

2024 Trafficking in Persons Report: Spain

SPAIN (Tier 1)

The Government of Spain fully meets the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. The government continued to demonstrate serious and sustained efforts during the reporting period; therefore Spain remained on Tier 1. These efforts included investigating and prosecuting more suspected traffickers, issuing adequate prison terms to convicted traffickers, and awarding significant restitution amounts to most survivors. Law enforcement identified significantly more victims, government-funded NGOs assisted more victims, and the government increased funding for victim assistance and prevention activities. The government continued delivering comprehensive and extensive training to a variety of officials, and law enforcement continued participating in extensive international investigations and partnerships, which resulted in the identification of victims and arrest of suspects. The government established a process for approved NGOs to obtain official victim status for sex trafficking victims. Although the government meets the minimum standards, gaps remained in victim identification, and the government did not report identifying any victims among the asylum-seeker population, despite civil society detecting such victims, and comparatively few children or Spanish nationals. Law enforcement remained the sole entity able to formally identify victims, which may have limited victims' access to some government assistance. The government continued to lack adequate mechanisms for identifying potential trafficking victims among the asylum-seeker and undocumented migrant populations. Though rare, observers reported authorities inappropriately penalized victims solely for unlawful acts, including immigration offenses, committed as a direct result of being trafficked. The government did not provide compensation to any victims, as there was no fund from which to do so, and while restitution was frequently awarded to victims, few victims actually received it from convicted traffickers.

PRIORITIZED RECOMMENDATIONS:

Increase proactive victim identification, especially among Spanish citizens and vulnerable populations such as children, undocumented migrants, asylum-seekers, government-affiliated Cuban workers, sea fishers, and workers in industries and agricultural regions with high incidences of labor exploitation. * Improve uniform implementation of national victim identification and referral protocols, systematic training for front-line officials on proactive victim identification, and expand victim service centers to all autonomous communities. * Allow formal victim identification by and referral from entities other than law enforcement, including by labor inspectors, asylum case workers, health care professionals, and social workers, and NGOs. * Ensure victims are not inappropriately penalized solely for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of being trafficked. * Establish and utilize a state compensation fund for trafficking victims. * Consistently enforce strong regulations and oversight of labor recruitment companies and hold fraudulent labor recruiters criminally accountable. * Increase survivor engagement, including by establishing accessible mechanisms for receiving and providing compensation for survivor input when forming policies, programs, and trainings. * Continue to improve coordination with an effective multidisciplinary response between government and government-funded NGOs to combat trafficking. * Adopt a comprehensive, trafficking-specific national action plan and dedicate resources toward its implementation. * Update the Framework Protocol for Protection of Victims of Trafficking to ensure legal aid is not contingent on a lack of sufficient economic resources.

PROSECUTION

The government increased law enforcement efforts. Article 177 *bis* of the criminal code criminalized sex trafficking and labor trafficking, prescribing penalties from five to eight years' imprisonment, which were sufficiently stringent and, with respect to sex trafficking, commensurate with those for other grave crimes, such as kidnapping. Since at least 2018, civil society noted the need for a stand-alone, comprehensive anti-trafficking law; while the law was with Spanish parliament, it did not advance by the end of the reporting period.

In 2023, law enforcement initiated 151 human trafficking investigations involving the arrest of 435 suspects. Of the 144 cases investigated by law enforcement, 108 were for sex trafficking and 43 were for labor trafficking, including two for forced begging and two for forced criminality. This was a significant increase compared with 98 investigations in 2022 and 71 in 2021. After receiving cases from law enforcement, some of which police referred in previous reporting periods, the Office of the Prosecutor initiated 160 follow-up proceedings: 116 for sex trafficking and 44 for labor trafficking, including one for forced begging and three for forced criminality. This was an increase compared with 109 cases in 2022 and 115 in 2021. In 2023, the judiciary initiated prosecutions for 123 suspects – 88 for sex trafficking, two for both sex and labor trafficking, 33 for labor trafficking, including 20 for forced criminal activity, two for forced begging, and five for domestic servitude; this was an increase compared with 70 prosecutions in 2022 and 64 in 2021. In its 2023 report, GRETA expressed concern regarding the scarcity of prosecutions and convictions for labor trafficking; the report criticized the government's political will to address labor trafficking, especially within the agricultural sector. In 2023, provisional data indicated courts convicted 34 traffickers under Article 177 *bis* – 24 for sex trafficking and 10 for labor trafficking, including five for forced criminality and five for domestic servitude – a decrease compared with 68 in 2022 and 43 in 2021. Courts also convicted 31 traffickers under non-trafficking statutes – 12 for sex trafficking and 19 for labor trafficking, including 16 for forced criminality, one for domestic servitude, and two for debt-bondage; the government did not report the number of traffickers convicted under non-trafficking statutes in 2022. Courts sentenced traffickers to adequate penalties; of the 34 traffickers convicted under Article 177 *bis*, 31 received significant prison sentences of more than one year imprisonment. Traffickers received separate sentences for each victim exploited; however, the law prescribed a maximum of 20 years' imprisonment. The government did not report comprehensive sentencing data for convictions under non-trafficking statutes. Courts upheld 10 appealed trafficking convictions in 2023. The government did not report any investigations, prosecutions, or convictions of government employees complicit in human trafficking crimes. Following an investigation into trafficking allegations involving a Spanish diplomat in the United States that occurred during previous reporting periods, authorities in the United States did not bring criminal charges.

The government, often in collaboration with government-funded NGOs, provided comprehensive training to law enforcement, judges, magistrates, prosecutors, forensic experts, Ministry of Equality (MOE) officials, NGO personnel, municipal police, civil servants, and social workers. The Civil Guard (CG) reported organizing several in-depth human trafficking conferences for new civil guard officers, which included NGOs to promote collaboration, and completed its third extensive e-learning course. However, NGOs continued to report more training for non-specialized law enforcement officers was necessary. Law enforcement continued extensive efforts to cooperate on operations with various international law enforcement organizations. Law enforcement reported conducting international investigations and joint operations with Belgium, Colombia, Dominican Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Paraguay, Portugal, and Romania, which resulted in the identification of at least 177 victims and arrest of at least 145 suspects across all participating countries. Law enforcement continued operation of a cyber-trafficking investigative group and regular monitoring of online platforms, but unlike prior years, did not report results. Law enforcement also reported increasing its vigilance of internet sites by searching for online advertising associated with trafficking.

The Ministry of the Interior (MOI) coordinated law enforcement efforts through the Spanish National Police (SNP), CG, and regional and local security forces, which included specialized law enforcement units to address human trafficking. The SNP and CG maintained points of contact to coordinate anti-trafficking activities with other relevant bodies, institutions, and NGOs. Law enforcement continued to partner with officials specialized in money laundering and financial

crimes to pursue financial crime investigations in tandem with human trafficking charges; every investigation into an organized crime group included a financial investigation. The Office of the Prosecutor for Trafficking in Persons had specialized prosecutors who covered all jurisdictions. The SNP continued to use an operational manual to combat labor trafficking, including forced criminality on cannabis plantations, and judges and prosecutors had a framework guide for trafficking cases, which included sentencing recommendations. The government did not have judges or courts specialized in trafficking; however, sex trafficking cases could be handled in courts dedicated to gender-based violence (GBV) crimes. Experts concluded, however, judges often lacked adequate training on handling human trafficking cases and had limited access to specialized trafficking training; GRETA recommended specialization of judges in its 2023 report. Law enforcement, NGOs, and specialized prosecutors continued strong and effective coordination, though this varied by region and province. The Office of the Prosecutor continued to hold quarterly meetings with NGOs and law enforcement to coordinate victim identification and assistance and continued coordination work through its liaison positions within the SNP and CG.

PROTECTION

The government increased protection efforts. In 2023, law enforcement reported formally identifying 497 trafficking victims – 294 sex trafficking victims and 203 labor trafficking victims, including two forced begging victims and six forced criminality victims. This was a significant increase compared with 227 trafficking victims in 2022 and 187 in 2021. Of the victims formally identified by law enforcement, six were children, 17 were Spanish nationals, 348 were women, and 143 were men. Law enforcement remained the sole entity able to formally identify victims. As of 2022, the government established an accreditation process for approved NGOs to obtain official victim status for sex trafficking victims; victims were not required to interact with law enforcement and if approved, accreditation would allow victims to access certain assistance services. The government reported approving 255 new trafficking victims for accreditation in 2023, which was the first time this data was reported. Government-funded NGOs reported detecting 1,084 potential trafficking victims in 2023 – not all were formally identified by police – including 822 sex trafficking victims and 110 labor trafficking victims, and 152 victims of unspecified forms of trafficking. Of the 1,084 potential victims, 37 were children (20 boys and 17 girls); 23 were Spanish nationals; 891 were women; 58 were men; and nine were LGBTQI+. Gaps remained in victim identification; the government has not reported identifying any victims among asylum-seekers since 2022 (and only 26 between 2018 and 2021), and comparatively few children and Spanish nationals. While the government did not have a formal NRM, it continued to utilize its national victim identification and referral protocols. However, NGOs reported officials across the country did not uniformly implement the protocols, especially for children, and protocols for asylum-seekers were inadequate; NGOs continued to advocate the government adopt a formal NRM. Additionally, 15 of 17 autonomous communities employed their own protocols for identification of trafficking victims, which they implemented simultaneously with the national protocol. The two autonomous communities without their own protocols continued to use the national protocol. The government continued to make efforts to improve victim identification and in July 2023, a regional government partnered with a prosecutor, academic institution, and civil society to publish a new victim identification handbook, which included a special focus on forced criminality. In partnership with an NGO, the CG established a new protocol to improve protection and referral services for trafficking victims in November 2023. Additionally, a regional government signed a cooperation agreement with an NGO, the national police, and two foreign consulates in November 2023 to increase detection of women sex trafficking victims at the airport in Madrid.

The government reported formal victim identification was not tied to a victim's cooperation in criminal proceedings; however, in its 2023 report, GRETA concluded in practice, formal identification was typically conditional on cooperation. Civil society and GRETA continued to advocate the government allow formal victim identification by entities other than law enforcement, including by NGOs, to allow unconditional access to assistance. Even if victims chose not to participate in criminal proceedings, officials required victims complete an interview with law enforcement to formally establish themselves as victims, which then entitled victims to specific benefits. The government reported victims who chose not to participate in criminal proceedings had

the same rights and access to victim assistance, including residence and work permits; NGOs confirmed they could provide certain assistance to trafficking victims outside the formal identification procedure. Victim interviewing for formal identification was usually coordinated with an NGO, which would subsequently assume care of the victim. NGOs often accompanied law enforcement on operations to provide assistance and information to identified victims. A regional authority and several NGOs expressed concern law enforcement, as the sole entity authorized to formally identify victims, did not systematically provide victims with information on available assistance and protection; police relied predominantly on victim testimony instead of collecting corroborating evidence; and, officials predominantly viewed trafficking as affecting foreign nationals, which could exclude Spanish nationals from official victim recognition and the associated protection services.

Victims identified by NGOs or other entities outside of law enforcement were not included in national statistics if victims did not wish to speak with police. According to civil society, this, coupled with continued gaps in victim identification among children, Spanish nationals, labor trafficking victims, undocumented migrants, and asylum-seekers, resulted in probable underreported official victim statistics. Experts and government officials estimated 80 to 90 percent of the 500,000 individuals in commercial sex in Spain could be unidentified sex trafficking victims within the decriminalized sector, and in its 2018 and 2023 reports, GRETA concluded victim identification statistics did not reflect the scale of trafficking. Furthermore, several NGOs and GRETA recognized the discrepancy between Spain and neighboring countries with regard to its infrequent identification of child trafficking victims. In the 2023 GRETA report, a study highlighted that despite obvious indications of trafficking, officials frequently classified cases of child trafficking under other crimes, lacked awareness regarding types of labor trafficking, and focused on organized crime over individual traffickers, resulting in the identification of few child victims.

The CG continued to deploy immigrant assistance teams to coastal regions associated with high rates of irregular migration. Upon arrival, the government reported screening migrants for trafficking indicators in temporary reception centers – some of which were criticized as being overcrowded and unsanitary – and transferring them within 72-hours to migrant detention centers. In its 2023 report, GRETA noted officials typically did not provide information on victim's rights and available assistance to asylum-seekers, including potential trafficking victims and children, arriving in the Canary Islands, Ceuta and Melilla. Furthermore, the government remained without an adequate and systematic trafficking victim identification mechanism and protocols for asylum-seekers and undocumented migrants; consequently, law enforcement did not report formally identifying any victims among these vulnerable groups in 2023. Meanwhile, civil society reported detecting at least 73 potential trafficking victims. Law enforcement and NGOs noted sex traffickers likely exploited some undocumented migrants in their countries of origin or en route to Spain. With approximately 57,000 migrant arrivals along irregular migration routes by sea and land in 2023, several NGOs and GRETA expressed concern over the lack of adequate mechanisms for identifying potential victims, especially children, in areas with large numbers of migrant arrivals, including the Canary Islands, the southern coast, and the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla. Government officials and civil society continued to express concern regarding the government's failure to identify any trafficking victims in the Canary Islands and suspected officials may have deported some victims without screening for trafficking indicators. Due to continued gaps in identification protocols and resources, undocumented migrants were sometimes later identified as trafficking victims in asylum interviews, but may have been subjected to immigration enforcement penalties, including deportation proceedings, before they were identified.

The government allocated €9.51 million (\$10.51 million) in subsidies to NGOs providing victim assistance, a significant increase compared with €6 million (\$6.63 million) in 2022. The government continued to implement a €12.94 million (\$14.30 million) project, funded through September 2024, focused on the social and labor insertion of women who were victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation or were individuals in commercial sex. The government, through victim service offices, referred victims to government-funded NGOs that provided legal assistance, shelter, social welfare benefits, language training, psychological services, repatriation assistance, and full health care services through the national health system. Government-funded NGOs reported assisting an estimated 6,481 potential victims in 2023, including at least 38 children and 96 Spanish nationals. This was an increase compared with government-funded NGO assistance to

6,322 potential victims in 2022, but less than 8,240 in 2021. However, not all regions and cities had trafficking-specific victim service offices; the MOE reported trafficking-specific victim services were available in all regions except La Rioja, Ceuta, and Melilla. GRETA reported victim assistance, integration, and education services were predominantly available only for women.

While receiving assistance in shelters, victims had freedom of movement but could not choose between shelter options due to limited availability; foreign victims could receive voluntary repatriation assistance. The national and regional governments had several specialized shelters for women, girls, and men trafficking victims throughout the country, but no shelters for boys; children could also be accommodated in specialized centers for children. The law required child shelters to adopt protocols established by the child protection agency, to include prevention, early detection, and intervention measures for victims. GRETA cited NGO reports stating unaccompanied migrant children in Ceuta and Melilla were vulnerable to trafficking in immigration detention centers frequently disappeared from centers; GRETA recommended increased psychological assistance for unaccompanied children. Services and shelters for male and labor trafficking victims remained very limited, and officials reported difficulty locating assistance for these victims. Civil society reported there were insufficient shelters and resources for trafficking victims with disabilities, mental health illnesses, and addictions.

The law entitled victims to interpretation when speaking with officials, but civil society noted interpreters were not always sensitized to human trafficking or available for certain dialects. The law entitled victims to free legal aid and guaranteed legal assistance for all trafficking victims; however, the government has not updated the Framework Protocol for Protection of Victims of Trafficking to ensure legal aid is not contingent on a lack of sufficient economic resources. However, in its 2023 report, GRETA noted law enforcement agencies did not provide sufficient information to victims about their right to obtain free legal aid or how to access it and the practical application of legal aid was uneven across Spain, especially for undocumented migrants arriving in the Canary Islands, Ceuta, and Melilla. GRETA emphasized the importance of early access to legal aid in its 2023 report. If a trafficking victim was in serious danger, their identity could remain anonymous during criminal proceedings; however, NGOs continued to report judges' inconsistent application of victim protections and called for legal reform to better protect witnesses by increasing measures to protect the identity of NGO expert witnesses, whose testimony could not be anonymous under current law. While the law entitled children to submit pre-recorded video testimony, it did not extend this protection to adults; NGOs and the Office of the Prosecutor continued to call for comprehensive legal reform to permit victims of all ages to testify via video conference, including using voice distortion, to prevent re-traumatization. Victims could be accompanied by NGOs, social workers, legal representatives, or psychologists to all interviews. The law required officials to ensure interviewing officials received specialized training, ensure the interview occurred at an appropriate venue, and minimize the number of times victims had to testify. GRETA noted not all protections for victims and witnesses were uniformly applied.

The government allowed non-EU victims to apply for reflection periods of 90 days, during which they were protected from deportation and could recover while deciding whether to participate in criminal justice proceedings. In its 2023 report, GRETA noted that reflection periods were dependent on a victim's participation in criminal proceedings. The government reported citizens of EU member states, however, were not limited to the 90-day reflection period and faced no deadline for claiming social services or cooperating with authorities. Foreign victims who chose to participate in criminal proceedings could request a renewable residence permit for up to five years; most received a one-year, renewable permit and could apply for permanent residency after the five-year period. The government did not report comprehensive statistics on how many victims received residence permits, or temporary protection. The government passed two laws in 2023 aimed at assisting trafficking survivors; one incentivized companies to hire women survivors and the other categorized trafficking survivors, both men and women, as a priority group for hiring policies. The law required prosecutors to seek restitution from defendants during all criminal proceedings unless victims expressly waived that right. In 2023, courts granted at least 41 victims monetary restitution from convicted traffickers. However, NGOs and GRETA, in its 2023 report, expressed concern regarding how few victims actually received awarded restitution and encouraged the government to confiscate trafficker's assets and increase training to officials. The government

remained without a state compensation fund for trafficking victims; NGOs continued to advocate for establishment of such a fund. Law 4/2000 exempted victims from administrative liability for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of being trafficked. However, in its 2023 report, GRETA cited two examples cited by an NGO, an international organization, and the Spanish Ombudsman where authorities penalized victims for unlawful acts, including immigration offenses, committed as a direct result of being trafficked; GRETA encouraged uniform implementation of Law 4/2000.

PREVENTION

The government increased prevention efforts. The national rapporteur, a politically appointed deputy ministerial position within the MOI, was responsible for coordination, analysis, and assessment of efforts across the government, with MOI's Center Against Terrorism and Organized Crime providing support and technical assistance. The rapporteur held two coordination meetings with NGOs and the interagency in 2023. Civil society reported the rapporteur and the government actively included NGOs and stakeholders in proceedings and coordination efforts, but some NGOs recommended an improved multidisciplinary approach. Despite the large scope of work, the rapporteur's office had limited staff, and the government did not report increasing resources. In its 2018 and 2023 reports, GRETA criticized the office of the rapporteur's ability to evaluate government efforts due to its prominent inter-ministerial coordination function and recommended the government create a fully independent evaluation body. At the regional and provincial level, the government had 17 regional delegates and 50 provincial deputy delegates who coordinated anti-trafficking efforts. In addition to the national rapporteur, the government also had an independent ombudsman responsible for reporting and advocating on behalf of trafficking victims. Furthermore, the government's Delegation Against GBV continued to play a central role in coordinating efforts pertaining to sex trafficking, including monitoring efforts on implementation and leading an interagency working group on sex trafficking and exploitation. The government continued to implement its 2021-2023 anti-trafficking NAP but did not report efforts adopt a new comprehensive NAP – including both sex and labor trafficking – to drive national-level trafficking efforts following expiration. The government maintained its 2021-2024 NAP specifically to address labor trafficking, which included an inter-ministerial working group to monitor the plan's implementation. The NAP focused on victim protection and improving government coordination and policies for the prevention and detection of labor trafficking, but it did not include a dedicated budget for implementation. Lastly, the government also had sex trafficking and exploitation NAP (2022-2026) for women and girls, which primarily focused on prevention, victim identification, and assistance; this NAP included a substantial budget, a monitoring committee, responsible parties, specific timeframes, and concrete actions.

The government provided €2.32 million (\$2.56 million) in 2023 for trafficking awareness campaigns, prevention activities, training, and a research program focused on women and girls; this was an increase compared with €1.90 (\$2.10 million) in 2022. State and regional governments, often in coordination with civil society, reported raising awareness through several extensive public awareness campaigns, social media campaigns, and seminars on topics like child sex trafficking, labor trafficking indicators, and online recruitment and trafficking trends. Most awareness-raising material was available online for public access. A municipal government established a network, with at least six other European cities and regions, to exchange best practices, knowledge, and challenges on combatting trafficking. The government continued to make efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts through several public awareness campaigns against purchasing commercial sex. Law enforcement supported a hotline that operated 24/7 and an email address, which could be used to report all crimes, including suspected trafficking; the MOE operated a national hotline for GBV. The government did not report the number of calls that resulted in trafficking-related investigations or victims identified. At least five government-funded NGOs operated trafficking-specific hotlines; in 2023, NGO hotlines received at least 3,596 calls, which led to the identification of at least 1,325 potential victims and 34 formally identified victims. Civil society recommended a nationwide trafficking-specific hotline, in multiple languages, to improve coordination between law enforcement and NGOs and to facilitate communication with potential victims.

Fraudulent labor recruitment remained a concern. Foreign workers needed prior government permission before changing employers, which may have increased their vulnerability to trafficking. The law prohibited recruitment or job placement fees charged to foreign workers. However, some labor recruitment companies and intermediaries likely charged such fees, which could have resulted in debt bondage. Additionally, labor officials noted concerns regarding the practice of companies sub-contracting or illegally seconding employees to other companies – all of which may have increased worker vulnerability to exploitation. The government did not have robust licensing or accreditation requirements for labor recruiters to operate, other than being subject to inspection to ensure compliance and a requirement for a “responsible declaration”. In December 2023, the government adopted an order that provided certain guarantees to foreign workers including the requirement for employers to: provide a contract and information about employee rights in the worker’s native language, fund travel to and from Spain, and provide suitable accommodation. The government made efforts to hold labor recruiters accountable for fraudulent recruitment by arresting several suspected traffickers, but efforts were not comprehensive nor proportional with the suspected scale. The government reported labor inspectors continued to distribute brochures, printed in nine languages, on labor trafficking indicators during inspections. Labor inspectors could alert law enforcement when they detected trafficking indicators during inspections, but victims could only be identified by law enforcement officers. Labor inspectors were unable to conduct unannounced inspections of domestic workers’ accommodations and investigate allegations of abuse in the absence of an official complaint; given the large number of domestic and care workers in Spain, this may have increased vulnerability and left some victims without protection. The government had at least 24 labor attachés at Spanish embassies abroad who reported labor trafficking cases to the government.

TRAFFICKING PROFILE:

As reported over the past five years, human traffickers exploit foreign victims in Spain and, to a lesser extent, Spanish victims in Spain and abroad. Authorities report Colombian, Paraguayan, and Venezuelan women now make up the largest demographic of sex trafficking victims. Sex traffickers use fraudulent recruitment, force, and debt bondage to exploit women and LGBTQI+ persons fleeing the collapsing social and economic conditions. Spanish law neither permits nor prohibits commercial sex, and NGOs believe 80 to 90 percent of the 500,000 individuals in the commercial sex industry in Spain are unidentified trafficking victims. Civil society continues to report the prevalence of young male traffickers, known as “lover boys,” coercing girls and women into sex trafficking, often through a faux romantic relationship. Initiated during the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of private residences, instead of brothels or clubs, and online recruitment has continued to increase. Traffickers increasingly use technology, including online platforms, social networks, mobile applications, and the dark web, to recruit and exploit victims and book apartment rentals used as a venue for sex trafficking. Organized sex trafficking networks exploit women, primarily from South America, by fraudulently recruiting them for non-existent jobs and subsequently using drug addiction and debt-bondage as a means of coercion. Sex traffickers continue to invoke the “voodoo” curse to coerce women and girls from Nigeria into commercial sex. The rising numbers of undocumented migrants arriving by sea, especially departing from Mauritania, Morocco, and Senegal, including to the Canary Islands, are vulnerable to trafficking. Unaccompanied migrant children continue to be vulnerable to sex trafficking and forced begging.

Labor trafficking remains under-identified in Spain. Refugees, predominantly women and children fleeing Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, are vulnerable to trafficking. A 2023 NGO report indicated traffickers sometimes exploit sea fishers in forced labor aboard deep sea commercial fishing vessels owned by Spanish nationals or companies registered in Spain. Instances of labor trafficking, especially in agriculture, domestic work, and cannabis cultivation in Catalonia continue to increase. Labor traffickers exploit men and women in the textile, agricultural, construction, industrial, restaurant, beauty, elder care, retail, deep sea fishing, and domestic work sectors. Traffickers from Romania, Spain, Nicaragua, and Honduras often exploit family members in labor trafficking. Mafia groups run by Nigerian and People’s Republic of China (PRC) nationals commonly work with a local Spanish collaborator. Mafia groups run by Vietnamese and PRC nationals increasingly exploit Vietnamese and PRC national victims in labor trafficking in

agriculture and on cannabis plantations. Women from the PRC are vulnerable to fraudulent recruitment and debt bondage. According to an international organization and press reports, government-affiliated Cuban recruitment companies made agreements with companies or local governments, to recruit Cuban workers and then withhold a large portion of their earnings. In 2024, three government-affiliated Cuban workers, including an electrical engineer, a naval mechanic, and a sports specialist reported the Cuban government withheld half their wages and they did not understand the contracts, know their destination until their time of travel, and worked extremely long hours. Government-affiliated Cuban workers may have been forced to work by the Cuban government. Fraudulent recruitment of migrant workers, especially from Morocco, increases vulnerability to labor trafficking and exploitation in the agricultural sector, especially fruit farms. Romani girls are vulnerable to labor trafficking in Spain.