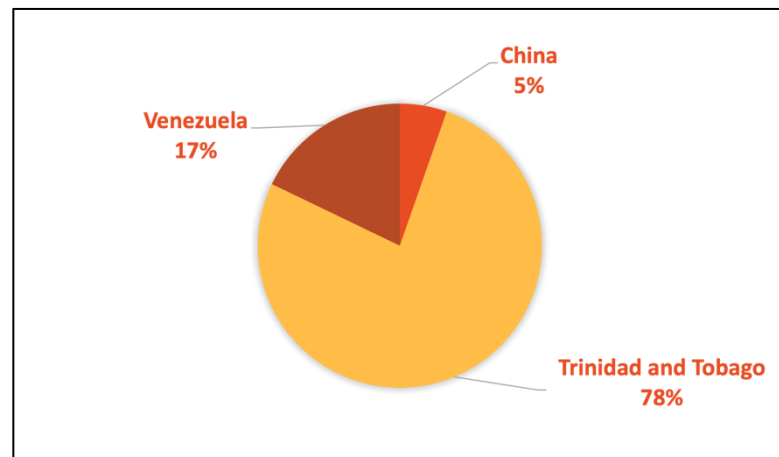


Chart 9: Nationality of Accused (2013-2022)

The accused ranged in age from twenty (20) to fifty-two (52) years old (\*based on available data). While the data shows that more persons in their early to mid-thirties have been accused of trafficking in persons and related offences, persons of all age groups have been suspected of being involved in this nefarious activity.

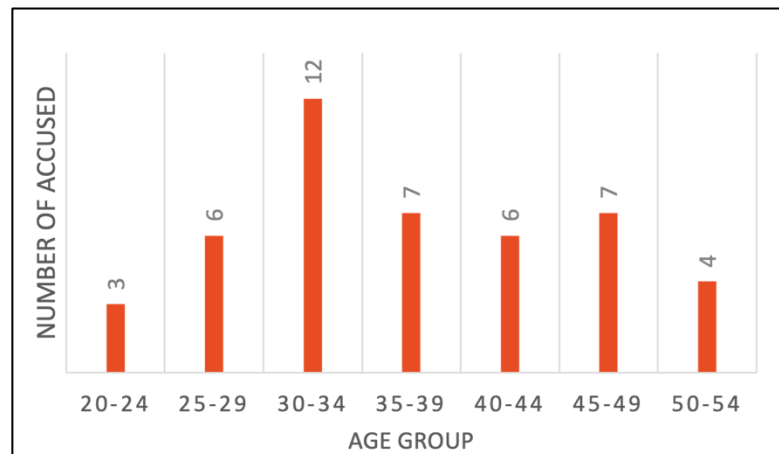


Chart 10: Age of Accused (2013-2022)

### 3. PARTNERSHIPS

Cooperation among and between governmental, non-governmental, regional, and international organizations was imperative in advancing the fight against human trafficking. In 2022 the CTU continued to partner with local and international organizations to investigate cases of human trafficking, provide accommodation and assistance to victims, and facilitate training opportunities.

The International Organization for Migration continued to be a key alliance providing accommodation and care packages for victims and conducting training and sensitization sessions to governmental and non-governmental agencies.

The Radio Talk Show Eye on Dependency remained a key partner in raising awareness of trafficking to the wider community and local non-governmental organizations such as the Family Planning Association, the Franciscan Institute, Families in Action and the Living Waters Community provided much needed support to aid in victim rehabilitation.

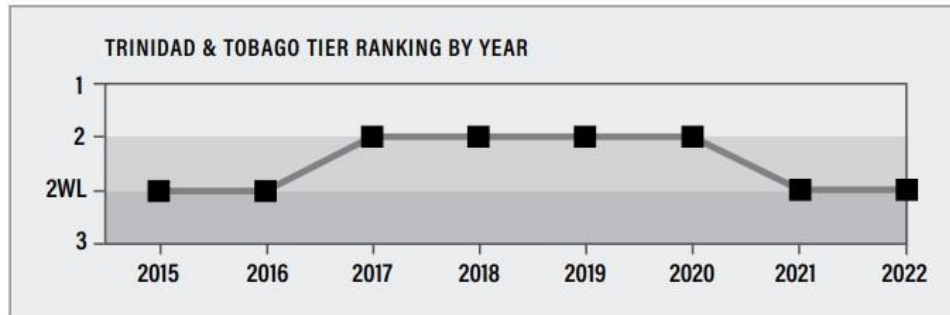
#### 4.1 The US Department of State Annual Trafficking in Persons Report

The Trafficking in Persons Report, or the TIP Report, is an annual report issued since 2001 by the U.S. State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. It ranks governments based on their perceived efforts to acknowledge and combat human trafficking. The report places countries into tiers based on their compliance with standards outlined in the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA). These tiers are:

<b>Tier 1:</b>	Countries whose governments fully comply with the TVPA's minimum standards
<b>Tier 2:</b>	Countries whose governments do not fully comply with all of TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards.
<b>Tier 2 Watchlist:</b>	<p>Countries whose governments do not fully comply with the TVPA's minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ absolute number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing; or</li> <li>▪ There is a failure to provide evidence of increasing efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons from the previous year; or</li> <li>▪ The determination that a country is making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with minimum standards was based on commitments by the country to take additional future steps over the next year.</li> </ul>
<b>Tier 3:</b>	Countries whose governments do not fully comply with the minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so.

In the 2022 TIP Report, the country remained at Tier 2 Watch List for a second consecutive year. Chart 11, taken from the 2022 TIP Report shows the ranking of Trinidad and Tobago from 2015 to 2022.

**Chart 11: Tier Ranking for Trinidad and Tobago 2022**



Source: USDOS Trafficking in Persons Report 2022

The Report stated that ‘...the government did not demonstrate overall increasing efforts compared to the previous reporting period, even considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its anti-trafficking capacity. The government has never convicted a trafficker under its 2011 anti-trafficking law. Corruption and official complicity in trafficking crimes remained significant concerns, inhibiting law enforcement action, and the government did not take action against senior government officials alleged in 2020 to be involved in human trafficking. Victim identification and services remained weak, and the government did not formally adopt the National Action Plan (NAP) for 2021-2023. Therefore, Trinidad and Tobago remained on Tier 2 Watch List for the second consecutive year.’ The recommendations offered by the State Department include:

- Increase efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers, including complicit officials and staff.
- Increase proactive victim identification, screening, and protection among vulnerable communities, including migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees, especially Venezuelans.
- Ensure victims are not penalized for unlawful acts traffickers compelled them to commit.
- Strengthen rules and regulations to ensure immigration enforcement does not hinder human trafficking detection, criminal law enforcement, or victim protections.
- Ensure trafficking is investigated and prosecuted using the anti-trafficking law and not as other or lesser crimes.
- Implement a formalized protocol and a functioning and active coordinating committee for victim care.
- Improve the quality of victim care—especially for children—and increase bilingual services.
- Reduce judicial backlog.
- Approve, fund, and implement the anti-trafficking NAP for 2021-2023.
- Provide adequate funding for robust trafficking investigations and victim services, including accommodation.
- Train law enforcement and prosecutors in proactively identifying, obtaining, preserving, and corroborating evidence of trafficking.
- Improve cooperation between the Counter Trafficking Unit (CTU), prosecutors, the judiciary, and NGOs to increase the number of cases that proceed to trial.
- Strengthen oversight, regulation, and inspections of private labor recruitment agencies and domestic work locations, including by appointing a license officer.
- Increase trauma-informed training on trafficking for NGO, shelter, social services, and law enforcement staff to improve their ability to identify and care for potential trafficking victims



**CONCLUSION**

Trinidad and Tobago continues to grapple with the trafficking of persons and, increasingly, the trafficking in children mainly for sexual exploitation. Migrants are the most vulnerable to human trafficking in this country and the increased migration of persons into the country from Venezuela, many through irregular means, has exacerbated the problem. It is noted that since the proclamation of the Trafficking in Persons Act in 2013 one hundred and two (102) victims have been rescued and assisted and sixty-three (63) persons have been charged for various offences arising from the investigations into the exploitation of the victims.

Since 2013, a number of initiatives have been undertaken to raise awareness of human trafficking among the populace and to train persons to identify victims and recognize the indicators of the phenomenon. Government, civil society and international organizations have all joined together to combat human trafficking in this country.

The government of Trinidad and Tobago remains committed to the fight against this scourge of modern-day slavery and will continue to dedicate resources to eliminate all forms human trafficking in this country.