2022

STUDY OF THE DOMINICAN PUBLIC JUSTICE SYSTEM

In response to sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children, 2010–2022

IJM

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About International Justice Mission

Who we are

International Justice Mission is a global organization that protects people in poverty from violence. IJM partners with local authorities in 29 program offices in 17 countries to combat slavery, violence against women and children, and police abuse of power. IJM works to rescue and restore victims, hold perpetrators accountable, and help strengthen public justice systems. IJM's work has been recognized by the U.S. State Department, the World Economic Forum, and leaders around the globe, and has been featured by *The Guardian*, T*he New York Times*, Reuters, BBC, and CNN, among many others.

IJM has worked in the Dominican Republic since 2014, partnering with government agencies and civil society to combat commercial sexual exploitation of children and sex trafficking.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

TIC: Trauma-informed care

CITIM: *Comisión Interinstitucional contra la Trata de Personas y el Tráfico Ilícito de Migrantes* — Inter-Institutional Commission to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants

CONANI: *Consejo Nacional para la Niñez y la Adolescencia* — National Council for Children[1]

DN: *Distrito Nacional* — National District

ATD: *Departamento de Trata y Tráfico de la Policía Nacional* — Anti-Trafficking Department of the National Police

ECA: *Estándar de Calificación de Acusaciones* — Quality Standard for Indictments

ECS: *Estándar de Calificación de Sentencias* — Quality Standard for Rulings

EDI: *Estándar de Calidad de las Diligencias de Investigación* — Investigative Quality Standard

CSE: Commercial sexual exploitation

CSEC: Commercial sexual exploitation of children

IJM: International Justice Mission

ICAP: *Instituto Centroamericano de Administración Pública* — Public Administration Institute of Central America

INACIF: *Instituto Nacional de Ciencias Forenses* — National Institute for Forensic Sciences

LQAS: Lot quality assurance sampling

NGO: Non-governmental organization

PETT: *Procuraduría Especializada contra el Tráfico Ilícito de Migrantes y Trata de Personas del Ministerio Público* — Specialized Prosecutor's Office against Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons

PJ: *Poder Judicial* — Judiciary

PN: *Policía Nacional* — National Police

POLITUR: *Dirección Central de Policía de Turismo* — Central Tourist Police (formerly CESTUR— *Cuerpo Especializado de Seguridad Turística* — Specialized Tourist Safety Corps)

PJS: Public Justice System

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[1] CONANI is the national child welfare agency in the Dominican Republic.

Glossary

Acquittal: The opposite of a guilty verdict. The accused is not declared guilty.

Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC): Act in which a person, company, or institution "uses a minor in sexual activities in exchange for money, in-kind favors, or any other compensation, which constitutes sexual exploitation in the form of prostitution of minors" (Law 136-03, 2003).

Pre-trial testimony hearing using the Gesell Chamber: a pre-trial hearing in which the victim gives their testimony in a Gesell Chamber (*audiencia de anticipo de prueba en Cámara Gesell*). The Gesell Chamber is a room divided by a one-way mirror. The victim and the interviewer, usually a forensic psychologist, sit on one side of the mirror, which is made to be comfortable, with a couch, pillows, etc. The judge, prosecution, and defense sit on the other side of the mirror and are able to observe the interview, while the victim and psychologist cannot see out of the room. The parties may request the judge submit questions, which are filtered through the psychologist. After giving testimony in this hearing, the victim does not have to attend the trial. This method for hearings is commonly used throughout Latin America with children and with adults in sensitive cases involving abuse or trauma.

Protection: The array of benefits that accrue to people in poverty through a transformed justice system. People are protected from violence when the justice system deters perpetrators; is attractive for victims to report crimes and pursue cases; performs well in those cases; and has the confidence of key stakeholders such as judges, prosecutors, law enforcement, social workers, and NGOs.

Restrictive measures: According to articles 222 and 226 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Dominican Republic, restrictive measures are a court-ordered step to ensure the presence of the accused during the proceedings. These measures can include a monetary deposit, restrictions on geographic movement, surveillance or monitoring by a person or institution that reports regularly to the judge, the requirement to appear regularly before a judge or designated official, electronic monitoring, house arrest, or preventive detention.

Trafficking in persons/human trafficking: "The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of threat, of force, 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 any form of sexual exploitation, pornography, debt servitude, forced labor or services, servile marriage, irregular adoption, slavery or similar practices, or the removal of organs" (Law 137-03, 2003).

Victim and survivor: International Justice Mission uses the term "victim" for people experiencing violence, and as a legal designation for a victim of a criminal offense. A person no longer experiencing violence is referred to as a "survivor."

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This study analyzes the response of the Dominican public justice system (PJS) to commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and sex trafficking from 2010 to 2022. It is the first nationwide study of its kind to use a robust methodology and provide concrete data about the performance of the PJS in response to CSEC and sex trafficking, key authorities' confidence in the response of the PJS, and survivors' reliance on the PJS for protection.

Prior studies have found that CSEC and sex trafficking are widespread in the Dominican Republic and that the effectiveness of the PJS's response has been inconsistent, with enduring gaps in the area of victim services. These prior studies were qualitative, drawing on the opinions of key government and civil society stakeholders (International Justice Mission [IJM], 2017; Participación Ciudadana, 2022). Ethnographic research on prevalence published by International Justice Mission (IJM) in 2015 found that 10% of people in the Dominican sex industry were minors being sexually exploited. Qualitative studies conducted by IJM and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have identified comprehensive services for victims as one of the largest gaps in the PJS's response (IJM, 2017; Universidad Iberoamericana [UNIBE], 2022).

Each year the government issues a report with an overview of the human trafficking cases it has prosecuted (Ministry of Foreign Affairs [MIREX], 2021). However, this report does not describe the quality or speed of the government's response, nor does it measure the progress of cases towards justice or a complete recovery for victims. **In short, there is a lack of quality data on the PJS's response to CSEC and sex trafficking, which hinders efforts to strengthen the PJS and make evidence-based decisions.**

This study fills this gap, providing data from a review of prosecutor and police case files, as well as interviews with CSEC survivors, government officials who interact with CSEC or sex trafficking victims in critical moments, and officials who hold leadership positions on CSEC and sex trafficking issues. This study's contribution to research on sex trafficking and CSEC in the Dominican Republic is novel for two reasons. First, it includes the voices of CSEC and sex trafficking survivors and upholds them as essential to informing the government's response. Second, it presents quantitative data based on official documents from the institutions that comprise the PJS.

This research forms part of a concerted effort to measure the following indicators of protection: prevalence of the crime; people's reliance on the public justice system for protection; performance of the PJS in reported cases; and key stakeholder confidence in the PJS's response. This series of measurements provides evidence of the extent to which the Dominican public justice system has transformed its response to CSEC and sex trafficking throughout the course of IJM's intervention.

When laws are enforced fairly and effectively, potential perpetrators are deterred by the higher risk of punishment, which in turn lowers crime rates. Improved performance means the PJS response is swifter and more frequent, cases progress in criminal proceedings, and proceedings meet quality standards. This enhanced performance then increases people's reliance on and confidence in the justice system, creating a virtuous cycle of confidence and effectiveness that drives a sustained decline in the prevalence of abuse.

SECTION 2.0

METHODS

The following subsections describe the five methods used in this study: a review of prosecutor and police case files, trauma-informed interviews with survivors and officials who interact with victims, interviews with government officials holding leadership positions on sex trafficking issues (referred to as senior officials), and data queries with institutions in the Dominican public justice system (PJS). IJM received approval for the research conducted in 2022 from the ethics committee of the Public Administration Institute of Central America (ICAP).

Review of prosecutor case files: prosecutorial and judicial performance

The study team reviewed case files from public prosecutor offices across the country from July to October 2021 and again from April to August 2022 to measure the performance of the PJS in the criminal justice process. A senior attorney with over ten years of experience working as a public prosecutor at the Office of the Attorney General led the data collection team, coordinating and supervising three junior attorneys who reviewed the files using an instrument developed by IJM. The same senior attorney worked on both the 2021 and 2022 reviews, while the team of junior attorneys changed from the first review to the second.

DATA COLLECTION TOOL

To review prosecutor case files, the team used a 65-item survey with questions on different topics and phases in criminal proceedings. Questions 1 to 18 dealt with basic data such as the criminal statute initially and ultimately applied in the case; demographic data on victims and the accused; the location where the abuse occurred; and where the judicial proceedings took place. Questions 19 to 28 concerned the key dates of the proceedings: the date of case opening, request for arrest warrant, court decision on the arrest warrant, arrest, search and seizure operation, hearing on restrictive measures, filing of charges, preliminary hearing, trial, and sentencing. Questions 29 to 46 were about the treatment of victims and use of sensitive measures to take victims' testimonies.

Questions 47 to 54 focused on the charges brought by the public prosecutor. This section was based on IJM's Quality Standard for Indictments (*Estándar de Calificación de Acusaciones*–ECA), which evaluates the statute or statutes the prosecutor requested be applied to the case; whether aggravating circumstances were correctly included; evidence; and whether charges were clear, precise, and supported by the facts. After taking into account each component, ECA scores the overall quality of the indictment. To pass the standard, the indictment must score higher than 70 percent. ECA was validated and approved by a public prosecutor who formerly served as the head of the Specialized Prosecutor's Office against Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons (PETT).

Questions 55 and 56 contained a similar evaluation of the court's ruling. This evaluation, called the Quality Standard for Rulings (*Estándar de Calificación de Sentencias*—ECS)*,* examines the court's verdict as well as the legal grounds for its ruling. Only rulings with scores higher than 70 percent are considered satisfactory. ECS was designed and validated in collaboration with a Dominican judge who is an expert on the topic of CSEC and sex trafficking.

Next were three questions on the use of restrictive measures[2] (questions 57 to 59) and six (questions 60 to 65) on the type of sentence the court issued. Data collectors only provided responses to questions relevant to each particular file. For cases that did not result in a ruling, for example, they marked questions about rulings as "not applicable."

To be included in the study universe, case files had to meet at least one of two inclusion criteria:

1. Cases that started[3] as CSEC (Law 136-03, Article 410) or sex trafficking (Law 137-03, Article 3) between 2010 and 2021
2. Cases with a conviction for CSEC (Law 136-03, Article 410) or sex trafficking (Law 137-03, Article 3) between 2010 and 2021

IJM chose the first criterion of cases filed to obtain data on the progress of CSEC and sex trafficking cases. It selected the second criterion of cases with convictions in order to analyze successful cases.

The researchers first proposed using a random, nationwide sample of the total universe of case files that meet these two criteria. However, they ultimately chose to review the entire universe of files at priority prosecutor offices, as there were fewer cases than expected for the study period (see Table 4 for a complete list of the files). Given the minimal difference between a potential sample and the universe, researchers considered it worthwhile to examine the entire universe to ensure the most accurate data possible.

While the universe of case files was more manageable than expected, the lack of a national case file management system at the Office of the Attorney General made searching for and obtaining files very challenging in terms of human and financial resources. Each public prosecutor office in the country has its own system for organizing and storing case files, with vastly different physical conditions in each office. In some offices, the lack of case file organization, as well as the effects of heat, dust, and humidity required that investigators take multiple days to analyze the files. These realities, combined with the fact that some prosecutor offices had no files that met the inclusion criteria, forced the team to carry out a geographic sample of priority public prosecutor offices.

Two criteria were used to determine which prosecutor offices to prioritize:

1. Provinces identified as having a high prevalence[4] of CSEC in IJM's 2015 prevalence study.

2. Public prosecutor offices that fell into the top 80% of a multidimensional evaluation of factors that contribute to the prevalence of CSEC or sex trafficking. These factors were population, poverty level, expert opinion on the existence of cases, general opinion on the presence of tourism, and cross-border movement. Table 1 lists the dimensions that were evaluated.

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[2] According to articles 222 and 226 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Dominican Republic, restrictive measures are a court-ordered step to ensure the presence of the accused during the proceedings. These measures can include a monetary deposit, restrictions on geographic movement, surveillance or monitoring by a person or institution that reports regularly to the judge, the requirement to appear regularly before a judge or designated official, electronic monitoring, house arrest, or preventive detention.

[3] The initial filing was used to determine how cases began (see Chapter II of the Dominican Code of Criminal Procedure).

[4] "High prevalence" was defined as a rate of sexual exploitation of minors in the sex industry of greater than 5%, or a location where minors were offered for sexual services more than once in the survey.

TABLE 1. CRITERIA USED TO INCLUDE WESTERN PROVINCES IN THE REVIEW OF PROSECUTOR CASE FILES

Criteria	Reason for criteria	Source used to apply criteria	Weight assigned
Population	Larger population sizes increase the likelihood of cases.	Provincial population (Presidential Office of Information and Communications Technology, 2021)	Relative population on a scale of 0–3, with 3 indicating a larger population
Poverty	Higher poverty levels correlate with greater vulnerability to CSEC or sex trafficking.	Percentage of poor households (Ministry of Economy, Planning, and Development, 2014)	Relative poverty on a scale of 0–3, with 3 indicating higher poverty levels
Expert opinion on the existence of cases	Cases will be found in locations known to have cases.	IJM legal expert[5]	1- I am not aware of any cases. 2- I am aware of cases. 3- I am aware of cases and know of many and/or know of impunity.
General opinion on the presence of tourism	Sex tourism, and therefore CSEC and sex trafficking, follows tourism. IJM's 2015 prevalence study found a higher prevalence in public spaces, especially in coastal areas.	General opinion of IJM staff	0- It is not a place known for tourism. 2- It is a place known for tourism.
Cross-border movement	Cross-border movement increases vulnerability to CSEC and sex trafficking and makes cases more complex, causing some to be overlooked.	Total movement from July 20, 2015 to October 18, 2017 (International Organization for Migration-Haiti, 2021)	Relative cross-border movement on a scale of 0–3, with 3 indicating higher levels of movement

Once the team defined the criteria, they scored the provinces on each dimension. They then calculated each province's total score and ordered them from highest to lowest, as shown in Table 2. The provinces that comprised the top 80% of the cumulative total of points were included in the sample. Accordingly, the provinces of Valverde, Bahoruco, Santiago Rodríguez, and San José de Ocoa were excluded from the study.

TABLE 2. MULTIDIMENSIONAL EVALUATION OF WESTERN PROVINCES

Province	Population	Poverty	Expert opinion	Tourism	Cross-border movement	Total points	% of total points	Cumulative %
Independencia	0.5	2.6	3	0	3	**9.1**	**10.5%**	**11%**
Barahona	2.3	2.4	2	2	0	**8.7**	**10.1%**	**21%**
Monte Cristi	1.4	2.2	2	2	0	**7.6**	**8.8%**	**29%**
Elías Piña	0.7	3	1	0	2.8	**7.5**	**8.7%**	**38%**
Pedernales	0.4	2.7	1	2	1.4	**7.5**	**8.7%**	**47%**
San Juan de la Maguana	3	2.3	2	0	0	**7.3**	**8.5%**	**55%**
Azua de Compostela	2.6	2.4	2	0	0	**7**	**8.1%**	**63%**
Dajabón	0.7	1.9	2	0	2.1	**6.7**	**7.8%**	**71%**
Peravia	3	1.7	2	0	0	**6.7**	**7.8%**	**79%**
Valverde	2.1	2	1	0	0	**5.1**	**5.9%**	**85%**
Bahoruco	1.2	2.7	1	0	0	**4.9**	**5.7%**	**90%**
Santiago Rodríguez	1.6	1.7	1	0	0	**4.3**	**5.0%**	**95%**
San José de Ocoa	0.8	2.2	1	0	0	**4**	**4.6%**	**100%**

[5] The legal expert has worked on over 50 cases with IJM since 2014, interacting with many public prosecutors on cases and in trainings across the country.

After applying the two inclusion criteria, 22 public prosecutor offices were included[6] in the study and 13 were excluded, as shown in Table 3. IJM also included the PETT, considering the specialized unit's national jurisdiction useful for identifying files throughout the country. Including the special prosecutor's office could help capture cases from the 13 excluded districts. In this way, the team aimed to cover the entire universe of available files. The excluded provinces were ultimately found to contain few cases. The study team visited three of them and found three case files in Bonao, one in Villa Altagracia, and none in Moca.

TABLE 3. PUBLIC PROSECUTOR OFFICES INCLUDED IN AND EXCLUDED FROM THE STUDY

	High prevalence criterion	Multidimensional criterion for western provinces
Included	*Distrito Nacional*	Azua
	Duarte (San Francisco de Macorís)	Barahona
	La Altagracia (Higüey)	Dajabón
	La Romana	Elías Piña
	La Vega	Independencia (Jimaní)
	María Trinidad Sánchez (Nagua)	Monte Cristi
	Santo Domingo	Pedernales
	Puerto Plata	Peravia
	Samaná	San Juan de la Maguana
	San Cristóbal	
	San Pedro de Macorís	
	Sánchez Ramírez	
	Santiago	
Excluded	El Seibo	Bahoruco
	Espaillat (Moca)	San José de Ocoa
	Hato Mayor	Santiago Rodríguez
	Hermanas Mirabal (Salcedo)	Valverde
	Monseñor Nouel (Bonao)	
	Monte Plata	
	Villa Altagracia	
	Constanza (La Vega)	
	Matas de Farfán	

In 2021, the data collection team found and reviewed a total of 64 case files at the priority public prosecutor offices. The 2022 team found and reviewed 32 new case files, and rechecked 17 of the 64 previously studied files that had been flagged as cases with ongoing proceedings. This second inspection consisted of editing the existing log to add any new data since the last review. IJM thus found and reviewed a total of 98 cases in the two surveys. Table 4 shows the distribution of cases by province.

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[6] The public prosecutor offices included in this study are also referred to as priority public prosecutor offices.

TABLE 4. UNIVERSE OF CASE FILES BY PROVINCE WHERE THE FACTS OF THE CASE OCCURRED AND INCLUSION CRITERIA

Province where facts of the case occurred	Criteria for inclusion			Total
	Filed	Convicted	Both	
Distrito Nacional	17	1	1	**19**
Puerto Plata	9	3	4	**16**
Santo Domingo	8	1	3	**12**
Santiago	10	1	-	**11**
San Cristóbal	7	1	-	**8**
La Altagracia	6	-	-	**6**
María Trinidad Sánchez	4	-	1	**5**
La Romana	4	-	-	**4**
Barahona	3	-	-	**3**
San Pedro de Macorís	2	-	-	**2**
Samaná	1	-	1	**2**
Peravia	1	1	-	**2**
Monte Cristi	1	1	-	**2**
La Vega	2	-	-	**2**
Independencia	1	1	-	**2**
San Juan	-	-	1	**1**
Azua	1	-	-	**1**
Dajabón	-	-	-	**-**
San Francisco de Macorís	-	-	-	**-**
Elías Piña	-	-	-	**-**
Pedernales	-	-	-	**-**
Sánchez Ramírez	-	-	-	**-**
Total	**77**	**10**	**11**	**98**

FIGURE 1. MAP OF PROVINCES INCLUDED IN AND EXCLUDED FROM THE PROSECUTOR CASE FILE REVIEW
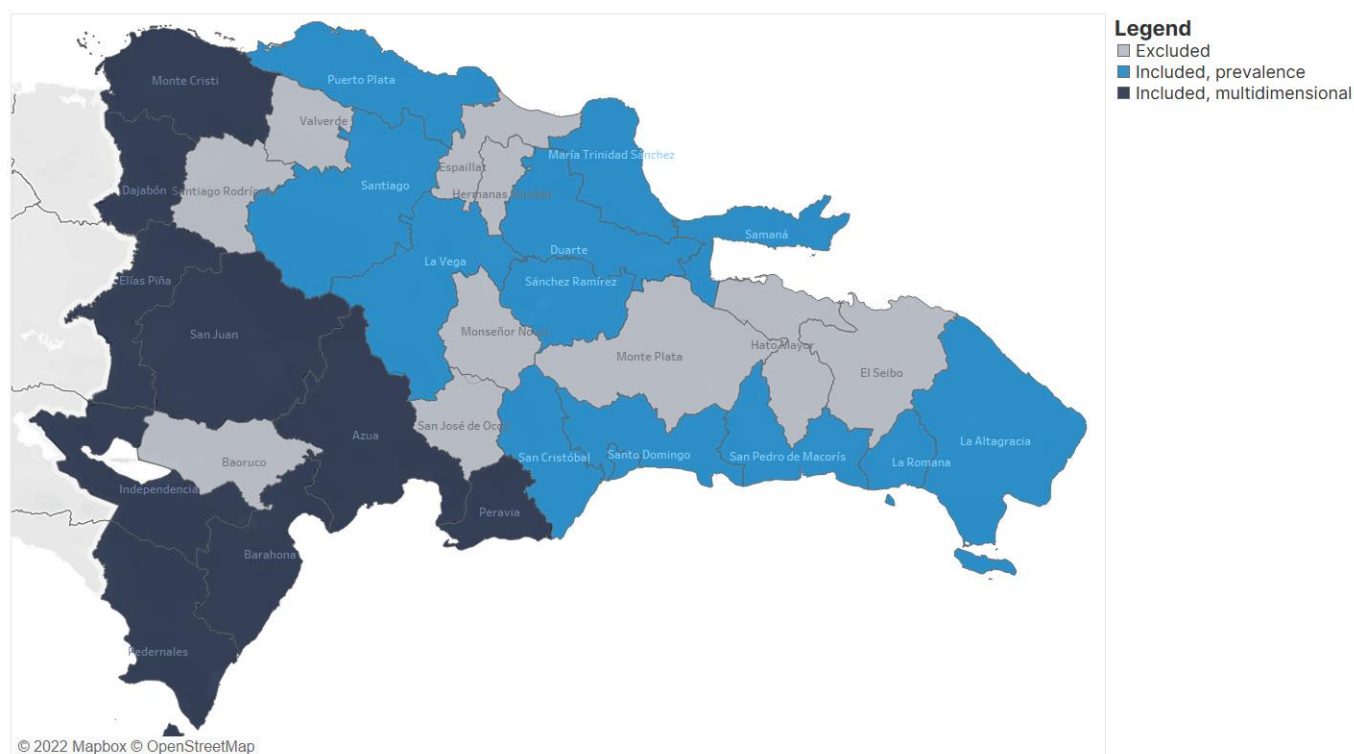
FIELD PROCEDURES

The data collection team followed the same basic procedures with each priority public prosecutor office. They:

1. Contacted the chief prosecutor and filing clerks to coordinate the data collection team's visit.

2. Identified the universe of case files that met the inclusion criteria.

3. Reviewed the universe of case files found using the review tool.

4. Performed a quality control audit.

The team carried out steps two and three consecutively and fully at each prosecutor office before proceeding to the next office.[7] They repeated steps one through three at each public prosecutor office. Step four occurred during the case file review stage, with the goal of auditing at least 15% of reviews, in accordance with the quality control protocol discussed below.

As mentioned in the Results section, the Office of the Attorney General lacks both a system for locating files effectively and does not have a unified national method for organizing and storing files. Instead, each prosecutor office has its own system, some more organized than others.[8] When prosecutor offices had no

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[7] At some public prosecutor offices, it was not possible to complete steps two and three before moving on to the next office. However, the team always sought to keep the number of prosecutor offices with open research processes to a minimum in order to optimize their workflow and maintain a good relationship with the Office of the Attorney General.

[8] Some prosecutor offices use a digital tracker in an Excel file to record basic information about cases such as the name of the suspect or accused and type of offense. However, different offices enter this data in different ways, with some offices omitting details that others

organized and reliable system for locating cases, the data collection team manually reviewed all files to find those that meet the inclusion criteria. Since each office's files run well into the thousands, this organizational variability had a major impact on the logistics and time-intensiveness of the review.

To ensure a realistic and consistent workflow with a high certainty of capturing files that met the inclusion criteria, the team adopted the following approach to determine the universe of files:

1. When they were able to confirm that all cases in a given location were included in a reliable digital tracker,[9] they used the tracker to identify cases of human trafficking (Law 137-03), commercial sexual exploitation of children (Article 410 of Law 136-03), sexual abuse against minors (Article 396-C of Law 136-03), and pimping (Article 334 of the Criminal Code).[10]

    a. The team then reviewed these cases one by one to see if any met at least one of the inclusion criteria.

2. When they were unable to confirm that the digital tracker was reliable and included all files at the location, and when they had reason to believe[11] that the location could have one or more files that met at least one of the inclusion criteria, the team checked all case files manually.

    a. Given the very high probability that relevant specialized departments—such as anti-trafficking or gender-based-violence units—would have the desired case files, the team manually reviewed all case files from these departments, regardless of whether the departments had a digital tracker.

QUALITY CONTROL

The team implemented two safeguards to ensure the quality of the data collected:

1. All reviews were supervised by the senior attorney coordinating the study.

2. Two IJM expert attorneys who work on and litigate CSEC and sex trafficking cases audited 22.4% of the reviews performed by the data collection team.[12] This formal audit included checking each response to the data collection tool. When they found mistakes, the auditors retrained the data collectors on correct procedures. The quality control protocol required audits for each data collector's first three reviews, as well as for at least 15% of each data collector's total reviews.

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include. Some prosecutor offices have no digital case tracking system at all, while others have systems that do not accurately reflect the cases stored there. Moreover, each office stores its cases in a different type of physical space and applies different criteria to determine how case files are organized within that space. Most offices have a general section with a space for active case files and another for inactive case files, in addition to a gender-based violence or sexual violence unit with its own archive.

[9] Some locations had both cases that went to court and others that never did, but the digital tracker only listed cases that reached the court system, for example. When systems had such missing data or did not contain all cases, they were considered unreliable.

[10] The study team intentionally included types of offenses that, while not part of the inclusion criteria, are related to statutes that could be applied to the case later in a way that meets the inclusion criteria. The type of offense listed in a digital tracker system reflects a single point in the process, while the study's inclusion criteria focus on two distinct points.

[11] For example, it would be unreasonable to conclude that a case file of interest would be found in locations where only traffic accident documents are stored, for example. Typically, prosecutor office staff are able to offer helpful information to make such assessments.

[12] IJM's data quality control plan requires a minimum of 15%. The study also achieved the 15% minimum for each data collector.

NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE DATA

While the study team reviewed case files from priority prosecutor offices, the total number of reviews (98) would be nationally statistically representative with a confidence level of 95% if the total number of case files in the country is 131 or fewer. In other words, even if 33 cases were left out, the data would be nationally representative. It is unlikely that more than 33 cases were excluded, given that only 13% of Dominicans live in the geographic regions not covered by the study (Official Portal of the Dominican Government, 2021). Of the three excluded prosecutor offices visited by the 2021 data collection team, Bonao had three files, Villa Altagracia had only one file, and Moca had none. Therefore, the number of case files left out is probably relatively small.

POSSIBILITY OF LOST DATA AND MISSING CASE FILES

While the reviewed case files are likely statistically representative of all prosecutor case files at the national level, some files may have been lost over time due to the poor organization and control of files described in this section. Furthermore, this study found that many case files are stored in substandard conditions or with very little document control, which can make it difficult to collect certain data. Even so, the data presented here is the most robust nationwide source available for CSEC and sex trafficking cases. If the data exist in a case file, then this study captured them, thanks to the robust field procedures that the team followed throughout the data collection stage.

Review of police case files: performance in police investigations

To measure the quality of the police's response during the study period, the study team reviewed police case files from the National Police's Anti-Trafficking Department (*Departamento de Trata y Tráfico*—ATD) on two occasions. The first measurement was from January to February 2021 and focused on cases from 2010–2019. The data was collected by a consultant team of two senior attorneys supervising five law students who reviewed the records using the instrument described below. The second measurement took place in July 2022 and focused on cases from 2020–2021. The team that performed this review was the same as the one that conducted the prosecutor case file review described in the previous section.

DATA COLLECTION TOOL

The study team reviewed police case files using an instrument called the Investigative Quality Standard (*Estándar de Calidad de las Diligencias de Investigación*—EDI, pronounced like the name "Eddy"). IJM designed EDI based on the PETT's October 2017 Operational Guidelines for Investigating Smuggling of Migrants and Human Trafficking. To create the tool, IJM partnered with a police officer who specializes in CSEC and sex trafficking and who held a leadership position in the Anti-Trafficking Department of the National Police. These guidelines establish the procedures to be followed in human trafficking investigations and divide investigations into four phases:

1. Inquiry

2. Identification

3. Investigative report

4. Investigation planning

These four phases form the foundation of EDI's five areas of focus:

1. <u>Inquiry phase</u> of the elements that ensure victims' well-being and safety

2. <u>Identification</u> phase

3. Investigation <u>report</u> and <u>plan</u>

4. Evaluation of <u>actions taken</u> and <u>results</u>

5. Case file <u>management</u> system

EDI assigns a specific score to each area (see Table 5) and each area has questions about actions that must be taken for the investigation to be considered satisfactory.[13] Each question is assigned a certain number of points based on its importance for building a strong case capable of achieving a conviction. To pass EDI, a case file must achieve a percentage of at least 70%.

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[13] For all questions in the EDI, see Appendix 5. Detailed tables from the review of .

TABLE 5. EDI EVALUATION COMPONENTS AND WEIGHTS

EDI area of focus	EDI weight
I. Phase of inquiry into the elements that ensure victims' well-being and safety	15%
II. Identification phase	15%
III. Investigation report and plan	35%
IV. Evaluation of actions taken and results obtained	25%
V. Case file management system	10%

As shown in Table 5, the EDI evaluation assigns the greatest weight to the investigation report and plan (35%), followed by the evaluation of actions taken and results obtained (25%). These two areas make up 60% of the evaluation and are key to scoring well on the overall evaluation. However, the results obtained depend on a proper inquiry into the elements that ensure victims' well-being and safety, as well as an effective identification phase. Without these two crucial steps—each worth 15% of the evaluation—the report cannot be considered satisfactory. The final 10% of EDI assesses best practice for managing case files.

STUDY POPULATION

The study used the following criteria to select cases for review:

1. Sex trafficking and CSEC cases

2. Investigations completed[14] between 2010 and 2021

The research team found a total of 130 cases that met these criteria. The ATD had both physical and digital records, with no cases from 2010–2013. According to the ATD, pre-2014 cases of sex trafficking and CSEC were registered in a file that they speculated could be located in the public prosecutor offices of Boca Chica, Santiago, or Higüey. However, after making inquiries, the ATD confirmed that these prosecutor offices did not have these case files. The ATD explained that another possible reason for the lack of case files from this period may be that a different statute was applied to the case, such as fraud, falsification of travel documents, or other crimes. But the study team neither found nor reviewed any cases of these crimes.

SAMPLING STRATEGY

Once the study team identified cases that met the two inclusion criteria, they used the lot quality assurance sampling (LQAS) method to determine which cases to include in the EDI review.[15] LQAS consists of dividing all case files into groups or lots. For this study, each lot represented a two-year period (2014–2015, 2016–

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[14] Completed means that the file contains an official document certifying the conclusion of the investigation, such as a search and seizure report, arrest report, or detainee transfer record. Investigations are also considered completed if four months have passed since the last action.

[15] Lot quality assurance sampling (LQAS) is a stratified random sampling method. Among the advantages of this method are the speed of measurement, and the speed of informing opportune decisions that increase quality. IJM has designed quality standards for reviewing files that, together with LQAS sampling, have proven effective for estimating overall case file quality within a set period, as well as for identifying priority areas to be strengthened. By aligning these priority areas with a mentoring program, quality can steadily increase with each evaluation.

2017, 2018–2019, and 2020–2021). After forming the lots, the study team then randomly selected 19 case files from each lot.

As shown in Table 6, there were only six case files in 2014–2015. However, one of the files could not be located, so the study team only reviewed five. For the other lots, researchers used oversampling[16] to have three case files to keep in reserve in case any of the 19 selected files could not be located.[17]

TABLE 6. TOTAL NUMBER OF POLICE CASE FILES AND SAMPLE SIZE, BY LOT

Lot	Number of case files	Sample size
2014–2015	6	5
2016–2017	35	19
2018–2019	67	19
2020–2021	22	19
Total	**130**	**62**

TABLE 7. SAMPLE COMPOSITION BY POLICE REGION

Police Region	Number of case files
Santo Domingo North	1 (2%)
Northeast	2 (3%)
Northwest	3 (5%)
South	4 (6%)
Santo Domingo East	5 (8%)
Southwest	5 (8%)
Cibao Central	6 (10%)
East	7 (11%)
North	12 (19%)
Distrito Nacional Central	17 (27%)
Total	**62 (100%)**

As shown in Table 7, two-thirds of the sample cases come from four police regions: *Distrito Nacional* Central, North, East and Cibao Central.

FIELD PROCEDURES

The consultant team coordinated visits with the ATD leadership to review all ATD cases from the study period to determine whether they met the two inclusion criteria. During the process, the team organized qualifying cases by year to sort them into the study's four two-year lots. The consultant team then proceeded to take the sample from each two-year period and use EDI to review it.

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[16] A statistical practice that keeps an additional number of population units in reserve to replace any units that are later disqualified (units included in the sample that turn out not to fit the study parameters) or that cannot be found in the field.

[17] For the 2016–2017 lot, one case in the sample was replaced with a reserve case because it had been mostly handled by Ecuadorian police officials. For the 2018–2019 batch, two case files could not be found and had to be replaced with reserve files.

QUALITY CONTROL

The study team followed several data quality control procedures during the case file review process. First, all reviews were supervised by the data collection team's senior attorney. Second, two IJM legal experts audited 14 of the 62 reviews (23%), confirming each review question using EDI. When they found mistakes, the auditors retrained the data collectors on correct procedures. The auditors verified each data collector's first review at minimum, repeating the training if a data collector failed more than 5% of the questions (more than two questions).

LIMITATIONS

One limitation of the police case file review is that while it was based on available documentation, police case files were not always complete. This means that if police took action in a case without documentation, they would receive a lower EDI score. Despite this caveat, good document control remains an important and often overlooked component of police performance. Even when lower scores are due to poor record-keeping, they still reveal a key insight: that a given department is not managing information properly.

Similarly, police officers do not always learn case outcomes after perpetrators are apprehended, so several documents used to evaluate the Results section could be missing, hurting EDI scores. However, despite being a limitation, this too is a meaningful indicator of police performance: namely, a lack of collaboration with the Office of the Attorney General, as the entities should communicate with each other for the duration of the case. With regard to the study's geographic scope, the study team analyzed the ATD because it is the only police entity dealing with CSEC and sex trafficking.

Interviews with survivors and officials who interact with victims: performance in trauma-informed care

To measure the levels of trauma-informed care (TIC) provided by the PJS, the study team conducted interviews with survivors of CSEC and officials who interact with CSEC and sex trafficking victims. A consultant team conducted the interviews from June to August 2021 and then again from May to August 2022. Survivors were only interviewed in 2021. The team was led by an attorney with over 20 years of experience in the child protection system and a clinical psychologist with extensive experience in child protection.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

To measure TIC levels, the study team used a semi-structured interview guide developed by IJM known as the TIC Tool. This tool focuses on key interactions between CSEC survivors and PJS officials. In the Dominican Republic, the following interactions are considered relevant in CSEC cases:

1. Rescue of victim from site of abuse

2. Transfer of victim to a shelter

3. Investigative testimony, i.e., interviews with public prosecutors or National Institute of Forensic Sciences (*Instituto Nacional de Ciencias Forenses*—INACIF) staff outside of a court hearing

4. Court hearing, typically a hearing to take victims' video testimony before trial

5. Case management in shelter

With approximately ten questions per interaction, the TIC Tool focuses on the actions and competencies that officials should follow to ensure that interactions are trauma-informed (see Table 8 and Table 9). Each interaction can be broken down into different competencies, which were defined and validated by an interdisciplinary global IJM team. Within the tool, each question is weighted differently based on its importance for achieving trauma-informed care. After it is filled out, the tool generates a TIC score. The score is both a percentage and a determination of whether or not the interaction was trauma informed. To be considered trauma informed, the interaction must score higher than 80% and cannot fail any of the core competencies.

TABLE 8. TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE VALUES AND COMPETENCIES[18]

Trustworthiness	Safety	Collaboration	Choice	Empowerment	Connectedness
Communicate purpose and next steps	Provide basic needs	Assess survivor preferences, needs, and goals *	**Communicate about rights and choices ***	Validate survivor experiences	Strengthen social connections
Communicate process, purpose, and rights	**Separation from suspects**	Preparation for giving testimony	Respect survivor choices	Provide encouragement	Welcome at placement
Communicate about rights and choices*	**Safety**			Teach coping strategies	
Understandable language	Safe disclosure of personal information			Psychoeducation	
Confirm accurate statement	**No mistreatment**				
Active listening	**Responsiveness to survivor distress**				
Assess survivor preferences, needs, and goals*	Relevant and necessary questions				

TABLE 9. NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ADDRESSING EACH TIC VALUE BY KEY INTERACTION TYPE

	Rescue of victim from site of abuse	Transfer of victim to shelter	Investigative testimony	Court hearing	Case management in shelter
Trustworthiness	3	4	5	5	3
Safety	6	4	4	5	2
Collaboration	1	1	1	-	1
Choice	1	-	-	2	-
Empowerment	-	1	1	-	4
Connectedness	-	1	-	-	1

The TIC Tool questions can be answered through three methods:

1. An interview with the survivor

2. An interview with an official who participated in the key interaction

3. Third-party observation of the interaction

The questions' wording changes depending on the method used, but the competencies assessed remain the same.[19] Through interviews with survivors, the study team sought information about trauma-informed care

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[18] The TIC values appear in the first row, with each value's competencies listed in the same column. Competencies shown for more than one value are designated with an asterisk, while competencies in bold are core competencies.

[19] For example, the question for the appropriate language competency was reworded depending on the respondent:
Interview with a survivor: "Officials sometimes use words and phrases that are hard to understand, or they may speak differently than you do. When you were taken from the location, did officials speak in a way that was hard for you to understand?"
Interview with an official: "Did any government official or social service provider speak to the survivor using words and phrases that were hard for him or her to understand?"

in the past, and through interviews with officials, they aimed to assess current TIC levels. A different sampling strategy was used for the two study populations.

To be interviewed, officials had to meet one condition:

1. Officials who have provided direct services or who have observed colleagues provide direct services to survivors of CSEC or sex trafficking in one of the interactions of interest

To be interviewed, survivors had to meet the following three conditions:

1. Be restored[20]

2. Be an adult

3. Be a survivor of CSEC or sex trafficking

IJM established most of these inclusion criteria for ethical reasons (such as the protection of minors) and to avoid revictimization.

SAMPLING STRATEGY

Officials who interacted with CSEC and sex trafficking victims

For each key interaction type, the study team sought 12 responses from government officials in both 2021 and 2022. To determine the number of interactions for each type of official, IJM designed a qualitative criterion based on experience drawn from real cases. For example, IJM experts have observed that police officers are the people who interact most with victims in a typical rescue operation. To reflect this reality, the study team assigned a weight of 70% to police and 30% to prosecutors and then sought a matching proportion of responses from each official type (nine responses from police and three from public prosecutors). Table 10 shows the full breakdown of actors by interaction. While this distribution was used as a general guideline, officials' availability often determined whether or not the team reached the target for each interaction.

To identify respondents, the study team used a snowball sampling technique, where senior officials and other authorities provide referrals to people with the required expertise. Once the team had a list of officials to contact, the team planned to take a simple random sample of actors who could respond about one of the key interactions. In the end, they took a non-probabilistic sample because the team found that many officials who claimed to have direct knowledge about one of the interactions of interest did not or could not be contacted.[21]

The 2021 breakdown of responses presented in Table 10 was achieved through 40 interviews: seven with staff from the National Council for Childhood and Adolescence (*Consejo Nacional para la Niñez y la Adolescencia –* CONANI), 19 with members of the Office of the Attorney General, and 14 with members of the National Police. Of the 19 respondents from the Office of the Attorney General, all were public prosecutors except for two INACIF

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[20] IJM considers a survivor to be restored "when a survivor is able to function in society with low vulnerability to revictimization," measured by achieving a score of 3 or greater on the Assessment of Survivor Outcomes (ASO) (IJM, 2018, p. 4).

[21] In 2021, 80% of the identified officials participated. Three police officers, four public prosecutors, and three CONANI staff members on the final list did not participate, as the team was unable to schedule interview appointments with them and the goal of responses per interaction had been reached by that point. In 2022, all identified individuals who met the inclusion criteria and who were willing to participate were interviewed.

forensic psychologists, who gave answers for the investigative testimony interaction. The team achieved the 2022 breakdown presented in Table 10 through 37 interviews: 12 with CONANI staff, 14 with members of the Office of the Attorney General, and 11 with members of the National Police. Again, two Office of the Attorney General participants were INACIF forensic psychologists. Nineteen of the persons interviewed in 2022 had been previously interviewed in 2021.

TABLE 10. BREAKDOWN OF INTERACTIONS DISCUSSED WITH OFFICIALS, 2021 AND 2022

Interaction	Proportion of interactions with victim	National Police			Office of the Attorney General			CONANI staff		
		Target	Actual 2021	Actual 2022	Target	Actual 2021	Actual 2022	Target	Actual 2021	Actual 2022
Rescue of victim from site of abuse	70% police, 30% public prosecutor	9	11	11	3	4	5			
Transfer of victim to shelter	100% police	12	10	11						
Investigative testimony	100% public prosecutor or Office of the Attorney General staff	-	1		12	13	9			
Court hearing	100% public prosecutor				12	12	10			
Case management in the shelter	100% CONANI							12	7	12

Survivors of CSEC and sex trafficking

Survivors were only interviewed in 2021, since no new survivors met the inclusion criteria when the survey was conducted in 2022. To achieve its goal of interviewing 12 survivors, IJM compiled a list of 30 survivors who met the relevant criteria, all of whom had participated in IJM's restoration program in the past. This list was then narrowed down to the 21 survivors with whom the team believed they were most likely to be able to make contact.[22] However, they were ultimately only able to contact eight survivors.

As shown in Table 11, the team tried to achieve a relatively equal number of responses for each interaction. Of the eight survivors, six were women and two were men. Four of the survivors were from Santo Domingo, two were from Santiago, one was from Puerto Plata, and one was from Monseñor Nouel. Their cases occurred between 2014 and 2019.

TABLE 11. BREAKDOWN OF INTERACTIONS DISCUSSED WITH SURVIVORS, 2021

Interaction	Actual	Target
Rescue of victim from site of abuse	3	4
Transfer of victim to shelter	3	3
Investigative testimony	4	3
Court hearing	3	3
Case management in shelter	1	4

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[22] The inclusion criteria limited eligible survivors to those with cases that had been closed for several years. This, combined with the fact that survivors' contact information may change, made it difficult to contact survivors.

FIELD PROCEDURES

The study team obtained the informed consent of each person they interviewed, first explaining the study's purpose and objectives. Team members also discussed the respondent's right to participate or not participate in the study, withdraw from the interview at any time, or refuse to answer any question. They also requested consent to record the interview for later analysis. If the participant gave their consent, the team members recorded the interviews in audio format.[23] If they refused, then the interviewer took careful notes and later typed them up verbatim. The final transcripts were based on these notes and any others made by team members.

In 2021 and 2022, the team conducted some interviews virtually via a synchronous audio/video platform due to the COVID-19 pandemic, either by request of the official being interviewed or for operational purposes. In total, the team conducted 13 virtual interviews with officials in 2021 and 18 in 2022. All interviews with survivors were in person and were accompanied by an IJM psychologist.

Each TIC interview with officials or survivors focused on a maximum of two interactions and lasted no longer than 60 minutes.

QUALITY CONTROL

The consultant team transcribed all interviews, checking the answers in the survey tool against the transcript and then double-checking them against the interview audio file. When there were errors, they made the appropriate changes to the interview form.

The IJM study coordinator formally audited each interviewer's first trauma-informed care interview for each population (officials and survivors). The study coordinator also corrected any errors and notified the interviewer and the consultant team leaders of the errors. Whenever he found recurring errors made by the same interviewer, he audited that interviewer's following interviews until the error was resolved. In 2021, eight of the 40 TIC interviews with officials and four of the eight interviews with survivors were audited. In 2022, only two of the 37 interviews were audited because the interviewers were the same as the previous year.

LIMITATIONS

LIMITATIONS IN OFFICIALS' RESPONSES

The limitations of TIC interviews largely depend on the population being interviewed. For example, government officials knowledgeable about TIC could answer based on what they understood to be the correct action instead of stating what they actually did. To avoid this scenario, the questions in the interview guide for officials use neutral language and passive voice that does not blame the official for any mistake. For example, respondents were asked: "Was the survivor spoken to using words and phrases that were hard for him or her to understand?" instead of "Did you speak..." However, this risk remains and may partially explain the discrepancy between TIC levels reported by officials and those reported by survivors.

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[23] In some of the virtual interviews, both video and sound were recorded by default. However, the team deleted the video recordings and only used the audio files in the study.

Furthermore, due to the confidential nature of cases, some interactions may have been reported twice. However, the consulting team believes this to be unlikely, given that the sample of officials was taken from across the country and the team inquired about the reported interactions when recruiting officials.

REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE SURVIVOR POPULATION

The survivors interviewed for the study are not representative of the total population of persons victimized by CSEC and sex trafficking, as the inclusion criteria precluded capturing all persons in this group. Many survivors never achieve a full recovery, but the study made restoration a condition for participation. Given how rare it is to hear the voice of survivors in studies like this one, IJM considered it appropriate to include them, even if they are not representative of the entire population.

DIRECT COMPARISONS BETWEEN DIFFERENT POPULATIONS

As mentioned above, the study team aimed to learn about trauma-informed care in the past through interviews with survivors, and about current TIC levels through interviews with officials. However, survivors' and officials' accounts cannot be compared directly due to the considerable gap in the number of responses from the two populations, as well as differences in the time elapsed between the interactions and the interviews. Despite this limitation, the differences in these populations' responses can shed light on how survivors perceive interactions, rather than just how officials do.

The data from interviews with officials reflects the national TIC levels provided by officials when interacting with CSEC and sex trafficking victims in 2021 and 2022. For this data, it is thus appropriate to directly compare overall TIC levels experienced by survivors in 2021 versus 2022. Certain patterns in the scores for each TIC value are apparent. However, since the populations are not composed of the same people, the data does not allow for a more individualized, actor-specific analysis. The one exception can be seen in Table 35 which analyzes the results for the 19 officials who answered about the same type of interaction in 2021 and 2022.

Interviews with officials holding leadership positions: confidence and institutional assessments

To measure key officials' confidence in the PJS's response; perceptions of inter-institutional coordination; and the strengths and weaknesses of their own institutions, the study team interviewed officials holding leadership positions (senior officials) on CSEC and sex trafficking. These interviews were conducted by the same consultant team described in the section on interviews with survivors and officials who interacted with victims. They were conducted from June to July 2021 and then May to June 2022.

The interviews with senior officials were based on an interview guide developed by IJM. This guide used both closed- and open-ended questions to ask about officials' confidence in the PJS's response, coordination between PJS institutions, and the general response of the interviewed official's institution.

The study team sought to make the section on officials' confidence consistent with interview questions used in a qualitative study conducted by IJM in 2015. In that study, respondents were asked about their confidence in the Office of the Attorney General, the National Police, the Central Tourist Police (*Dirección Central de Policía de Turismo*—POLITUR),[24] the Specialized Land Border Security Corps (*Cuerpo Especializado en Seguridad Fronteriza Terrestre*—CESFRONT), the Judiciary, CONANI, and the Inter-Institutional Commission to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (CITIM). For the current study, IJM asked about these institutions and added questions about the Ministry of Women and the PJS as a whole. The interviewers briefly described each institution's mission and then asked respondents about their level of confidence in the institution to carry out those activities.[25] The interviewers followed up with another question on whether their confidence had increased in the previous five years.

The section on coordination asked about respondents' interactions with key institutions for criminal prosecution and survivor restoration, specifically the Office of the Attorney General, the National Police, CONANI, and the Ministry of Women. Officials also identified how often they interacted with these institutions and their level of satisfaction with these interactions. Finally, officials discussed the greatest strengths and needs of their own institutions.

To be considered for an interview, officials had to play a management and decision-making role in CSEC and sex trafficking issues. The study team used a convenience sampling method, prioritizing officials that IJM considered the most relevant on the subject. In both 2021 and 2022, the team interviewed 12 senior officials: three from the National Police, three from the Office of the Attorney General, three from CONANI, two from the Judiciary, and one from the Ministry of Women. Ten of the 12 officials interviewed in 2022 were also interviewed

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[24] Formerly known as the Specialized Tourist Safety Corps (CESTUR).

[25] These descriptions were prepared by IJM.

in 2021 and held the same positions. The two changes occurred in the Ministry of Women and CONANI, as the two previous participants no longer held their leadership positions. However, the study team was able to interview two people with similar positions at these institutions. In 2022, 92% of the senior officials had more than five years of experience in their area of work, compared to 42% in 2021.

This study compares the confidence levels reported in 2021 and 2022 with those reported in IJM's qualitative study conducted in November and December of 2015 (IJM, 2017). To ensure data comparability, the study team took the following measures:

First, the confidence scores were made equivalent. In 2015, respondents' confidence was measured on a numerical scale from 1 to 5, with five indicating the highest level of confidence. In 2021 and 2022, respondents' confidence was measured using the following scale: "not very confident" (1 point), "somewhat confident" (2 points), and "very confident" (3 points). Table 12 shows how the 2015 scores equate to the scale used in 2021 and 2022.

TABLE 12. 2015 CONFIDENCE LEVELS AND THEIR EQUIVALENTS ON THE 2021/2022 SCALE

2015 score	1	2	3	4	5
Equivalent on the 2021/2022 scale	1	1.5	2	2.5	3
Interpretation * 2021/2022 scale value	Not very confident 1–1.5*		Somewhat confident 1.51–2.49*	Very confident 2.5–3*	

Second, the study team modified the 2015 study population to make it resemble the types of actors interviewed in 2021 and 2022. For this reason, the team only analyzed the 2015 responses of officials who reported having experience with CSEC and who worked for the National Police, the Office of the Attorney General, the Judiciary, or CONANI.[26] This shrunk the 2015 respondent population from 54 to 23. Table 13 shows the breakdown of respondents in both 2015 and 2021 and 2022.

TABLE 13. BREAKDOWN OF OFFICIALS INTERVIEWED, BY INSTITUTION, 2015 STUDY AND 2021/2022 STUDY

Institution	Number and percentage of respondents 2015	Number and percentage of respondents 2021	Number and percentage of respondents 2022	Weight assigned within the weighted average
National Police	3 (13%)	3 (25%)	3 (25%)	25%
Office of the Attorney General	9 (39%)	3 (25%)	3 (25%)	25%
CONANI	5 (22%)	3 (25%)	3 (25%)	25%
Ministry of Women	-	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	
Judiciary	6 (26%)	2 (17%)	2 (17%)	25%
Total	**23**	**12**	**12**	

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[26] No officials from the Ministry of Women were interviewed in 2015.

Table 13 reveals that the proportions of institutions represented changed from the 2015 study to the 2021–2022 study. For example, the Office of the Attorney General comprised 39% of the population in 2015, compared to 25% in 2021 and 2022. Given that the confidence questions are subjective—asking officials to give their opinion on how much confidence they have in other institutions—any increase of an institution's proportion of the population biases the confidence assessments. For example, if public prosecutors make up 39% of the population compared to 25%, and prosecutors tend to have negative opinions about the National Police, this would negatively impact the confidence levels reported for the National Police. To control for this, the study team decided to analyze confidence levels as weighted averages, assigning a relative weight of 25% each to the National Police, Office of the Attorney General, victim protection institutions (CONANI and the Ministry of Women), and Judiciary.

FIELD PROCEDURES

The study team obtained the informed consent of each person they interviewed, first explaining the study's purpose and objectives. Team members also discussed respondents' right to participate or not participate in the study, withdraw from the interview at any time, or refuse to answer any question. They also requested consent to record the interview for later analysis. If participants gave their consent, the team members recorded the interviews in audio format.[27] If they refused, then the interviewer took careful notes and later transcribed them. The final transcripts were based on these notes and any others made by team members. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and by request of the official being interviewed or for operational purposes, the team conducted five virtual interviews in 2021 and two in 2022 via a synchronous audio/video platform.

QUALITY CONTROL

The consultant team transcribed all interviews, checking the answers in the form against the transcript and then double-checking them against the interview audio file. When there were errors, they made the appropriate changes to the interview form.

The IJM study coordinator formally audited each interviewer's first interview with senior officials. The study coordinator also corrected any errors and notified the interviewer and the consultant team leaders of the errors. Whenever he found recurring errors made by the same interviewer, he audited that person's following interviews until the error was resolved. In the end, three of the interviews with senior officials were audited.

LIMITATIONS

Given the subjective nature of the confidence assessments, it is a limitation not to have interviewed the same people in 2015 as in 2021 and 2022, since surveying a different group of people can affect the reported confidence levels. However, even if it were possible to contact everyone interviewed in 2015, many may no longer be in the same position or institution, or no longer work on CSEC and sex trafficking issues. In response, the best solution is to select the same type of actors (keeping the inclusion criteria the same) and control for differences in the composition of the population by using weighted averages that give each institution equal influence. The team took both of these actions in the current study to make confidence data as comparable as possible. In

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[27] In some of the virtual interviews, both video and sound were recorded by default. However, the team deleted the video recordings and only used the audio files in the study.

addition, ten of the 12 people interviewed in 2021 were re-interviewed in 2022, which also helps increase comparability.

Reliance on the PJS

To assess people's reliance on the PJS for protection, the study team included five questions for the eight survivors interviewed in 2021. These questions, which were asked prior to the TIC section, focused on when survivors first sought help and whether they persisted in their court cases. These questions sought to understand whether victims saw the State as an entity they could trust and one that met their needs. Since this set of questions was asked at the beginning of the TIC interview, the same methodological processes described in the previous section apply to this measurement.

In the interviews with senior officials in both 2021 and 2022, the team asked two simple questions designed to complement the information provided by survivors. Specifically, officials were asked to identify the factors that most contribute to victims remaining in their legal court cases as well as the biggest weaknesses in the PJS to help victims remain in their legal case.

LIMITATIONS

The survivors interviewed for the study are not representative of all CSEC victims, as the inclusion criteria precluded capturing everyone in this group. For instance, many victims never reach full recovery, and the study made restoration a condition for participation. In addition, all the interviewed survivors were previously known to IJM, which further biases the results for reliance on the PJS.

While the data is not representative of all survivors, it still provides insights into services and sources of assistance that can help make the PJS more survivor friendly. The study team included officials' views to complement survivors' accounts with a broader perspective that covers all cases, not just those in which survivors receive extensive support. Comparing the perspectives of survivors and officials can also be instructive. IJM insists that the best way to determine CSEC survivors' reliance on the PJS for protection is to ask survivors themselves. IJM hopes that by including the group of eight survivors, it can prompt more robust studies on what is needed to make the PJS truly reliable.

RESULTS

The Results section is organized as follows: First it presents the results for the performance of the PJS in CSEC and sex trafficking cases. It then describes key government officials' confidence in the PJS. Finally, it presents the results for people's reliance on the PJS for protection.

The performance results are divided into two main sections: performance in prosecuting CSEC and sex trafficking and performance in short- and long-term services for victims. The section on prosecution covers the following topics: the frequency of the PJS's response; the progression of cases; the speed of the PJS's response; the geographic and demographic profile of the crime; criminal investigation; and performance at the trial phase. The analysis of prosecutorial performance examines how the victim was treated at each phase of the process.

The tables in the Results section separate the 12 years studied (2010–2021) into six periods of two years to provide precise information. The data visualizations in this section use three periods of four years to show general trends, with a few specific exceptions where two-year periods are used. The choice of four-year intervals for data visualizations is intentional: since the Specialized Prosecutor's Office against the Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons of the Office of the Attorney General was established in 2013 and IJM began working in the Dominican Republic in 2014, the 2010–2013 period reflects the situation prior to the PETT and IJM; 2014–2017 shows the initial efforts of the PETT, ATD, and IJM; and 2018–2021 reflects the current period.

Performance of the public justice system in prosecuting commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking

FREQUENCY OF THE PUBLIC JUSTICE SYSTEM'S RESPONSE

Key findings
- CSEC and sex trafficking are no longer invisible, unpunished offenses; they are now prosecuted.
    - Both the Anti-Trafficking Department of the National Police and the Office of the Attorney General handled more cases in each successive four-year period.
    - The number of cases leading to arrests, indictments, and convictions also rose in each four-year period.
- In their review of prosecutor case files, researchers often found inconsistencies in the administrative control of cases. These inconsistencies make it difficult to obtain reliable and timely administrative data to inform decision making and improve performance. The current administrative control practices, both at the ATD and the Office of the Attorney General, increase the cost of monitoring performance and diminish opportunities to continually enhance the PJS response. The Office of the Attorney General and the National Police do not have a technological system for managing cases and storing performance data.

OVERALL PRODUCTIVITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL OF CASES

In general, government authorities' productivity has increased sharply since 2014. As shown in Graph 1, both the ATD and the Office of the Attorney General handled more CSEC and sex trafficking cases in each successive four-year period. From 2010–2013, the ATD handled zero cases and the Office of the Attorney General handled eight. The Office of the Attorney General registered 3.6 times more cases in 2014–2017 (29 cases), and the ATD handled 41 cases. Both institutions more than doubled their caseloads in 2018–2021 (61 cases at the Office of the Attorney General and 89 cases at the National Police). This increase is a major achievement for the PJS and signals that CSEC and sex trafficking have gone from being invisible and unpunished to being prosecuted.

GRAPH 1. NUMBER OF CASES HANDLED BY THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND THE ATD OF THE NATIONAL POLICE, 2010–2021
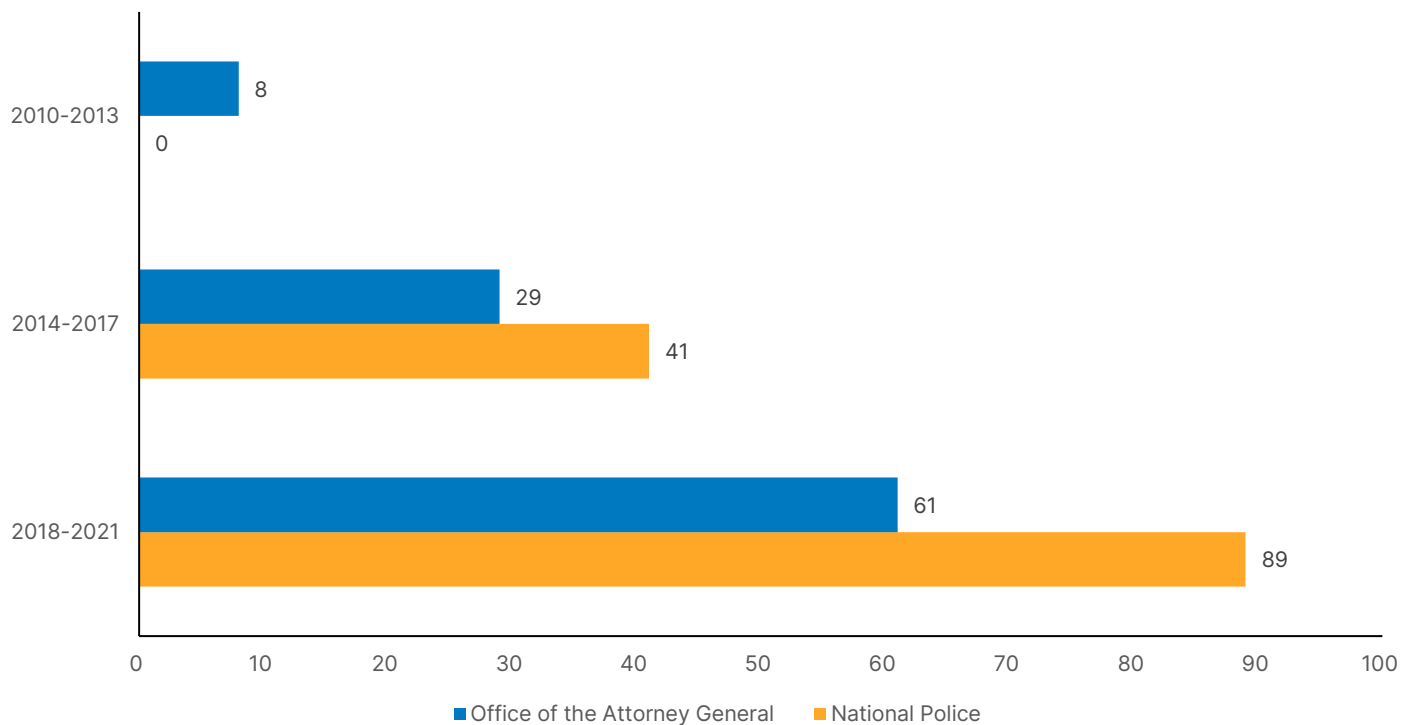
At the same time, Graph 1 shows a large discrepancy between cases at the ATD and those at the Office of the Attorney General (130 versus 98 cases). While not all cases initially investigated by the National Police reach the courts, the research team expected the 130 cases the ATD filed as CSEC or sex trafficking investigations to appear in the review of prosecutor case files.[28]

The fewer cases found at the Office of the Attorney General suggests that the data from the prosecutor case file review could be biased towards cases that reached the courts, since these case files would contain more documents. However, any analysis of the reason for the gap is theoretical, since neither the Office of the Attorney General nor the National Police have a reliable, nationwide system for managing this data. It is therefore impossible to track cases from start to finish.

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[28] In the review of prosecutorial files, cases were considered "opened" when they had an initial filing of proceedings with a notice of investigation.

In addition to the lack of a nationwide data management system, the field investigation also found inconsistencies and shortcomings in the institutions' internal document control procedures. Each public prosecutor office has a different way of storing and organizing case files. Some public prosecutor offices have a digital tracker in an Excel document where they record basic information about the case, such as the name of the suspect or accused, the crime in question, or the law the suspect or accused has allegedly violated. But the method and consistency of data entry varies from office to office. Some public prosecutor offices have no digital tracker or their digital tracker does not match the actual cases on file. Additionally, each public prosecutor office has different physical spaces where they store case files, and the criteria for using a space are different at each office.

These inconsistencies undermine data quality and swift access to data for making decisions on how to improve performance. Weak document control also increases the cost of performance monitoring and diminishes opportunities for continuous improvement. With so many inconsistencies, key information about a case—or even entire case files—can easily get lost, lessening the quality of the data that can be extracted. The inconsistencies also complicate the data collection process itself. In the absence of a national case management system, researchers must travel in person to each public prosecutor office in the country and manually review hundreds or thousands of case files to find the relevant ones.

The situation at the Specialized Prosecutor's Office against the Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons underscores the importance of document management. The office only had 11 cases on file that met the criteria for inclusion in the study. This is a very small number for a specialized agency with a nationwide mandate. Several officials said that those previously in charge of the PETT may have sent the case files to the public prosecutor offices where the crimes were committed, but when the data collection team went to those provinces, they did not find the files. Even when the team asked about specific PETT cases that should have been on file, the public prosecutor offices had no knowledge of them. This lack of administrative control over cases, and the probable loss of data, is a key finding of this study.

FREQUENCY OF KEY MILESTONES IN PROSECUTING CSEC AND SEX TRAFFICKING

As shown in Graph 2, the authorities' productivity—in terms of cases with arrests, indictments, and convictions—increased dramatically in each 4-year period since 2010. In 2014–2017, there were four times more cases with arrests and indictments, and nine times more convictions, compared to 2010–2013. The numbers were even stronger in 2018–2021, which had the most cases with arrests and indictments of all periods. The 2018–2021 period had fewer cases resulting in convictions than the previous period, but this is probably because cases filed in 2018–2021 may still be in progress and may not have reached the ruling phase when the data was collected.

GRAPH 2. NUMBER OF CASES RECORDED AND CASES WITH AN ARREST, INDICTMENT, AND CONVICTION, BY PERIOD, 2010–2021
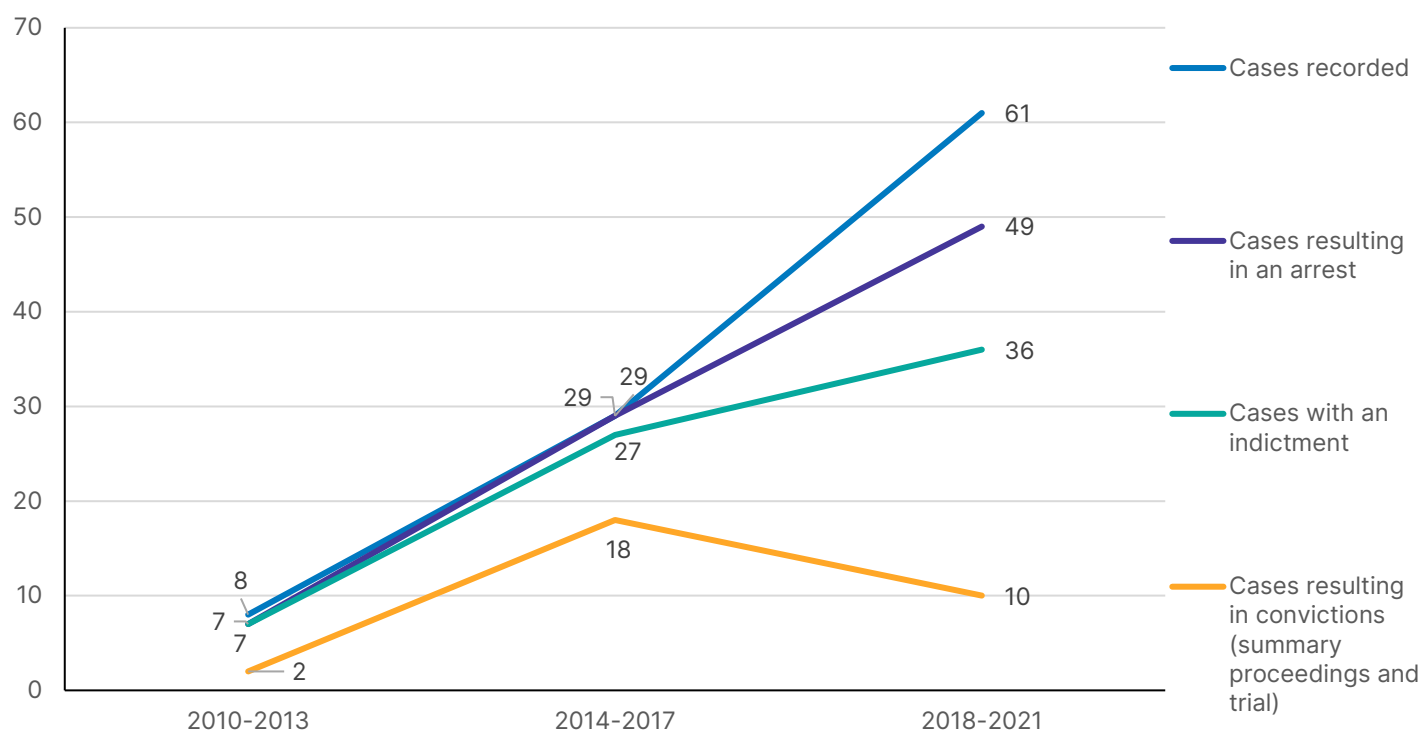
PROGRESSION OF CASES

Key findings

- While the frequency of the PJS's response consistently increased, case progression did not show the same level improvement over the period of this study. The PJS improved in this area in 2014–2017 compared to 2010–2013, but it was not able to sustain these gains in 2018–2021. There are various explanations for this regression, including the COVID-19 pandemic, potential bias towards cases that reached the courts in data from 2010–2017, and a heavier PJS caseload as a result of its more frequent response in 2018–2021.
- The review of prosecutor case files found that 86.7% of cases resulted in an arrest, that legal charges were filed against a suspect in 71.4% of cases, and that 33.7% of cases went to trial. 30.6% of cases led to a conviction.

Regarding progress rates, the review of prosecutor files found that 86.7% of cases resulted in an arrest,[29] formal charges were filed against the suspect in 71.4% of cases, 33.7% of cases went to trial, and 30.6% of cases resulted in a conviction through a trial or summary proceedings.

TABLE 14. OVERALL PROGRESSION OF CASES, 2010–2021

INDICATOR	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	TOTAL
Percentage of cases of resulting in an arrest	100.0%	83.3%	100.0%	100.0%	85.7%	73.1%	86.7%
Percentage of cases in which formal charges were filed	100.0%	83.3%	100.0%	88.9%	71.4%	42.3%	71.4%
Percentage of cases that went to trial	50.0%	50.0%	81.8%	55.6%	22.9%	7.7%	33.7%
Percentage of cases resulting in a conviction (summary proceedings or trial)	50.0%	16.7%	72.7%	55.6%	28.6%	0.0%	30.6%

[29] This is a very high percentage, which supports the theory that the data is biased towards case files with greater documentation.

While the frequency of the PJS's response consistently increased, as described in the previous section, the progression of cases in criminal proceedings did not show the same level of improvement. Graph 3 illustrates the strong advances in case progression in 2014–2017 compared to 2010–2013. It also shows that this trend reverses in 2018–2021. There are four possible explanations for this regression:

1. **The COVID-19 pandemic** caused major disruptions in Dominican courts from March 16 to July 6, 2020 and hindered the Office of the Attorney General's investigative work.

2. **Timing of data collection**: Cases filed at the end of the last four-year period, especially in 2020–2021, may not have had enough time to reach the trial phase, since data collection ended in August 2022. But even after controlling for this variable and focusing solely on the data for cases filed in 2018–2019, the conviction rate still drops by over half compared to 2014–2017 (28.6% versus 62.1%).

3. **Bias towards cases that reached the courts in the data for 2010–2017:** The rate of cases resulting in arrests for 2010–2013 and 2014–2017 (87.5% and 100.0%) is surprisingly high. This could mean that public prosecutor records are biased towards cases that reached the courts, or it could simply be that there are more records of cases that did not enter the court system for 2018–2021.

4. **Heavier PJS caseload:** the PJS handled more cases in 2018–2021 than any other period (see Graph 2). This increased caseload could cause the proportional quality of the PJS response to decline, resulting in a lower case progression.

GRAPH 3. PERCENTAGE OF CASES THAT RESULT IN ARREST, LEGAL CHARGES, TRIAL, OR CONVICTION

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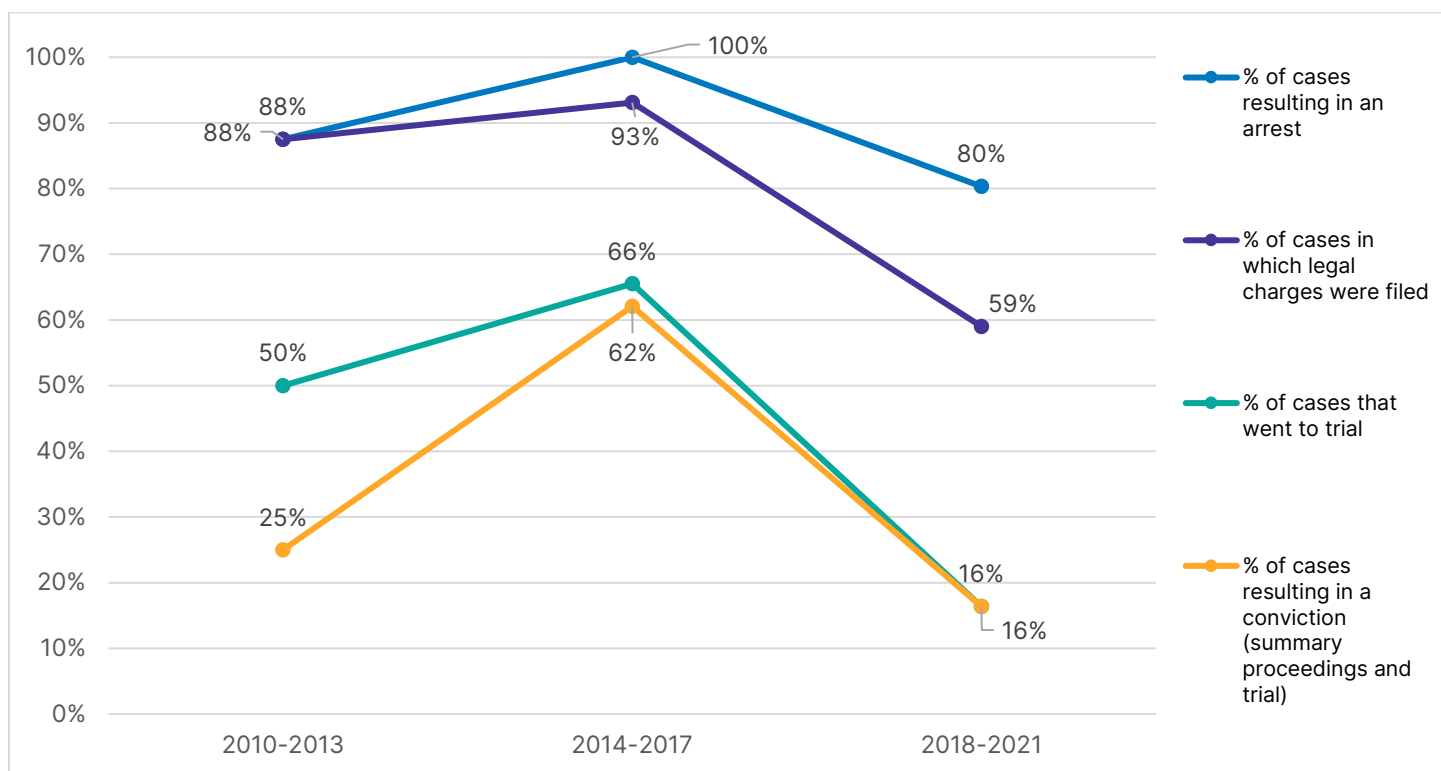
An analysis of case progression shows that the number of suspects prosecuted decreases at each phase of criminal proceedings. Researchers identified 210 suspects or accused[30] in the 98 cases studied. The PJS applied restrictive measures[31] to 108 of the 210 suspects or accused (51.4%); for 83 of them, this measure was preventive detention (39.5% of 210). Ultimately, 48 of the suspects or accused (22.9% of the original 210) were convicted.

As shown in Graph 4, more suspects or accused have been prosecuted in each successive 4-year period since 2010. The sole exception to this trend was the number of suspects or accused who were convicted in cases filed in 2018–2021, which fell compared to the previous period. In proportional terms, prosecution weakened in 2018–2021 compared to 2014–2017. For cases filed in 2018–2021, the PJS applied restrictive measures to 40.5% of suspects or accused identified by researchers, compared to 74.1% in 2014–2017. Additionally, 9.9% of suspects or accused identified from 2018–2021 were convicted, compared to 51.7% in 2014–2017. The explanations for reduced case progression (see previous page) could also apply to both the drop in convictions and the proportional decline in prosecution.

GRAPH 4. NUMBER OF SUSPECTS OR ACCUSED WITH RESTRICTIVE MEASURES, PREVENTIVE DETENTION, OR A CONVICTION, 2010–2021
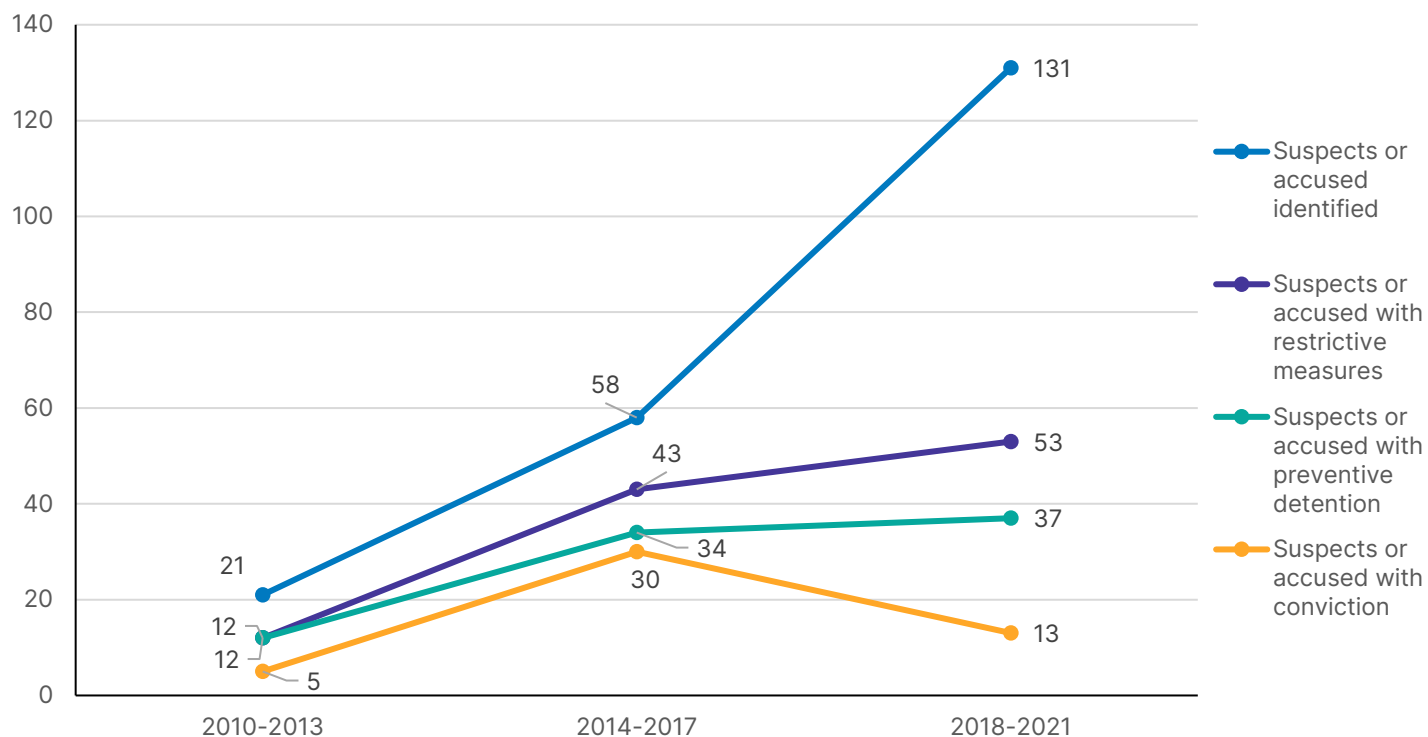
[30] "Suspects or accused identified" refers to any single person identified as a suspect or charged with a crime in the prosecutor case file.

[31] According to articles 222 and 226 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Dominican Republic, restrictive measures are a court-ordered step to ensure the presence of the accused during criminal proceedings. These measures can include a monetary deposit, restrictions on geographic movement, surveillance or monitoring by a person or institution that reports regularly to the judge, the requirement to appear regularly before a judge or designated official, electronic monitoring, house arrest, or preventive detention.

Key findings

- In a trend similar to that of case progression, the PJS processed cases more efficiently in 2014–2017 than in 2010–2013, but it did not sustain these improvements in 2018–2021. Possible explanations for the regression include the COVID-19 pandemic and the PJS's heavier caseload in 2018–2021.
- The time between the preliminary hearing and trial takes up 40% of the total length of criminal proceedings and is the process's most significant bottleneck, followed by the time between the hearing on restrictive measures and the filing of charges (which takes up over 25% of the total length of the proceedings) and the time between the filing of charges and the preliminary hearing (nearly 25% of the total length of the proceedings). These three bottlenecks account for over 90% of the total length of a CSEC and sex trafficking case, so improvements in these areas could significantly speed up the public justice system's response.

The speed of the PJS's response followed a similar pattern to case progression. It handled cases more swiftly in 2014–2017 compared to 2010–2013, but these improvements did not persist in 2018–2021. Graph 5 and Graph 6 display these trends. Perhaps more than any other indicator, data on efficiency reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused major disruptions in Dominican courts and a backlog of cases. The decline in efficiency in 2018–2021 therefore cannot be solely attributed to reduced efforts by authorities. That said, Graph 6 shows that the time elapsed from when the case is opened to the sentencing was longer in 2018–2021 than in any other period studied, and 1.6 times longer than in 2014–2017. The PJS urgently needs to make improvements to return to its pre-pandemic efficiency levels.

The median[32] time from when the case is opened to the sentencing for all cases analyzed is 574 days. It takes a median of 14.5 days from when the case is opened to make an arrest, 195 days (six months) to file charges, and 336 days (nearly a year) from when the case is opened until the preliminary hearing.

GRAPH 5. MEDIAN NUMBER OF DAYS BETWEEN WHEN THE CASE IS OPENED AND THE ARREST, SEARCH AND SEIZURE, AND HEARING ON RESTRICTIVE MEASURES

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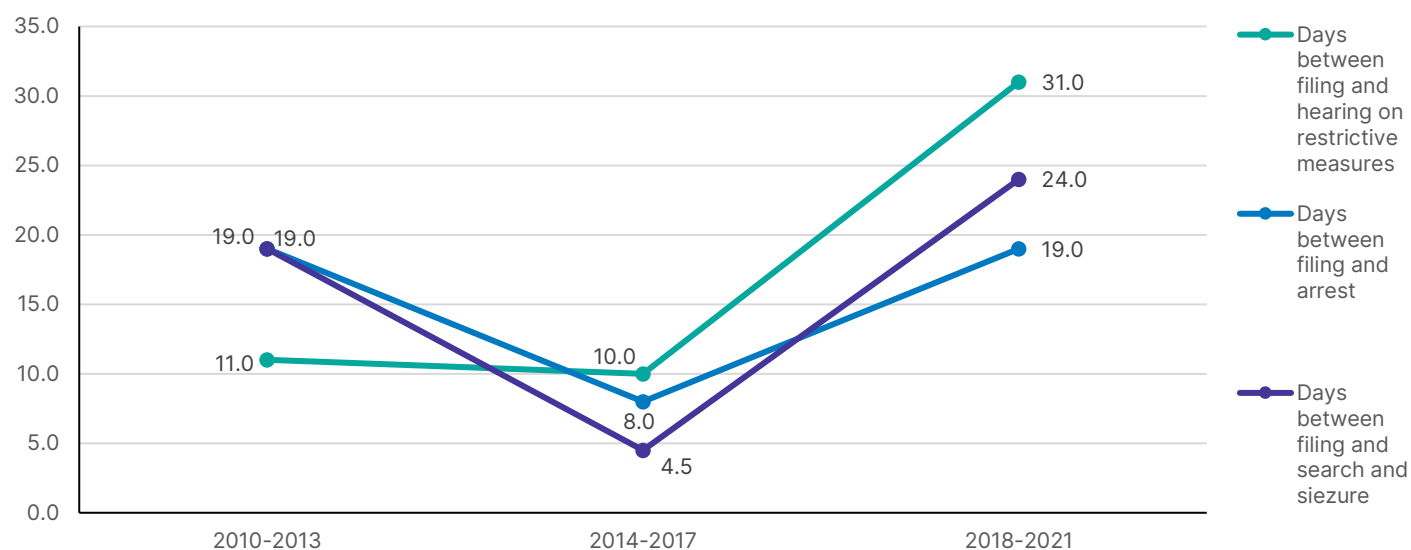
[32] Since case duration can vary widely from one case to another, this study uses the median time elapsed to control for atypical cases.
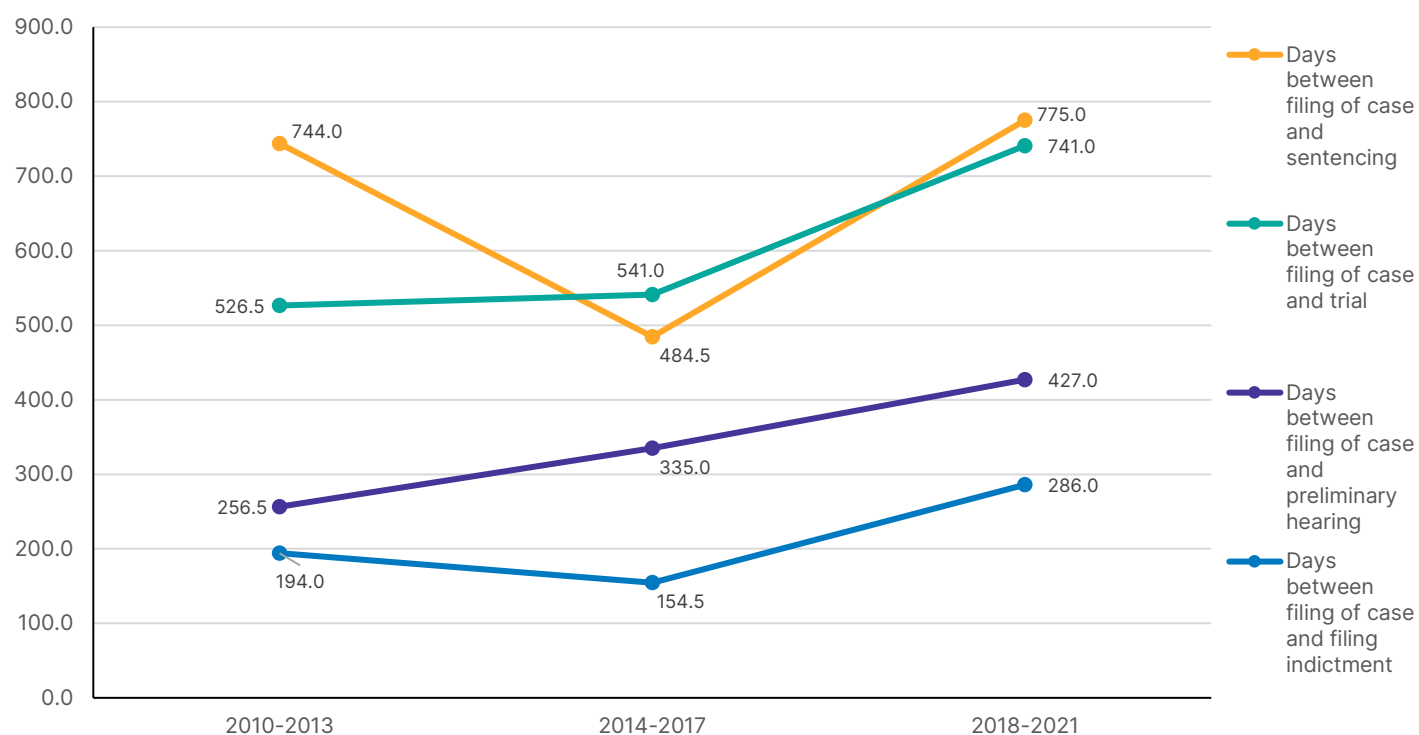
Table 15 shows three primary bottlenecks in criminal proceedings: the time between the preliminary hearing and the trial, which takes up 40% of the proceeding's total duration; the time between the hearing on restrictive measures and the filing of charges, which constitutes over 25% of the proceeding's total duration; and the time between the filing of the charges and the preliminary hearing, which represents nearly 25% of the case's total duration. Together, these three bottlenecks account for over 90% of the total length of criminal proceedings, so improvements in these three areas have significant potential to speed up the public justice system's response. In particular, the PJS could focus on eliminating delays due to administrative errors by ensuring proper service of process for all parties, bringing the suspect to the court, and effectively coordinating hearing dates.

TABLE 15. BOTTLENECKS IN CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS

INDICATOR	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	TOTAL	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Days between filing of case and arrest	29.0	15.0	9.0	8.0	30.0	9.0	**14.5**	**2.7%**
Days between arrest and hearing on restrictive measures	2.5	1.5	4.5	3.0	4.5	7.0	**4.0**	**0.8%**
Days between hearing on restrictive measures and filing of charges	56.5	248.0	140.5	132.0	209.0	178.5	**152.0**	**28.5%**
Days between filing of charges and preliminary hearing	114.0	125.5	196.0	120.0	120.5	95.0	**122.0**	**22.9%**
Days between preliminary hearing and trial	264.0	322.0	175.5	141.0	325.5	0.0	**218.5**	**41.0%**
Days between trial and sentencing	521.0	22.0	23.0	20.0	50.0	-	**22.0**	**4.1%**

[33] The time from when the case is opened until sentencing can be less than the time from when the case is opened until the trial because of the use of plea bargaining.

Key findings

- Half the cases examined in the review of prosecutor files originate in three provinces: the *Distrito Nacional,* the Province of Puerto Plata, and the Province of Santo Domingo.
- 82.4% of suspects or accused are Dominican. Of foreign suspects or accused, 48.6% are from Latin American countries, and 51.4% are from the USA and Europe.
- 90.9% of the victims of CSEC and sex trafficking are female, 27.0% are minors, and 68.6% are Dominican. The most common nationality of foreign victims was Venezuelan, followed by Haitian and Colombian.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE CASES STUDIED

As shown in Table 16 and Table 17, half the cases analyzed in the prosecutor case file review are from the *Distrito Nacional* and provinces of Santo Domingo and Puerto Plata.

TABLE 16. PROVINCE WHERE THE FACTS OF THE CASE OCCURRED

Province where the facts of the case occurred	Cases	Percentage	Cumulative %
Distrito Nacional	19	19.4%	19%
Puerto Plata	16	16.3%	36%
Santo Domingo	12	12.2%	48%
Santiago	11	11.2%	59%
San Cristóbal	8	8.2%	67%
La Altagracia	6	6.1%	73%
María Trinidad Sánchez	5	5.1%	79%
La Romana	4	4.1%	83%
Barahona	3	3.1%	86%
San Pedro de Macorís	2	2.0%	88%
Samaná	2	2.0%	90%
Peravia	2	2.0%	92%
Montecristi	2	2.0%	94%
La Vega	2	2.0%	96%
Independencia	2	2.0%	98%
San Juan	1	1.0%	99%
Azua	1	1.0%	100%
Total	**98**	**100.0%**	

TABLE 17. JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT OF THE CASE

Judicial department	Cases	Percentage
Distrito Nacional	19	19%
Puerto Plata	16	16%
San Pedro de Macorís	12	12%
Province of Santo Domingo	12	12%
Santiago	11	11%
San Cristóbal	11	11%
San Francisco de Macorís	7	7%
Barahona	5	5%
Montecristi	2	2%
La Vega	2	2%
San Juan de la Maguana	1	1%
Total	**98**	**100.0%**

PERPETRATOR AND VICTIM PROFILES

In the period analyzed in this study, there were 210 suspects or accused, 37 of whom were foreigners (17.6%). There were 519 victims of CSEC and sex trafficking. Of these, 140 (27.0%) were minors, 472 (90.9%) were women, and 163 (31.4%) were foreigners. While 27.0% of victims were minors, 65.3% of cases studied (64/98) had

minor victims. The difference between these two numbers exists because cases involving minors typically only have a few victims, whereas adult sex trafficking cases tend to have many adult victims.

In terms of gender, the study confirms that the victims of CSEC and sex trafficking are overwhelmingly women. This means that institutions and officials that work with victims should ensure treatment suited to a largely female population. However, the data also signal the importance of raising awareness about male victims. Given that one in ten victims is a boy or man, robust services designed for males are also needed.

The data reveal that most victims and suspects or accused are Dominican (68.6% of victims, and 82.4% of suspects or accused). However, 27.6% of cases have foreign suspects or accused, and 24.5% of cases have foreign victims. The number of foreign victims per case varies widely, from 1 to 44 people, with a median of three per case. The most common nationality of foreign victims is Venezuelan, followed by Haitian and Colombian, as shown in Table 18. Meanwhile, the foreign suspects or accused are from the United States, Haiti, Venezuela, Italy, Peru, Colombia, Germany, France, and Canada. 48.6% of foreign suspects or accused are from Latin American countries, while the other 51.4% are from North America and Europe.

These statistics show the complexity of trends of CSEC and sex trafficking cases. This means that government officials need a specialized and agile response that can handle a primarily Dominican population but can also respond to complex cases with foreign suspects or victims.

TABLE 18. NATIONALITIES OF VICTIMS IDENTIFIED IN THE REVIEW OF PROSECUTOR CASE FILES

Nationality of victims	Victims per country	Percentage per country
Dominican Republic	356	68.6%
Venezuela	125	24.1%
Haiti	22	4.2%
Colombia	13	2.5%
United States of America	3	0.6%
Total	**519**	**100.0%**

TABLE 19. NATIONALITY OF FOREIGN SUSPECTS OR ACCUSED

Nationality of foreign suspects or accused	Number of suspects or accused	Percentage per country
United States of America	11	29.7%
Haiti	10	27.0%
Venezuela	4	10.8%
Italy	4	10.8%
Peru	2	5.4%
Colombia	2	5.4%
Germany	2	5.4%
France	1	2.7%
Canada	1	2.7%
Total	**37**	**100.0%**

Key findings

- There is a statistically significant connection between taking witness testimony at a pretrial evidentiary hearing and the likelihood of securing a conviction. Cases where the victim testified in advance of the trial were 11.3 times more likely to result in a conviction than those where the victim did not.
- The number of cases resulting in arrests, search and seizures, and perpetrators with precautionary measures has increased. However, this increase did not keep pace with the rise in the number of cases. The system is more productive, but not enough to cover the growing demand for justice.
- Prosecutors took victim testimony in 71.4% of cases. In a typical case, the victim testifies twice. However, the records of interactions with victims may be unreliable.
- There were improvements in how victims were treated when taking their testimony for the investigation. According to respondents in 2022, 100.0% of interviews with victims were trauma-informed, compared to 78.6% in 2021.
- Prosecutors filed legal charges against the suspect in 71.4% of cases. In line with other findings, the number of cases in which prosecutors filed charges increased in each successive period, but this increase did not keep pace with the total rise in cases from one period to the next.
- The quality of indictments improved in each four-year period. In 2010–2013, 14.3% of indictments passed the quality standard. This percentage rose to 51.9% in 2014–2017, and 60.0% in 2018–2021.
  - Prosecutors applied the correct criminal statute to the case with increasing frequency. In 2020–2021, the fit between the facts and the statute applied was average to very good for all charges evaluated, and it was considered good or very good in 77% of cases.

THE INVESTIGATIVE PREPARATORY PHASE

The number of cases resulting in arrests, search and seizures, and hearings on restrictive measures increased in each four-year period. The highest number of cases resulting in arrests, search and seizures, and hearings on restrictive measures was in 2018–2021 (Graph 7).

GRAPH 7. NUMBER OF CASES WITH ARRESTS, SEARCH AND SEIZURES, AND HEARINGS ON RESTRICTIVE MEASURES, 2010–2021
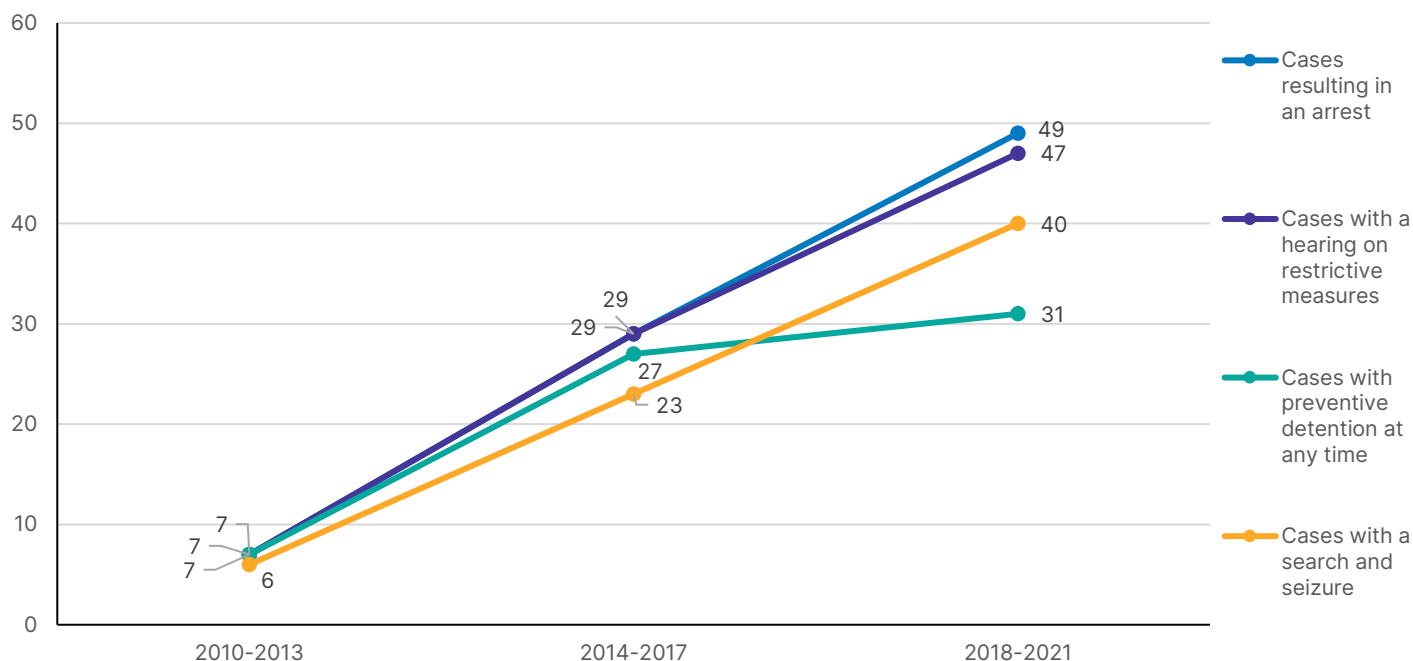
One indicator of prosecution quality is whether judges order restrictive measures, especially preventive detention. CSEC and sex trafficking are serious crimes that warrant restrictive measures, provided there is sufficient evidence. When a case does not have a hearing on restrictive measures or when a suspect is not put in preventive detention, this can signal that a case is weak. Overall, 84.7% of cases had a hearing on restrictive measures. Judges ordered preventive detention in 78.3% of these cases.

The period with the highest number of cases with a restrictive measures hearing was 2018–2021, with 47 cases, but the same period also saw the lowest rate of cases with restrictive measures hearings (77.0%), as well as the lowest rate of cases with preventive detention at any point in the proceedings (50.8% compared to 93.1% and 87.5% in 2014–2017 and 2010–2013, respectively). This follows the trend described above of a more frequent response from the PJS in 2018–2021, coupled with a proportional decline in the progression of cases. Since it takes an average of 22 days from when a case is opened until the restrictive measures hearing, it is unlikely that the COVID-19 pandemic or the timing of data collection would have influenced this downward trend.

This leaves two possible explanations: the PJS was overburdened and did not expand its capacity to handle cases on pace with demand, or the data from 2018–2021 is less biased towards cases that reached the courts. Both options could be correct. Unstable leadership at the PETT (the head of the PETT was suspended in 2021) could have undercut performance in 2018–2021, especially the proportional quality of cases. The need to handle higher caseloads at the same level of quality as in other periods is a key finding of this study.

Use of pre-trial victim testimony[34]

The data highlight that there is a statistically significant connection between taking victim testimony at a hearing before trial and the likelihood of obtaining a conviction. When judges accept victim testimony taken in advance of the trial, the case is 11.3 times more likely to result in a conviction (for a detailed analysis, see Appendix 4: Statistical analysis of hearings to take victims' testimony before trial).

The total volume of cases with pre-trial victim testimony began increasing in 2013, as shown in Graph 8.[35] From 2018–2021, there were fewer cases in which the courts accepted victim testimony taken in advance of the trial. The proportion of cases with hearings for pre-trial victim testimony showed no consistent trend over the study period, as shown in Graph 9. The 2014–2017 period was especially strong: prosecutors requested that victims give pretrial testimony in 69.0% of cases, and judges accepted this testimony as evidence in 55.2% of cases.

From 2018–2021, the percentage of cases with hearings to take victims' testimony before trial fell in comparison to 2014–2017, but remained above the levels of 2010–2013. The lower rate of acceptance of testimony taken in advance of the trial in 2018–2021 may be due to criminal proceedings being still in progress, or due to judges accepting this type of evidence less often.[36] However, both the absolute and proportional data show the importance of continuing to obtain pre-trial victim testimony in cases of CSEC and sex trafficking.

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[34] Similar to many countries in Latin America, the Dominican Republic allows for a pre-trial hearing in which the victim gives their testimony in a Gesell Chamber (*audiencia de anticipo de prueba en Cámara Gesell*). The Gesell Chamber is a room divided by a one way mirror. The victim and the interviewer, usually a forensic psychologist, sit on one side of the mirror, which is made to be comfortable, with a couch, pillows, etc.. The judge, prosecution, and defense sit on the other side of the mirror, and are able to observe the interview, while the victim and psychologist cannot see out of the room. The parties may request the judge submit questions, which are filtered through the psychologist. After giving testimony in this hearing, the victim does not have to attend the trial. The hearing is commonly used with children, and with adults in sensitive cases involving abuse or trauma.
See "Sensitive treatment for victims during court hearings" on page 71 for more information on the pre-trial testimony hearing using the Gesell Chamber.

[35] Proceedings began to use the Gesell Chamber for minors in 2007, as ordered by Supreme Court of Justice Decision No. 3687-2007.

[36] In 2020–2021, only 30.8% of cases had a preliminary hearing, and judges only accepted pre-trial victim testimony from one of 11 hearings.

GRAPH 8. USE AND ACCEPTANCE OF VICTIM TESTIMONY TAKEN IN ADVANCE OF THE TRIAL, 2010–2021, FOR ALL CASES REVIEWED
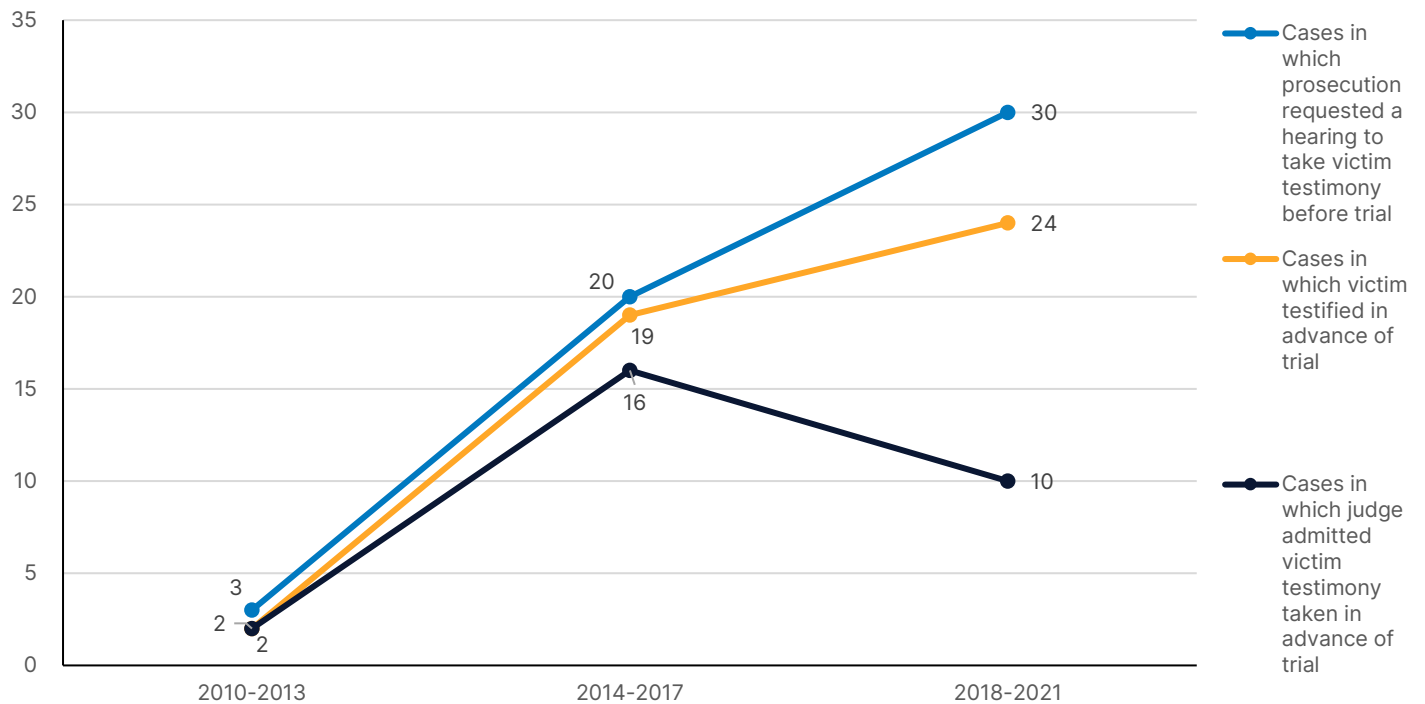
GRAPH 9. PROPORTIONAL USE AND ACCEPTANCE OF VICTIM TESTIMONY TAKEN IN ADVANCE OF THE TRIAL, 2010–2021, FOR ALL CASES REVIEWED
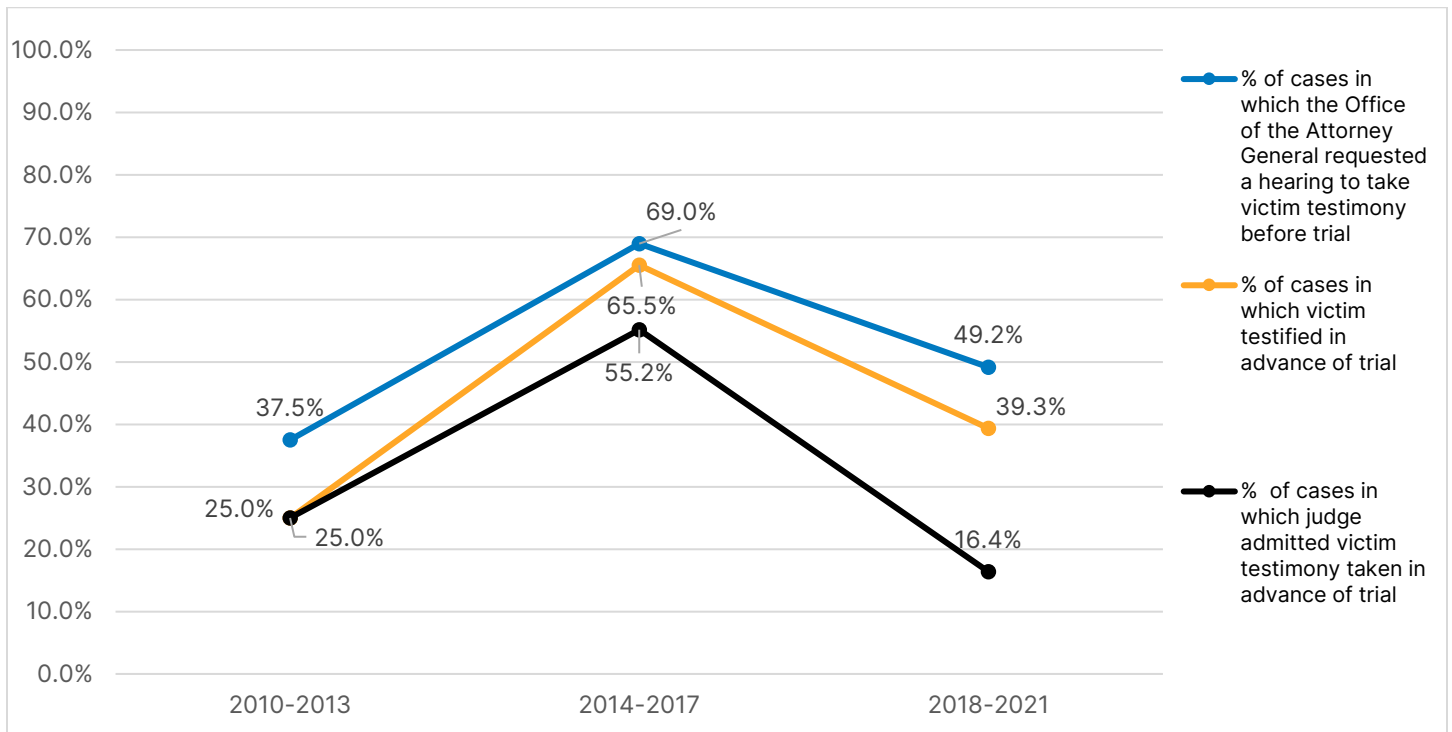
Victim testimony

Table 20 contains data on victims' experiences related to testifying within the PJS, based on the prosecutor case file review. The data in Table 20 are likely the most limited of this report, since much that happens with the victim goes undocumented. For example, the PJS often fails to record postponements of hearings to take victims' testimony before trial. Data from the case file review show that hearings to take victims' testimony before trial

are postponed an average of 0.1 times per case—but evidence from IJM's casework shows an average of 1.7 postponements.[37] This means that hearings to take victims' testimony before trial may be postponed much more frequently than is recorded in the case file.

Because these postponements only occur once the parties have arrived at the courthouse, they retraumatize victims more than almost any other practice in the PJS. Victims have to mentally prepare themselves to testify and physically go to court, only to return home without testifying and wait for a later date. The PJS's failure to record this event underscores the need for a more victim-centered approach.

TABLE 20. VICTIMS' EXPERIENCE GIVING THEIR TESTIMONY, ACCORDING TO CASE FILES, 2010–2021[38]

INDICATOR	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	TOTAL
Percentage of cases in which victim testified before a prosecutor	100.0%	100.0%	54.5%	60.0%	65.4%	90.5%	71.4%
Percentage of cases in which victim testified in a Gesell Chamber	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	62.5%	45.5%	52.6%	48.6%
Average number of times victim testified in a Gesell Chamber	-	-	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Percentage of cases in which victim testified in juvenile court	50.0%	50.0%	30.0%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	10.3%
Average number of times hearing to take victims' testimony before trial was postponed		0.0	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.1
Percentage of cases in which victim testified during the trial	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	8.3%	10.0%	0.0%	7.7%
Average number of times victim testified in court	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	-	-	1.0
Percentage of cases in which victim testified via other channels	50.0%	60.0%	27.3%	46.7%	20.0%	14.3%	29.2%
Average number of times victim testified via other channels	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.3	-	1.1
Average number of times victim testified before a prosecutor	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.1
Median number of times victim testified throughout the proceeding	1.5	2.0	1.5	2.0	1.0	1.0	2.0

According to the data, victims testified before prosecutors in 71.4% of cases, and in Gesell Chambers in 48.6% of cases. In a typical proceeding, the victim testifies on two occasions. Again, the data here are limited. These two occasions probably do not include times when the victim informally gives part of their testimony to the prosecutor for their investigation, and they may also fail to account for formal instances that were not properly documented in the prosecutor case file.

Comments from interviews with government officials fill in gaps in the information on victim testimony in prosecutor case files. As one senior official explained: "Proceedings involving victims who are minors should be swifter and more streamlined, and if she says something to one person, she shouldn't have to share it with 50 more" (2021). A CONANI social worker said: "The survivor is sometimes revictimized by the different interactions: Gesell Chamber interview, police, Office of the Attorney General, and temporary shelter" (2021). Another CONANI official stated that "Calling in a minor who was a victim of exploitation for a forensic interview after five or six months have passed means revictimizing them, something I think the protection system should keep in mind" (2021).

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[37] Based on an analysis of 32 IJM cases between 2010 and 2019. The pretrial evidentiary hearing was postponed an average of 1.7 times and a median of one time, with a range of 0–9 times. IJM routinely documents these postponements.

[38] The data is not for each individual victim. In cases with multiple victims, the instrument was only filled out for the victim who testified the most times.

Sensitive treatment when taking testimony for investigations: prosecutors

Table 21 shows improvements in how victims were treated when taking their testimony for investigations. Respondents shared that 100.0% of interviews with victims followed a trauma-informed approach in 2022, compared to 78.6% the year before. The four survivors interviewed reported that 50.0% of their interviews with prosecutors were trauma informed. The qualitative quotes from 2022 support these quantitative observations.

TABLE 21. TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE DURING INVESTIGATIVE TESTIMONY

INTERACTION	SURVIVORS		2021 OFFICIALS		2022 OFFICIALS	
	Number of responses	Percentage TIC	Number of responses	Percentage TIC	Number of responses	Percentage TIC
Investigative testimony	4	50.0%	14	78.6%	9	100.0%

In 2021, 13 officials responded to the interviewing guide for investigative testimony. One person provided information about an interaction that happened the same month as their interview with IJM, five (35.7%) about an interaction they had in the three months prior to the interview, and eight (57.1%) about interactions they had over six months prior. In 2022, four people (44.4%) responded about cases from over six months prior to the interview, one person (11.1%) referred to a case from three to six months prior; three people (33.3%) responded about cases from within three months, and one person responded about a case that happened in the same month as the interview. The experiences described by the four survivors occurred in 2014–2017.

Interviewees cited a shift toward greater reliance on psychologists and social workers in specialized units as an improvement in investigative interviews in recent years. As one prosecutor stated: "Even in the Anti-Trafficking Unit itself there are now psychologists . . . But it used to be more difficult; we did not have psychological support like we do now" (2021).

According to the officials in 2021 and 2022, most interviews used a free-narrative technique, followed by set questions or an established structure used to further inquire about certain points. Most officials explained that the goal is to use specific, clear, and accessible language: "Yes, I speak to them plainly . . . Because if you start using complicated words, it makes it hard to get through to [the survivor]" (prosecutor, 2021).

In this type of interview, survivors are usually upset, afraid, and ashamed. According to an official interviewed in 2022, one of victims' main fears is "seeing the aggressor." Psychologists said that they had been trained on crisis intervention techniques, and that the officials who interview victims display several of these techniques:

> I try to get them to see it as a conversation between the two of us rather than an interrogation, to put them at ease . . . The first thing I do is try to develop a good rapport, and I make it clear that I can only help them if they tell me the truth, "Hey, relax." I often decide to give them a little break, to let them rest for a few minutes, so they can go to the bathroom or sit on the sofa for a bit, and then we start up again (forensic psychologist, 2021).

> She was given space to let it all out, to talk . . . . I told her that she matters . . . That she wasn't in custody, because most believe that they are in custody . . . That she was a victim and that we are here to protect her (official, 2022).

> When you validate victims' emotions, it gives them the confidence to share more (official, 2022).

Officials saw not revictimizing people as very important. But they also stressed that when untrained staff participate in these processes, it can result in revictimizing actions. One prosecutor emphasized:

> I try to arrange it so she is telling her story to just me and the psychologist and so nobody else involved starts questioning her and asking her questions, because not everyone really understands the issue, and they often use inappropriate phrases, like: "She was asking for it," "What was she doing there?" "She knew what was coming." (2021)

Several people alluded to the tension between letting the victim take their time and respecting their feelings, and the need for timely information to prosecute the case. For example:

> The interviewer has to know when not to push things with a victim. Some prosecutors cross this line because they want to save their case. But you have to realize that the person sitting there in that chair is a human being, and you have to strike a balance between both considerations (forensic psychologist, 2021).

Despite many positive results in 2021, certain responses revealed room for improvement. One survivor shared that the prosecutor in charge of her case promised her justice in order to build trust: "The prosecutor told me, 'I'll get that guy, if it's the last thing I do . . . ' Yes, she said it was so justice would be done" (2021). Even if motivated by a genuine desire on the part of the prosecutor to show empathy, promising justice is not a trauma-informed practice. It can damage long-term trust.

In other cases, officials adopted a confrontational tone with victims:

> At that point, for example, I had to raise my voice a little, even when she wanted to confront me, like, why did I want to know—since it was her own business, since it was personal—whether or not she'd had sexual relations before. So I had to speak a bit more firmly: "Look, this is a legal proceeding, and we have to get through it" (official, 2021).

Other officials reported feeling remorse after finishing interviews:

> Sometimes you ask questions that maybe at the time you don't realize could be revictimizing and that perhaps for the matter or case at hand aren't necessary. I mean, there are always things we can do better in that regard (prosecutor, 2021).

Also, an interviewee from 2021 described a case where a victim completely shut down and was unwilling to talk after she was asked if she had had sexual relations before. Unnecessary or intimidating questions can be humiliating for the victim, and negatively affect TIC and the process of collecting information for the case.

Meanwhile, in 2022 there was no mention of using physically or psychologically abusive techniques to obtain information when taking testimony. On the contrary, respondents' accounts showed high levels of awareness about trauma-informed care:

> I just find it unwise to use that type of technique, because we're here to calm them down. I mean, that's our job, trying to get them to calm down and feel more at ease (official, 2022).

> You're talking to someone you don't even know, so you should be compassionate. You should make them feel that what's happening to them matters to you, that you want to help them, and that you don't want them to go through that experience again (official, 2022).

Of the 98 cases reviewed, the prosecutor filed charges against the suspect in 70 (71.4%). In line with the data trends in the previous sections, 2018–2021 had the smallest proportion of cases in which charges were filed (59.0%, compared to 93.1% in 2014–2017 and 87.5% in 2010–2013), despite having the highest number of cases with charges filed (36 cases, compared to 27 in 2014–2017 and seven in 2010–2013). This proportional reduction can be explained by the four reasons discussed in previous sections (the COVID-19 pandemic, the timing of data collection, a bias towards cases that reached the courts in data from 2010–2017, and the higher PJS caseload).

Using the tool for evaluating the quality of indictments described in the Methods section, the study team found that 52.2% of indictments passed the quality standard. Graph 10 shows how the quality of indictments rose in each four-year period. Despite this positive trend, the 60.0% reported for 2018–2021 leaves room for improvement.

GRAPH 10. PERCENT OF INDICTMENTS THAT PASSED THE QUALITY STANDARD, 2010–2021
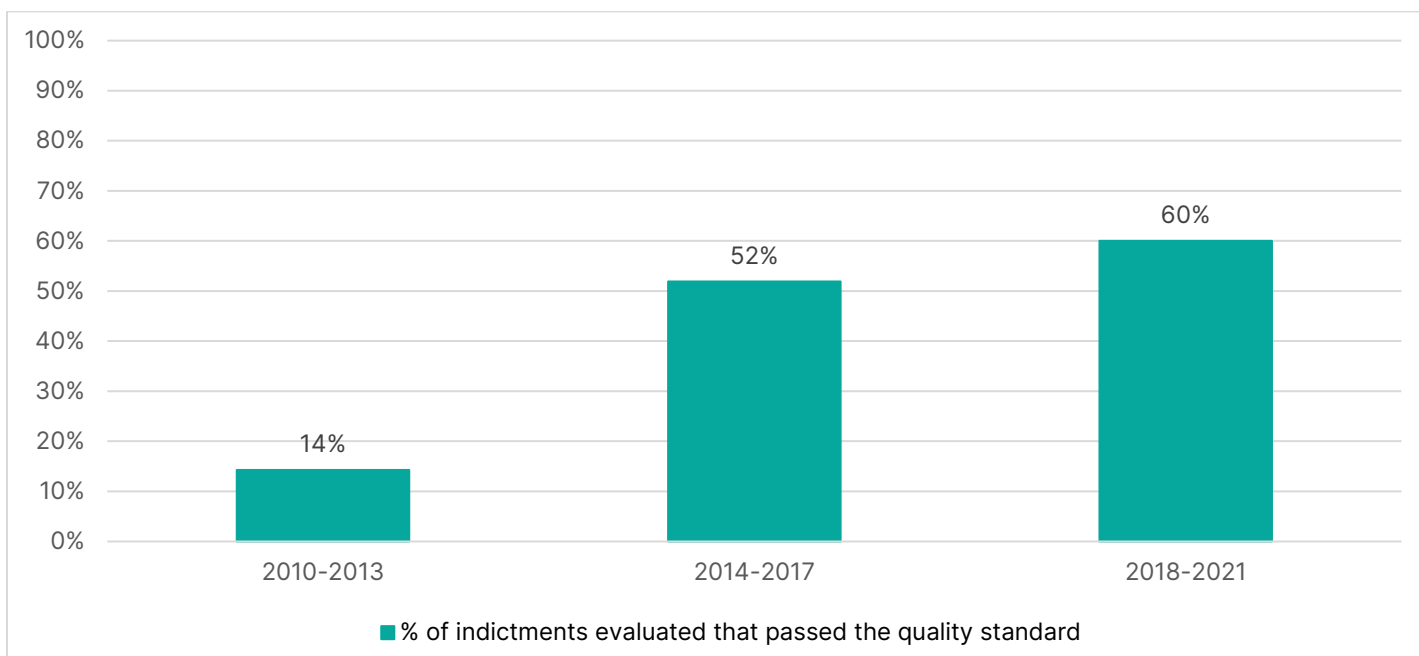
Table 22 provides a breakdown of the components of the quality rating, revealing several trends.[39] Prosecutors had the most difficulty with applying the correct statute(s) to the case: 49.2% of indictments were "very poor" to "average" in this area. In the quality tool, "very poor" means the prosecutor "did not correctly apply the correct statute(s) to the case" (21.7% of indictments); "poor" means the "prosecutor applied the correct statute, but made serious errors in describing the course of events" (1.4% of indictments); and "average" means "the prosecutor applied the correct statute, but made minor errors in describing the facts and/or added a charge that does not match the facts" (26.1% of indictments). "Good" means "the prosecutor applied the correct statute, without errors in their description of the facts" (39.1% of indictments) and "very good" means "the prosecutor applied the correct statute, without errors and citing international treaties on human trafficking that the country has ratified" (11.6% of indictments).

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[39] For the full evaluation criteria of the "Quality Standard for Legal Charges" tool, see Appendix 1.

TABLE 22. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE QUALITY OF INDICTMENTS

QUALITY CRITERION	VERY POOR	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD	VERY GOOD
Applying the correct statute(s) to the case	15 (21.7%)	1 (1.4%)	18 (26.1%)	27 (39.1%)	8 (11.6%)
Aggravating circumstances	4 (8.3%)	2 (4.2%)	10 (20.8%)	23 (47.9%)	9 (18.8%)
Evidence	2 (2.9%)	8 (11.6%)	13 (18.8%)	29 (42%)	17 (24.6%)
Factual clarity	2 (2.9%)	5 (7.2%)	16 (23.2%)	29 (42%)	17 (24.6%)
Factual accuracy	1 (1.4%)	6 (8.7%)	15 (21.7%)	24 (34.8%)	23 (33.3%)
Circumstantial details	-	5 (7.2%)	21 (30.4%)	21 (30.4%)	22 (31.9%)

CSEC and sex trafficking have complex statutory definitions that require precision, so it is no surprise that prosecutors struggled to apply the correct statute to cases. However, correctly identifying the relevant statute is one of the most important decisions the prosecutor makes. A poor or imprecise fit between the facts and the crime the suspect is charged with could crucially hinder prosecution of the case. Recognizing and applying the correct statute for CSEC and sex trafficking is the area with the most room for improvement in the quality of legal charges nationwide.

Despite this weakness, applying the correct statute was also the area that showed the most improvement from one period to the next. Graph 11 shows how the rating for applying the correct statute changed from 2010 to 2021. Unlike other graphs in this report, this one presents results in two-year intervals, since IJM launched a program to train 370 prosecutors between 2019 and 2022. The focus of the training program was correctly understanding and applying different statutes. It also emphasized the indictment quality tool used for this study.

Dividing the graph into two-year intervals gives greater nuance for recent periods, but it is important to note that only two charges were evaluated for cases filed in 2010–2011, and five charges for 2012–2013, so the quality rating for these periods holds little weight. As shown in Graph 11, the rating for applying the correct statute improved in each successive period. In 2020–2021, all legal charges evaluated ranged from "average" to "very good."

GRAPH 11. CHANGES IN THE RATING FOR APPLYING THE CORRECT STATUTE IN INDICTMENTS EVALUATED FROM 2010–2021.
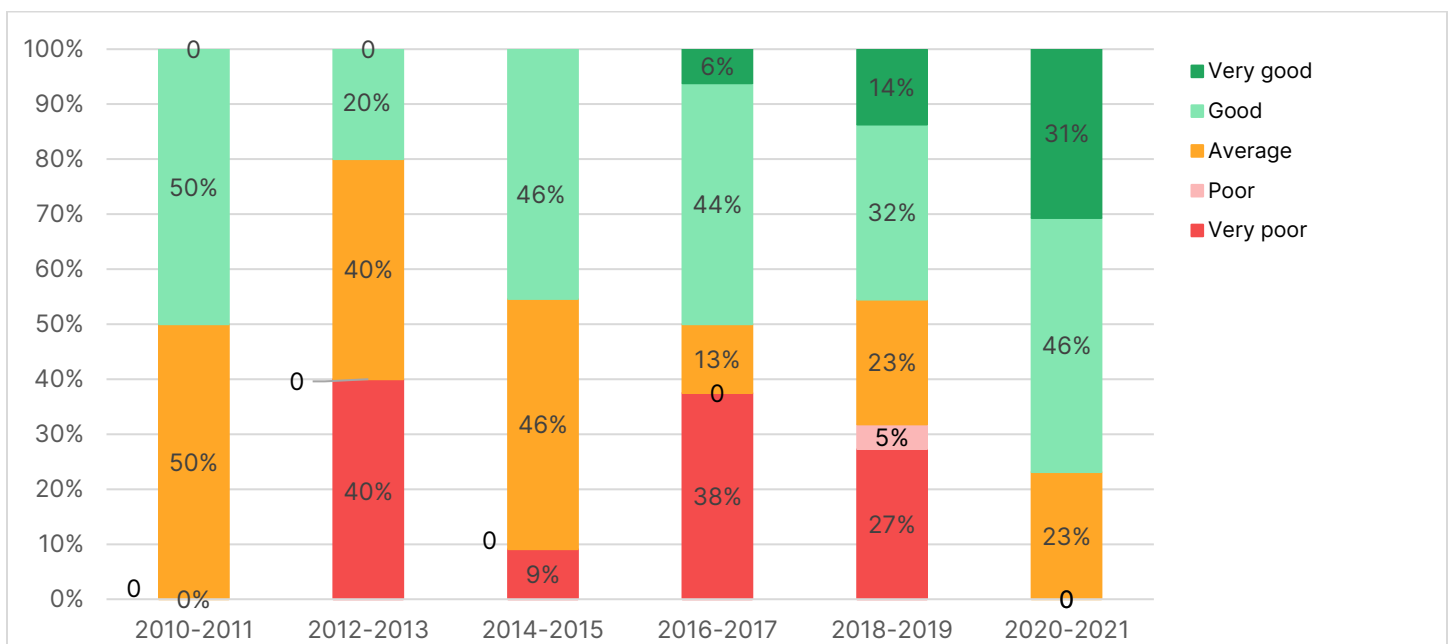
The other quality criteria showed similar trends. The inclusion of aggravating circumstances (where relevant) was a particular strength (87.5% of cases were rated "good" to "very good"). Meanwhile, the evidence submitted by the Office of the Attorney General was rated as "good" to "very good" in 85.4% of legal charges. The general strength of the evidence reinforces the need to focus on helping prosecutors better apply the correct statute to cases. In other words, the problem seems to lie in connecting the evidence with the correct statute. In terms of factual clarity and accuracy, 89.8% of legal charges were rated "good" to "very good." Finally, 92.7% of cases were rated as "good" to "very good" in the area of circumstantial details.

Use of summary proceedings[40]

This study found a total of 11 cases (12.2% of all cases analyzed) with summary proceedings: ten with a full plea bargain and one with an agreement at the trial phase. There were no full plea bargains prior to 2016.[41]

Table 23 shows that full plea bargains reduce the time it takes to reach a ruling by 509 days. In other words, a ruling is reached 3.4 times quicker when there is a full plea bargain. However, the sentence is 51.3% more lenient under full plea bargains (3.9 years versus 8.0 years). Also, perpetrators face an average of just 0.6 years, or seven months, of incarceration[42] under full plea bargains. The likelihood of a conviction is obviously 100% when there is a full plea bargain, compared to 57.6% when the case goes to trial. It is worth considering whether the time gained by reaching a conviction faster offsets the over 50% reduction in sentences and decrease in prison time of over 90%.

TABLE 23. COMPARISON OF RESULTS WITH AND WITHOUT A FULL PLEA BARGAIN

	Cases	Days between filing of case and sentencing	Average years of sentence	Average years of incarceration	Percentage of cases resulting in a conviction (summary proceedings or trial)
Cases that went to trial	33	725.0	8.0	7.5	57.6%
Case with full plea bargain	11	216.0	3.9	0.6	100.0%
Difference		**509.0**	**4.1**	**6.9**	**42.4%**

[40] There are three common types of summary proceedings in the Dominican Republic. The most frequent is the "full plea bargain," which occurs in the intermediate phase of the proceeding. Under this arrangement, the parties reach an agreement about the accused's guilt and about the sentence (in other words, the case does not go to trial). Another procedure is the "partial plea bargain," where the parties reach an agreement about the accused's guilt, but not about the sentence. This takes place at the trial phase and the trial judges determine the sentence to be applied. The final type, "informal plea bargains," are not clearly defined in the law and generate some legal controversy as the perpetrator admits guilt during the trial in exchange for a lighter or suspended sentence.

[41] Prior to 2015, full plea bargains were prohibited for crimes carrying maximum sentences of over five years. The Code of Criminal Procedure was amended in 2015 to allow full plea bargains for those crimes.

[42] The difference between the sentence and prison time is due to suspended sentences, a topic this study explores further in the Controversial Practices part of the Performance at the Trial Phase section.

Key findings

- The Anti-Trafficking Department of the National Police has dramatically increased its productivity with regards to CSEC and sex trafficking cases. It went from handling zero cases in 2010–2013 to 41 cases in 2014–2017 to 89 cases in 2018–2021.
- The ATD improved its productivity, despite multiple staffing and technological limitations.
- The quality of the ATD's investigations has improved. No case passed the quality standard in 2014–2015, while 25% of cases passed it in 2016–2019 and 40% passed it in 2020–2021. However, room for improvement remains.
- There is a large discrepancy between the records of the Office of the Attorney General and those of the National Police. According to prosecutor case files, 86.7% of cases resulted in an arrest and 70.4% led to a search and seizure operation, but police records reported percentages of only 32.3% and 30.6%, respectively. This difference underscores the shortcomings of the PJS's document control. There is no way to compare these two numbers to make sense of the discrepancy, making joint, evidence-based decisions difficult.

As shown in Graph 1, the ATD has dramatically increased its productivity. According to police case files, the ATD handled zero CSEC and sex trafficking cases in 2010–2013, but in 2014–2017 it handled 41, and in 2018-2021 it handled 89.

The ATD reported rescuing 1175 victims of sexual exploitation[43] in 2016–2021, as shown in Table 24.[44] It also reported conducting 113 search and seizure operations and making 91 arrests related to cases of sexual exploitation and human trafficking in 2016–2021 (see Graph 12). The department was particularly productive in 2019 and 2021, the years with the highest number of victims rescued and the most search and seizure operations and arrests. According to the ATD, the spike in arrests and search and seizures in 2021 was the result of two nationwide operations it performed that year.

TABLE 24. NUMBER OF VICTIMS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION RESCUED BY THE ANTI-TRAFFICKING DEPARTMENT OF THE NATIONAL POLICE, 2016–2021

Source: National Police Statistics, Open Access to Information, 2021 and 2022

VICTIMS RESCUED	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	TOTAL
Adult victims rescued	**247**	**169**	**127**	**403**	**109**	**120**	**1175**
Dominican	184	152	112	349	78	84	959
Venezuelan	30	2	6	19	14	31	102
Colombian	0	3	1	9	6	3	22
Haitian	33	12	8	26	11	2	92
Minor victims rescued	**9**	**16**	**12**	**23**	**11**	**25**	**96**
Dominican	6	9	8	16	8	9	56
Haitian	3	7	4	7	3	16	40
Total victims rescued	**256**	**185**	**139**	**426**	**120**	**145**	**1271**

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[43] "Sexual exploitation" was the ATD's term. They are not necessarily victims of CSEC and sex trafficking. They may be victims of other crimes involving sexual exploitation, such as pimping.

[44] The ATD did not keep statistics prior to 2016.

Source: National Police Statistics, Open Access to Information, 2021 and 2022
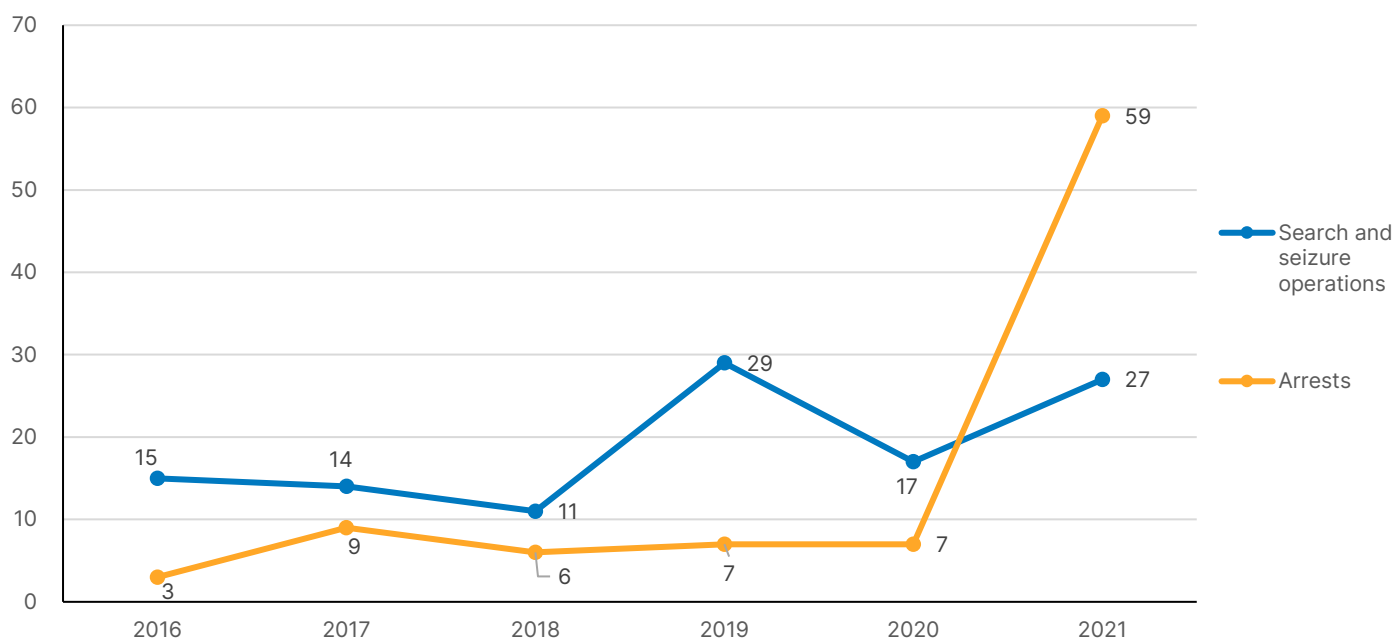
Importantly, the ATD achieved this increase in productivity despite major staffing and technological challenges. As shown in Table 25, the department had no laptops until 2019. Now, as of 2022, it has twenty. In 2016–2017, there was a ratio of 3.7 staff per cell phone. The 2022 ratio is 2.5. These numbers show progress, but also signal room for further improvement, especially to meet the demands of ATD's growing staff. While there were 21 investigators assigned to the ATD in 2022, the ATD has a nationwide mandate and handles crimes other than CSEC and sex trafficking. Additionally, some of these investigators are liaison officers who work in provinces where they may have responsibilities that go beyond anti-trafficking efforts.

TABLE 25. PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT OF THE ANTI-TRAFFICKING DEPARTMENT OF THE NATIONAL POLICE, 2016–2022

Source: National Police Statistics, Open Access to Information, 2021 and 2022
* Reported in April 2022

RESOURCES	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*
Investigative personnel	7	7	11	11	15	17	21
Administrative personnel	4	4	4	4	6	7	7
Vehicles	2	2	3	3	3	3	3
Computers	1	1	3	3	3	3	3
Laptops	-	-	-	10	10	20	20
Printers	1	1	3	3	-	-	-
Cell phones	3	3	5	5	1	1	11
Specialized equipment for investigations (CELLEBRITE)	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Electronic Module for Investigations mobile app	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Handheld Biometric Terminal	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

Despite the overall increase in productivity, the review of police case files found that the quality of police investigations has not increased in the same proportion. As shown in Table 26, there were no periods evaluated[45] in which quality exceeded the 70% minimum threshold considered acceptable. The current quality level is estimated to be less than 40%,[46] meaning that at least three of every five cases fail to meet the minimum criteria of the Investigative Quality Standard. However, as Graph 13 shows, the ATD's investigative quality has successfully increased since 2014.

This low investigative quality is likely related to the shortage of resources identified in Table 25. CSEC and sex trafficking require proactive and specialized investigations which require advanced technological capacity, so the lack of technological resources could have affected investigative quality.

TABLE 26. PERCENTAGE OF POLICE INVESTIGATIONS THAT MEET THE QUALITY STANDARD, PER PERIOD

Lot	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021
Quality percentage, per period (# that meet the quality standard/case files evaluated)	0% (0/5)	25% (2/19)	25% (2/19)	40% (5/19)

GRAPH 13. PERCENTAGE OF ATD CASES THAT MEET THE INVESTIGATIVE QUALITY STANDARD.
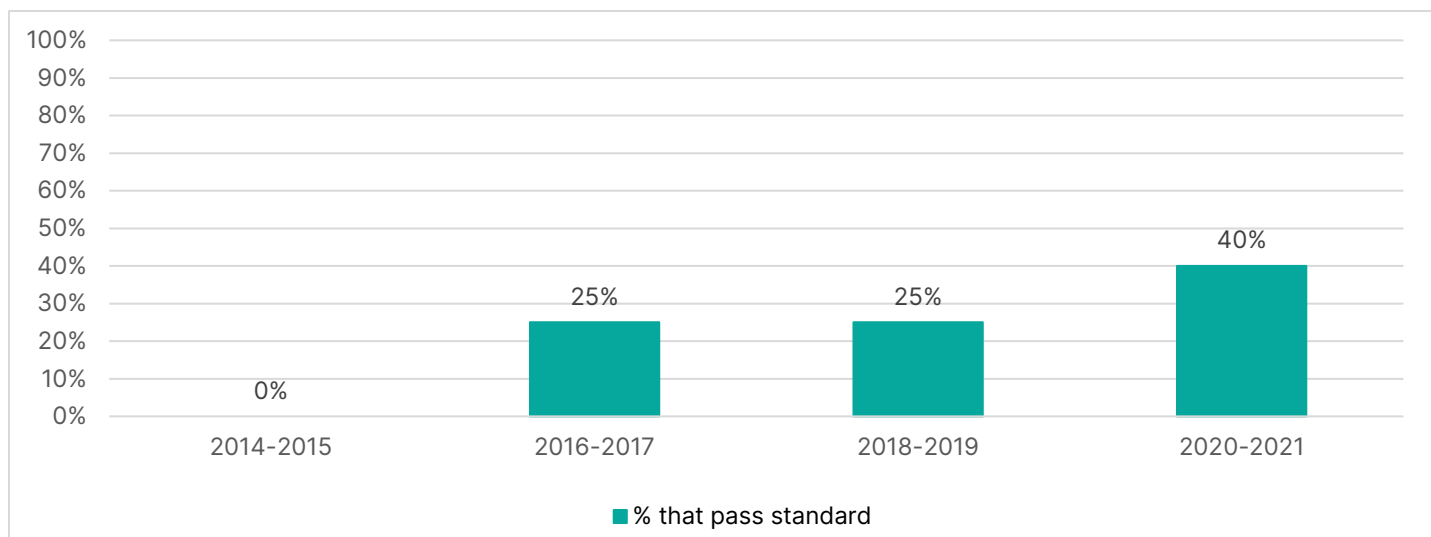
Graph 14 shows the results for each area. For ease of understanding, each area's quality is scored on a scale of 100, although each area keeps its weight according to the system explained in the Methods section (see Table 5). Graph 14 shows that performance within each area changes little from lot to lot. The main exception is in the inquiry phase, where the score for the 2020–2021 lot is nearly double that of any other lot. The data also shows continuous improvements in case management. For this reason, the analysis below compares 2020–2021 to all other periods (2014–2019) for these two divergent areas (the inquiry phase and case management). For the other three areas, the analysis covers the entire 2014–2021 period.[47]

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[45]For more information about how periods were created, see "Review of police records" in the "Methods" section.

[46] The lot's overall quality, based on the size of the sample and number of cases that do not meet the standard, is determined using a binomial distribution curve. This means the sample data cannot be interpreted as a simple percentage. According to this curve, 5 of 19 signifies quality of under 40%, considered unacceptable. The lot passes when the number of "case files that pass" is over 70% in the LQAS curve.

[47] Appendix 5 contains all data from the review of police records.

GRAPH 14. POLICE QUALITY, BY AREA, EVALUATED IN TWO-YEAR PERIODS, ALL CASES REVIEWED

Legend: ■ 2014-2015 ■ 2016-2017 ■ 2018-2019 ■ 2020-2021
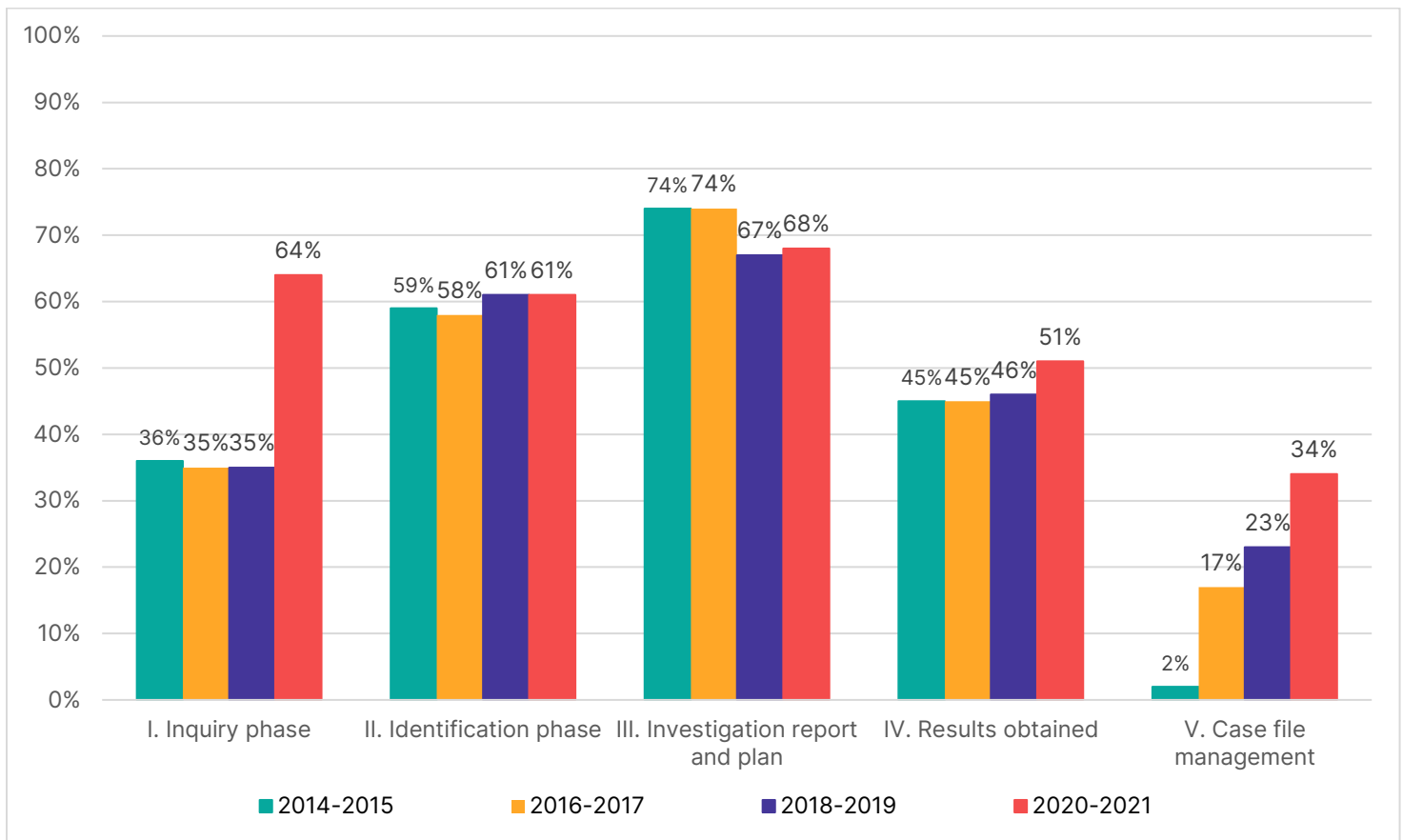
The area with the best score was the content of the investigation report and plan, with an average of 70 out of 100 for all cases reviewed. The strengths within this area are identifying the punishable act, identifying suspects, and determining the purpose of the crime. The weaknesses lie in establishing the modus operandi, the profile of victims, and the timeline, as well as documenting the investigative duties carried out.

The area of identification received a score of 60 points out of 100. The strongest aspects within this area are documenting suspects, their role, and potential aggravating factors; the weakest aspects are identifying flight risks and publishing alerts, documenting evidence of financial transactions linked to the purported crime, documenting the number of victims and the location of victims and suspects, and providing evidence on the possible modus operandi.

The actions taken and results obtained area received a score of 47 points out of 100. This area's primary weaknesses are not preparing a plan to mitigate possible operational risks (92%), not performing a search and seizure operation (69%), or incorrectly documenting a search and seizure when one is performed (19%). Arrests of suspects follow a similar pattern: no arrest is recorded in 68% of the case files evaluated, and when arrests are made, they are documented incorrectly (29%), affecting records of the reading of people's rights and records of personal searches. There is much room for improvement in the area of sensitive treatment for victims during rescue operations: no such measures were documented in 17 of 23 rescue operations. The police can also improve how they learn from the actions they've taken and the results they achieved: 38 of 41 case files have room for improvement in this area.

This data contrasts with the review of prosecutor case files, which found that 86.7% of cases resulted in an arrest and 70.4% led to a search and seizure operation, compared to only 32.3% and 30.6%, respectively, according

to police case files. This difference underscores the shortcomings of the PJS's overall document management processes. Without a case management system integrating police and prosecutor files, there is no way to reconcile the discrepancy between these statistics, making joint, evidence-based decisions difficult.

The discrepancy in arrest and search and seizure rates seems to confirm the hypothesis that prosecutor case files are biased towards cases that advanced in the criminal process. Conversely, police case files lack documents about the later stages of investigations, since the Office of the Attorney General would have begun to intervene more in cases resulting in an arrest. If that's the case, part of the low quality found at the ATD could be due to the lack of documents from the end of investigations.

The inquiry phase scored 64 points out of 100 in 2020–2021, compared to 35 points out of 100 in the combined 2014–2019 period. This 29-point improvement is a significant accomplishment for the ATD, since inquiry is one of its primary responsibilities. The improvement can mainly be attributed to correctly documenting the dates of the facts of the case (30% of cases in 2014–2019 compared to 68% in 2020–2021), in establishing a timeline of events (28% to 95%), in correctly recording the location of the facts of the case (65% to 95%), in using photographs to document aspects related to the facts of the case (53% to 95%), and in documenting basic vehicle identification information (14% to 63%).

Despite progress at the inquiry phase, inter-institutional coordination was still poor across all periods studied (2014–2021). Areas rated as weak are documenting a meeting with the prosecutor to jointly decide on next steps in the investigation, as well as coordinating with the Office of the Attorney General and CONANI when victims are minors.

In 2020–2021, the case file management system scored 34 points out of 100, compared to 18 points out of 100 in 2014–2019. This change is due to more cases being properly stored in a clearly labeled folder (30% of case files in 2014–2019, compared to 47% in 2020–2021) and more documentation about the date the case was filed at the ATD (14% to 53%). Also, in 2021–2022 the ATD conducted a self-assessment using EDI for five cases (26%), while in 2014–2019 it conducted none. The overall improvement in quality in 2020–2021 is likely due in part to the EDI self-assessment. The ATD had done an EDI self-assessment on four of the five cases that passed EDI in 2020–2021.[48] However, 34 out of 100 points leaves much room to improve case file management.

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[48] Of the five cases with record of an EDI self-assessment, only one failed to meet the quality standard, and this case scored 69%, or one point below the 70% threshold considered acceptable.

Key findings

- The review of police records found coordination with the Office of the Attorney General and CONANI in only 14.9% of cases involving minors (7/47).
- According to three survivors, 0.0% of their rescue operations were considered trauma informed. These interactions took place in 2015 and 2016.
- According to officials involved in rescue operations, 73.3% of these operations were trauma-informed in 2021, compared to 68.6% in 2022.
- Comments from survivors shed light on the inherent complexities of rescue operations. The state of consciousness of some victims may be altered by drugs and alcohol. Even when no alcohol and drugs are involved, rescue operations are often very disorienting to victims, so effective communication is crucial in order to build trust. Survivor accounts highlight an urgent need for professionals specializing in TIC and crisis intervention to participate in rescue operations.
- Of the three survivors who recounted experiences from 2014–2015, 66.7% experienced trauma-informed care while being taken to shelters.
- According to officials involved in taking victims to shelters, 70.0 % of rescue operations were trauma-informed in 2021, compared to 72.7 % in 2022.
- Most comments by officials who interact with victims—especially at specialized units of the National Police and Office of the Attorney General—display good levels of sensitivity.

In addition to when prosecutors take their testimony (see section on Sensitive treatment when taking testimony for investigations: prosecutors), victims also interact with government officials during rescue operations and when being taken to temporary shelters during the investigation phase. Ideally, the Office of the Attorney General, the National Police, and social service agencies like CONANI would effectively coordinate to properly assist the victim during the investigation. But according to police case files, only 14.9% of cases involving minors included coordination with the Office of the Attorney General and CONANI(7 of 47 case files).

Sensitive treatment during rescue operations: police and prosecutors

As shown in Table 27, the treatment victims received during rescue operations deteriorated slightly from 2021 to 2022. According to officials in 2022, 68.6% of rescue operations followed a trauma-informed approach, compared to 73.3% the previous year. The three survivors interviewed reported that 0.0% of their rescue operations were trauma informed.

In 2021, 15 officials responded to the rescue operations section of the TIC interviewing guide. Of these officials, 13.3% responded about an operation in the previous three months, 26.7% in the previous six months, and 60.0% from over six months prior to the interview. In 2022, 16 officials responded regarding rescue operations: 6.3% about cases that happened the same week as the interview, 25.0% less than three months prior, 25.0% about cases three to six months prior, and 43.7% regarding cases that had occurred over six months prior to the interview.

TABLE 27. TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE DURING RESCUE OPERATIONS

INTERACTION	SURVIVORS		2021 OFFICIALS		2022 OFFICIALS	
	Number of responses	Percentage of TIC	Number of responses	Percentage of TIC	Number of responses	Percentage of TIC
Investigative testimony	3	0.0%	15	73.3%	16	68.6%

Police officers and prosecutors offered important information about their protocol for dealing with victims. In most rescue operations, psychologists—sometimes from CONANI, the INACIF team, or another agency or NGO—handle communication with victims. A police officer who interacted with victims in rescue operations said, "We bring the INACIF team when minors are involved.[49] The psychologist handles the emotional side" (2021). Officials who interact with victims and some senior officials observed that rescue operations sometimes violate protocols when someone without training in the issue participates. In one case referenced in 2022, the team failed to provide trauma-informed care because it lacked government personnel specializing in crisis management.

The study found a certain level of awareness among specialized personnel regarding the treatment victims should receive. This awareness is illustrated in a quote from a police officer:

> When we rescue a victim, she doesn't really understand that we're helping her . . . And anything you say or communicate, she'll take poorly. So you have to try to bear with her, put yourself in her shoes, see things from her point of view, and treat her as agreeably as possible (2021).

The key values of trauma-informed care for rescue operations are trustworthiness and safety. Regarding the safety of victims, a significant percentage of officials mentioned that separating victims and suspects is a fundamental action that rescue operations in both 2021 and 2022 always sought to ensure: "We are very careful about this aspect, about separating the victim and suspect" (official, 2022). They also reported different strategies for building trust, like trying to have officers be the same sex as victims and, as much as possible, having plain-clothed police personnel interact with victims.

In contrast to the levels of TIC reported by officials, none of the rescue operations described by the three survivors interviewed were considered trauma informed. According to these interviews, the operations (from 2015 and 2016) scored 93.3% on the value of safety, which is similar to the scores of 95.1% and 93.4% for 2021 and 2022 according to interviews with officials. But the value of trustworthiness received a score of 33.3%—much lower than the 90.0% and 87.5% reported by officials in 2021 and 2022. In rescue operations, the value of trustworthiness means using understandable language and explaining what is happening and why to the victim. The large gap between the scores based on survivor accounts and those based on reports from officials highlights the importance of clarity, honesty, and proactive communication with the victim early in the rescue operation.

Specific comments from survivors revealed the intrinsic complexities of providing TIC in rescue operations, especially in relation to the value of trustworthiness. A significant obstacle to effective communication with victims early in the rescue is drug and alcohol use, which alters that person's state of consciousness. One survivor referred to this factor when asked if she received clear communication as the operation unfolded: "No, because right then I was . . . Most of us were drug users. When I got into the truck, when they put me in the truck . . . Later we woke up and that's when they started explaining things to us" (female survivor).

Even when no drugs or alcohol are involved, rescue operations are often very disorienting to victims. As another female survivor recounts:

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[49] The study team could not confirm whether the INACIF routinely participates in rescue operations throughout the Dominican Republic.

When I ended up beside my sisters, that's when I felt a bit better, because I really had no clue what was going on. I was nervous, because of all the questions they were asking me and because I realized I didn't know how to, or couldn't, answer any of them.

An official gave another example of a victim that illustrates the complexity of rescue operations: she "was worried about where she would end up after being there because she already had [her] child, a baby in her arms" (2022).

Rescue operations can be shocking if victims do not see themselves as such. They do not understand that "they are being exploited and we are there to help them. Because when rescued, many are agitated and start to panic, but then when we start talking to them, and they start to trust us" (official, 2022).

These comments show the strong need for TIC and crisis intervention specialists to participate in rescue operations to handle tensions related to drug and alcohol consumption, and to communicate effectively in the crucial first moments of the operation.

Based on the review of police and prosecutor records, having specialized personnel present is a challenge. Only 12.7% of prosecutor case files document the presence of psychologists during rescues. Police case files followed a similar pattern: sensitive treatment measures were only documented in six of the 23 cases involving rescues (26.1%). To an extent, this seems to contradict what officials reported about following protocols that require specialized personnel to be present.

As with the postponement of hearings described in the Victim testimony section, these rates may be due to poor document management and may not reflect on-the-ground reality. However, what an institution decides to document reflects its priorities. Even without reaching a definitive conclusion about whether these percentages are accurate, having specialized personnel participate in rescue operations and having the Office of the Attorney General and National Police document that participation should be top priorities.

Sensitive treatment when moving victims to shelters: police

As shown in Table 28, the populations interviewed give relatively similar rates of trauma-informed care when moving victims to shelters: 66.7% according to the three survivors, 70.0% according to 10 officials in 2021, and 72.7% according to 11 officials in 2022. These interviews were about transfers that took place in 2014 and 2015. During interviews with officials in 2021, 30.0% of the interviews were about transfers that had happened in the previous three months, 20.0% in the previous six months, and 50.0% over six months prior to the interview. In 2022, 9.7% of the interviews were about transfers that had happened in the same week as the interview, 9.1% in the same month, 36.4% within three months, 18.2% in the previous three to six months, and 27.3% about transfers that had happened over six months prior to the interview.

TABLE 28. TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE WHEN MOVING VICTIMS TO SHELTERS

INTERACTION	SURVIVORS		2021 OFFICIALS		2022 OFFICIALS	
	Number of responses	Percentage of TIC	Number of responses	Percentage of TIC	Number of responses	Percentage of TIC
Transfer to the shelter	3	66.7%	10	70.0%	11	72.7%

The percentages for the essential values of trustworthiness and safety reported by survivors were similar to those reported by officials interviewed in 2021 and in 2022. The slight increase from 2021 to 2022 was driven by an increase in trustworthiness, which rose from 88.2% in 2021 to 93.8% in 2022.

Specific comments from interviewees showed they have a good understanding of how to treat a victim sensitively when moving them to a shelter. According to the officials interviewed in 2021 and 2022, the police usually leave with the perpetrators, while the victims are accompanied by psychologists and prosecutors. As one official explains, "The psychologist deals with the victim, because really he or she is the one authorized and trained to handle the victim in that time of crisis" (2022). Achieving trauma-informed care in these cases requires always following these protocols.

Likewise, in both 2021 and 2022, officials explained that they try to operate in plain clothes in an attempt to generate more trust and to avoid triggering fear and mistrust among survivors. They also mention that survivors are transferred with a guard; they try to transfer women victims with women guards, to protect victims' physical and psychological safety.

Officials said that when untrained personnel participate, they may display insensitive attitudes: "Other officers said, 'If I were you, I'd pull her by the hair'" (2022). Other officials give mixed responses: "I won't use handcuffs, but I will speak to her firmly: stay calm, we're here to help you, we're not going to hurt you, it's best for you to cooperate so everything goes smoothly, without incident" (2022). On the one hand, this quote shows a clear distinction between how perpetrators and victims are treated, since the officer obviously sees a problem with using handcuffs in a crisis situation and lets victims know that they are there to help. However, the officer has difficulty not resorting to notions of authority and cooperation that are typical of interactions with perpetrators but are not appropriate for interactions with victims.

The officials interviewed in 2022 emphasized that specialized personnel at trafficking units had received different kinds of training. They attested to their skill and growth in recent years: "Lots of officers are being trained every day to make sure mistakes we might have made six years ago no longer happen now" (2022). Senior officials also recognized this progress in their interviews, but they said that training and sensitivity actions should cover all members of the police and prosecutors.

One police officer in particular shared a highly trauma-informed practice: "We always tell victims where they are being taken, and we read them their rights, but how long it will take? . . . We don't tell them exactly how long, because it all depends on how long the investigation takes" (2022). This police officer communicates clearly and precisely about what will happen, but does not promise what he or she cannot deliver. It may be tempting to many officials to give an estimate of how long the victim will stay at a shelter, especially since many victims specifically ask how much time they will spend there. However, the best approach is to explain that they don't know how long, because it is not up to the official but rather depends on multiple external factors.

Key findings

- Of all prosecutor cases reviewed, 33.7% go to trial. When formal charges are filed, 55.9% of cases go to trial.
- Nearly half of rulings (48.7%) pass the Quality Standard for Rulings. Both the quality and quantity of rulings rose from 2010–2013 to 2014–2017, but in 2018–2021 the quality of the rulings declined compared to 2014–2017.
- The sentence is suspended in 53.3% of cases with a conviction. The perpetrator is usually incarcerated for 1.2 years less than the sentence specifies. The average sentence is 6.9 years and the average time spent in prison is 5.7 years across all cases studied.
- When judges issue their rulings, 47.9% of those convicted are not in preventive detention at the time.
- For CSEC convictions (excluding cases where the accused was simultaneously convicted for sex trafficking), the accused was in prison at the time of the ruling in 29.4% of cases. The average sentence is 4.4 years. The sentence is suspended in 66.7% of cases, reducing prison time to 3.2 years in a typical case, which is close to the minimum legal sentence of three years.
- The number of sex trafficking convictions has increased in recent years. For sex trafficking convictions, the accused was in prison at the time of the ruling in 63.2% of cases. The average sentence is 9.6 years, which is less than the minimum legal sentence of 15 years. The sentence is suspended in 46.2% of cases, so in a typical case, the person convicted spends 7.7 years in prison.

Of all the prosecutor cases reviewed, 33.7% went to trial. When formal charges were filed and there was no full plea bargain, 55.9% of cases went to trial. The rate of cases that reach the trial phase varies widely among the different two-year intervals. In 2014–2015 and 2016–2017, the rate was 81.8% and 55.6%, respectively. Meanwhile, the rate in 2018–2019 was 22.9%, and in 2020–2021 it was only 7.7%. Cases with rulings followed the same pattern: 2018–2019 had among the lowest rates of cases with rulings (34.3%) despite having the highest overall number of cases with rulings (12 cases). These proportional declines can be explained by the reasons described in previous sections (the COVID-19 pandemic, the timing of data collection, a bias towards cases that reached the courts in the data from 2010–2017, and the heavier PJS caseload).

The 2014–2015 period was pivotal for convictions for the crimes analyzed in this study. From 2010 to 2013, there were only two cases that resulted in convictions. But in 2014–2015, there were 8 (72.7% of cases). Then in 2016–2017 there were 10 (55.6% of cases) and in 2018–2019 there were also 10 (28.6% of cases). This turning point in prosecutions coincides with the creation of the PETT on February 4, 2013, and the start of IJM's work in 2014. The decline in cases resulting in acquittals follows the same pattern. From 2012 to 2013, acquittals were relatively common: 75% of rulings acquitted the accused. In 2014–2015, there were no acquittals at all, and in 2016–2017 and 2018–2019, 26.7% and 16.7% of rulings acquitted the accused, respectively. Acquittals in CSEC and sex trafficking cases are increasingly rare.

Nearly half of the rulings evaluated (48.7%) passed the quality standard for rulings. Table 29 provides a breakdown of the evaluation for all rulings. The verdicts tend to be polarized between "good" or "poor," while the legal grounds range from "average" to "good" in 76.9% of rulings.

TABLE 29. QUALITY CRITERIA RATINGS FOR RULINGS

QUALITY CRITERION	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD
Legal grounds	9 (23.1%)	16 (41%)	14 (35.9%)
Verdict	13 (33.3%)	9 (23.1%)	17 (43.6%)

As shown in Graph 15, the quality of rulings rose sharply between 2010–2013 and 2014–2017, from 40.0% of rulings passing the quality standard to 66.7%. This improvement occurred despite there being 4.2 times more rulings in 2014–2017 than in 2010–2013 (21 rulings compared to 5). The regression in the quality of rulings in cases filed in 2018–2021 is therefore concerning. Of the 13 rulings from this period that researchers evaluated, only three (23.1%) passed the quality standard.

GRAPH 15. PERCENT OF RULINGS THAT PASSED THE QUALITY STANDARD, 2010–2021

■ % of rulings evaluated that pass the quality standard
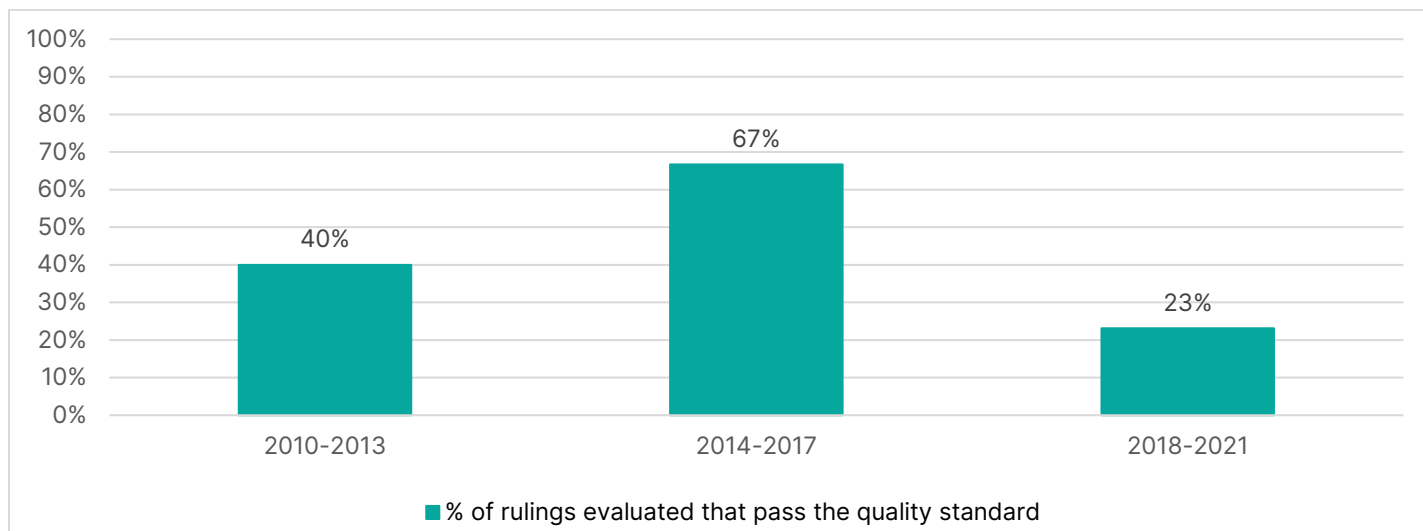
An analysis of the two quality criteria by four-year periods shows that the drop in ruling quality in 2018–2021 is driven by both criteria, but especially verdicts. As shown in Graph 16, 2018–2021 has the highest percentage of verdicts classified as "poor" (46.2%) and "average" (30.8%), as well as the lowest percentage of verdicts classified as "good" of all periods studied.

In practical terms, according to the tool used, this means that 46.2% of the rulings have verdicts "that do not find the accused guilty (when, based on the evidence, it is reasonable to conclude that they are), or in the event of a conviction, suspends the sentence. The verdicts may hold the victim responsible" (poor). It also means that 30.8% of rulings have a verdict that "based on the legal grounds and facts, finds the accused guilty and convicts them, but the sentence does not correspond to the crime" (average).

GRAPH 16. CHANGES IN THE QUALITY OF VERDICTS, 2010–2021
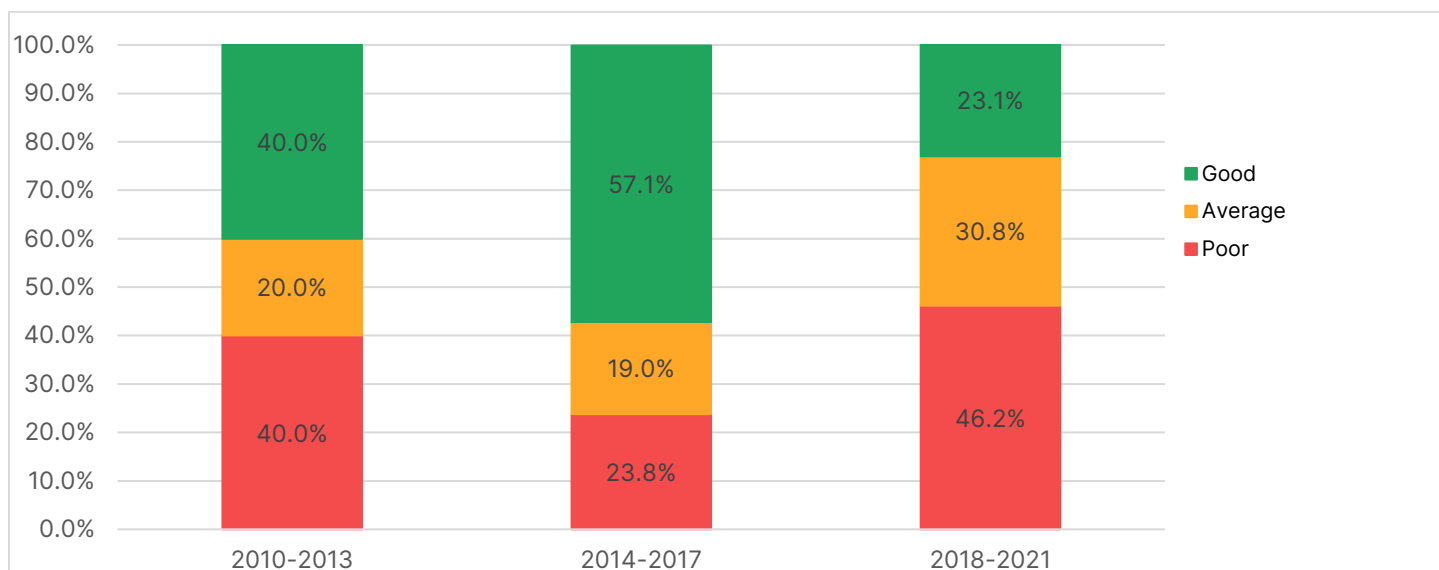
Controversial practices: suspending sentences and changing restrictive measures

There are two practices at the trial phase that are both controversial and common in cases of CSEC and sex trafficking. The first is the suspended sentence, where the bench of judges convicts the perpetrator but establishes that the sentence will not be fully enforced if the perpetrator meets certain good behavior requirements. Suspended sentences can mean that the perpetrator spends less time in prison than the minimum established by law.

Suspended sentences can be a valuable legal tool to avoid overburdening prison systems and avoid an excessively punitive criminal justice system. However, sex trafficking and CSEC are particularly serious crimes. Human trafficking, for example, is considered modern slavery, and CSEC involves taking advantage of the vulnerability of minors.

According to the data, sentences were suspended in 53.3% of cases with a conviction. When cases with plea bargains are excluded and only sentences suspended by the bench of judges at the trial phase are counted, the rate is 26.3%. In terms of sentencing, the person convicted is usually imprisoned for 1.2 years less than the sentence specifies across all cases studied. The average sentence is 6.9 years, while convicts actually spend an average of 5.7 years in prison across all cases studied, including those in which the sentence was not suspended.

The second controversial practice is modifying restrictive measures before reaching a conviction. Safeguarding the rights of the accused is extremely important. Preventive detention should only be used as a precautionary measure when there is good reason for doing so. But the data has shown that even for serious crimes with cases strong enough to secure a conviction, the accused is not being held in preventive detention throughout the proceeding.

In cases of CSEC and sex trafficking, granting liberty to a perpetrator is a threat to public safety, giving them the opportunity to victimize other people or attempt to evade justice, which has happened in cases in the Dominican Republic.[50] According to the data, 52.1% of those convicted are not in preventive detention when the judges issue their ruling. In other words, almost half are not in prison when they are convicted.

ANALYSIS OF CSEC AND SEX TRAFFICKING CONVICTIONS

Convictions for CSEC and sex trafficking warrant an in-depth analysis. Sex trafficking is considered a more serious crime and carries a heavier sentence than CSEC, so this section splits the analysis based on the crime for which the perpetrator was convicted. According to Table 30 and Table 31, there were a total of 22 cases with a conviction for CSEC and sex trafficking of the 98 cases studied, or 73.3% of the 30 cases that had a conviction.

Analysis of CSEC convictions

While Table 30 documents nine total cases with CSEC convictions, there were four cases[51] with convictions for both sex trafficking and CSEC, so there was a total of 13 cases with CSEC convictions. Notably, there was only one conviction for CSEC prior to 2014–2015. The increase in convictions starting in 2014 was a significant turning point for the PJS.

For cases with CSEC convictions (excluding those simultaneously convicted for sex trafficking), the accused was in prison at the time of the ruling in 29.4% of cases. In 2014–2015, only 15.4% of those convicted were

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[50] See the case of Heinrich Christlieb, for example (Office of the Attorney General of the Republic, 2019), a German national who fled to Haiti after being released on bail.

[51] One case filed in 2011, two cases filed in 2017, and one case in 2019, shown in Table 30.

in prison at the time of their conviction. The average sentence was 4.4 years. The sentence was suspended in 66.7% of cases, reducing prison time to 3.2 years in a typical case, which is close to the minimum legal sentence of three years. Rulings passed the quality standard in 44.4% of cases, which is slightly lower than the rate of 50.0% for all cases studied.

TABLE 30. SENTENCE IMPOSED FOR CASES WITH A CSEC CONVICTION

INDICATOR	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	TOTAL
Cases	5	2	2	9
Cases with IJM assistance	4	2	1	7
Cases resulting in a conviction (summary proceedings and trial)	5	2	2	9
People convicted	13	2	2	17
People convicted who were in prison at the time of the ruling	2	2	1	5
Percentage of people convicted who were in prison at the time of the ruling	15.4%	100.0%	50.0%	29.4%
Cases with suspended sentence (trial and summary proceedings)	2	2	2	6
Percentage of cases with suspended sentence (trial and summary proceedings)	40.0%	100.0%	100.0%	66.7%
Average years of sentence	5.0	2.5	2.5	4.4
Average years in prison	4.1	0.7	0.0	3.2
Percentage of cases that passed the quality standard for rulings	60.0%	50.0%	0.0%	44.4%

Analysis of cases with sex trafficking convictions

Table 31 shows how the number of cases with sex trafficking convictions has risen in recent years. Convicted persons were in prison at the time of the ruling 63.2% of the time. The average sentence was 9.6 years, which is less than the minimum legal sentence of 15 years for human trafficking convictions. The sentence was suspended in 46.2% of cases, causing the defendant to spend 7.7 years in prison in a typical case.

TABLE 31. SENTENCE IMPOSED FOR CASES WITH A SEX TRAFFICKING CONVICTION

INDICATOR	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	TOTAL
Cases	1	1	2	5	4	13
Cases with IJM assistance	0	0	2	3	0	5
Cases resulting in a conviction (summary proceedings and trial)	1	1	2	5	4	13
People convicted	2	3	2	7	5	19
People convicted who were in prison at the time of the ruling	1	3	2	3	3	12
Percentage of people convicted who were in prison at the time of the ruling	50.0%	100.0%	100.0%	42.9%	60.0%	63.2%
Cases with suspended sentence (trial and summary)	-	1	-	3	2	6
Percentage of cases with suspended sentence (trial and summary)	-	100.0%	-	60.0%	50.0%	46.2%
Average years of sentence	10.0	10.7	15.0	9.3	8.0	9.6
Average years in prison	40.0	10.6	15.0	5.4	6.8	7.7
Percentage of cases that passed the quality standard for rulings	100.0%	50.0%	100.0%	100.0%	25.0%	76.9%

Key findings
- Survivors recounting experiences from 2015–2019 shared that they received trauma-informed care at court hearings 33.3% of the time.
- According to officials interviewed in 2022, the rate of trauma-informed court hearings increased from 58.3% in 2021 to 80.0% in 2022.
  - The main reason for this change is more frequent use of the Gesell Chamber to take victims' testimony before trial.
- The logistical processes prior to the hearings can be improved for future hearings in Gesell Chambers. Specifically, IJM recommends better hearing coordination, reduced waiting times at the courthouse for survivors, and ensuring that survivors do not encounter the accused while waiting for the hearing.

As shown in Table 32, survivors considered court hearings to be trauma-informed 33.3% of the time for experiences that occurred between 2015 and 2019. In contrast, officials described major improvements in trauma-informed care at hearings, from 58.3% in 2021 to 80.0% in 2022. During interviews with officials in 2021, 30.0% of the interviews were about transfers that had happened in the previous three months, 20.0% in the previous six months, and 50.0% over six months prior to the interview. In 2022, 9.7% of the interviews were about transfers that had happened in the same week as the interview, 9.1% in the same month, 36.4% within three months, 18.2% in the previous three to six months, and 27.3% about transfers that had happened over six months prior to the interview.

TABLE 32. TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE DURING COURT HEARINGS

INTERACTION	SURVIVORS		2021 OFFICIALS		2022 OFFICIALS	
	Number of responses	Percentage of TIC	Number of responses	Percentage of TIC	Number of responses	Percentage of TIC
Court hearing	3	33.3%	12	58.3%	10	80.0%

Survivors usually appear at the court hearing where they testify. The increase in trauma-informed care correlates with greater use of the Gesell Chamber to take testimony prior to the trial.

This shift boosted the scores for TIC values. The largest improvements were in the values of safety (90.1% to 97.8%) and choice (77.3% to 85.7%). Choice depends on whether officials explained to survivors their rights and options. This explanation is a routine step when taking pretrial testimony in a Gesell Chamber.[52] Meanwhile, the value of safety can be broken down into various competencies, including: limiting questions to those strictly necessary, making sure the suspect and victim are separated, and creating a safe environment.

The Gesell Chamber makes it easier to limit questions to only those that are necessary because a judge screens them and a psychologist directly relays them to victims. The psychology team also adapts questions to make them age appropriate. As one official explained, "The judge acts as a mediator . . . . First they ask him/her the questions, and she/he authorizes the psychologist to ask them of the minor in the most appropriate way,

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[52] See also article 19, Section 1, Subsections G and O of the Protocol for Forensic Interviews with Victims and Witnesses in a Vulnerable State (Judiciary, 2020).

given the victim's vulnerability" (2021). Another source said that insisting on unnecessary questions subjects the victim to "a double state of vulnerability" (2022). Moreover:

> They always try to open the conversation to make the girl feel safe. They also invite her to use simple, common words, for example, they mention parts of the body to confirm the exploitation. (2022).

> Can you tell me in your words? If you want, I can give you a piece of paper so you can write it down, or if you want you can show me with a doll how he hit you (2022).

The Office of the Attorney General reinforces the judge's mediator role by objecting to questions asked by defense attorneys and limiting them to only what's necessary:

> When questions are not pertinent to the proceedings, we object to them. And the judge officiates. The judge makes the defense rephrase questions if he or she thinks they have some bearing on the case or views them as not pertinent or as affecting the dignity of the person being questioned or interviewed (2022).

Likewise, the Gesell Chamber's physical design separates the victim from the accused. A safe environment is often created through the physical setting, and a Gesell Chamber is more comfortable than a typical courtroom. Symbolic resources like dolls can also help create a friendly atmosphere.

> It's important to remember that the child or adolescent is going to be taken somewhere unfamiliar to them, a place they're not used to . . . And one way we make them much more comfortable is by having trained personnel do the interviewing. We also reassure them that they won't have to face the person who harmed them, that they will be in a safe and private space, and that we are there to protect them (2022).

According to officials, the conditions of the space itself and the protocols used mean there are few distractions. For example, cell phones have to be turned off in this space, and the process revolves around the interview. One official gave this description:

> Before the interview begins in the Gesell Chamber, the judge explains the topic of the interview and how it will be conducted to all participants . . . It's very unlikely that inappropriate terms or anything like that would be used in interviews, because the rules are laid out before starting the interview (2021).

> Then the psychologist comes in, identifies herself, and makes a connection with the victim before starting. They have a moment to talk and get to know each other. Then the psychologist asks the victim if she knows why she is there, and the victim begins a free narrative, and things start to emerge. The psychologist asks her questions as they go (2021).

Although using the Gesell chamber to take victims' testimony before trial has been an important innovation, the background of the hearing still presents issues regarding sensitive treatment. One example is the amount of time survivors sometimes have to wait for the hearing to begin. Having to wait for hours can influence minors' behavior.

> The interview began sometime in the afternoon. The children had arrived in the morning. Since the court left them for last, the judge allowed very few questions. The excuse he gave was exactly that, to not overwhelm the children with questions . . . Because they had spent the whole day there and were worn out (2022).

This also means that the safety of survivors, service providers, and government officials could be compromised if they meet relatives or people linked to the accused. One person highlighted the risk they run when going to the court:

When we go to the courts, we have to get there as fast as we can, because sometimes relatives of the other party even want to approach the adolescent… to try to convince her to change her story, and we practically have to slip into the court unnoticed (official, 2022).

The Dominican PJS needs to review and expedite its logistical processes for taking testimony at hearings.

Traditional hearings, outside of a Gesell Chamber, negatively impact survivors' treatment. There are more distractions at normal hearings. For example, a survivor recounted that when she testified, the officials seemed "very distracted," "and also when the attorneys would speak, they acted distracted. When the accused would speak, they would pay attention to him. They wouldn't pay attention to me. They were looking elsewhere." Moreover, both officials and survivors reported that the technical terms used, especially in court, keep survivors from clearly understanding the proceeding. One survivor shared, "I only understood a few things." Sometimes victims are Haitian, and their testimony has to be taken through an interpreter; some officials identified a lack of interpreters as an important challenge.

As in other steps of the proceeding, some survivors expressed feeling distressed at the hearing phase: "I felt very upset, and nervous about what would happen" (survivor). The story of one survivor in particular shows how stressful and confusing a legal proceeding can be. She shared that she felt unhappy because she had to speak in court, even though she did not want to and there was a video recording of testimony she gave as a minor from the Gesell Chamber:

I remember that the prosecutor alone was trying to convince them to show the recording, because I didn't want to speak. The judge told him that I was now legally an adult, and he told him that it didn't matter, that it happened when I was a minor . . . The prosecutor said no, I shouldn't have to speak, but then they made me speak.

The study identified a few tactics used in the PJS when victims are distressed at hearings, which happens frequently:

Most [judges], at least the ones I've worked with, are usually very empathetic toward witnesses and ask them if they need more time, or if they need water. That was the case at that hearing in particular, and it almost always happens at other hearings, because they are intense situations (official, 2021).

Performance of the public justice system in providing comprehensive services for survivors

Key findings

- The Dominican PJS lacks short- and long-term services for victims of CSEC and sex trafficking.
  - There are short-term services for minor victims at CONANI shelters, but there are often no specialized personnel to meet these victims' specific needs, and there are no shelters that specialize in CSEC.
  - In the long term, the government does not offer comprehensive services for a complete recovery for survivors.
- There were higher levels of trauma-informed care in 2022 compared to 2021.
- The Judiciary does not often act to promote short- or long-term care for victims. Judges ordered psychotherapeutic treatment or protection at shelters in less than 5% of cases reviewed.
- Everyone interviewed (officials and one survivor) reported experiencing trauma-informed interactions at their last case management meeting.

JUDICIAL INVOLVEMENT IN SERVICES FOR A COMPLETE RECOVERY

According to data obtained from prosecutor case files, the Judiciary does not often order short- or long-term care for victims. Court-ordered psychotherapeutic treatment for victims was recorded in 4.0% of cases. The court ordered the victim to be placed in a shelter in 4.2% of cases.

TABLE 33. COURT ORDERS FOR SERVICES FOR VICTIMS

INDICATOR	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	TOTAL
Percentage of cases with court–ordered psychotherapeutic treatment	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	7.1%	4.0%	0.0%	4.0%
Percentage of cases where victim was placed in shelter by court order	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	4.3%	0.0%	4.2%

SHORT-TERM SERVICES

SUMMARY OF LEVELS OF TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

Trauma-informed care is an important factor in survivors' complete recovery. If survivors are treated well, they are less likely to withdraw from the court case and more likely to continue receiving psycho-social support. Since trauma-informed care has been discussed extensively in other sections of this report, this section merely highlights general trends across all interactions.

As explained in the Methods section, the study cannot offer a direct comparison between what survivors and officials report, but survivor perspectives do help shed light on what treatment was like in the past. IJM can, however, draw a direct comparison between what officials reported in 2021 and 2022.

As shown in Graph 17, levels of trauma-informed care were generally higher in 2022 than in 2021, and they were also higher than the levels reported by survivors for 2014–2019. There were major changes in interactions for taking testimony within the prosecutor's investigation and at the trial phase. There were small shifts in reports of trauma-informed care for rescue operations and transfers to shelters.

This means survivors are receiving better treatment in their interactions with officials. Most interactions analyzed happen at the start of the case. The better the treatment at the outset, the more likely survivors are to continue receiving support and remain in the court proceeding.

GRAPH 17. LEVELS OF TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE FOR ALL INTERACTIONS, INTERVIEWS WITH SURVIVORS IN 2021 AND OFFICIALS IN 2021/2022
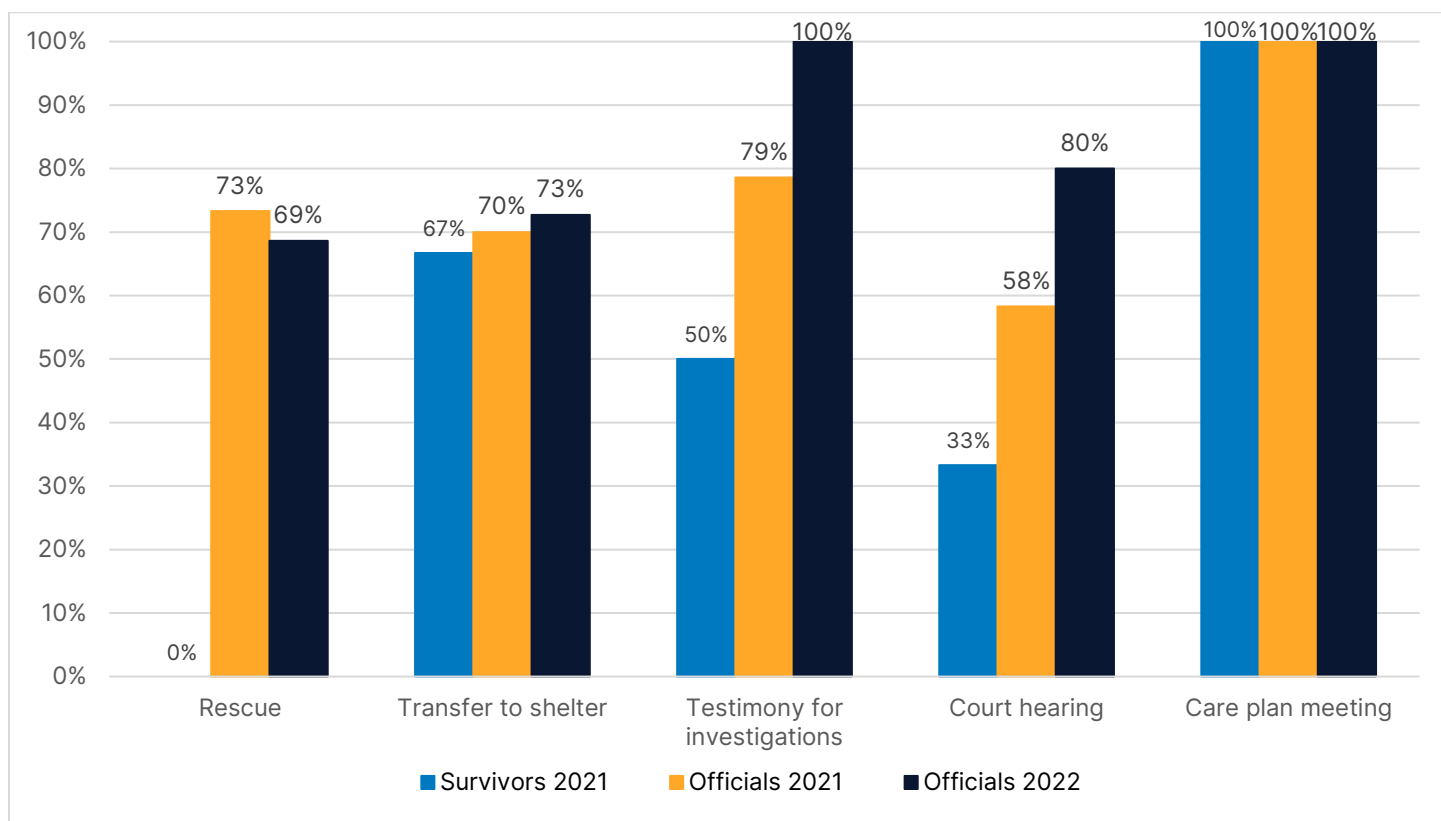
TABLE 34. NUMBER OF RESPONSES AND LEVELS OF TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE FOR ALL INTERACTIONS, INTERVIEWS WITH SURVIVORS 2021 AND OFFICIALS 2021/2022

INTERACTION	SURVIVORS 2021		OFFICIALS 2021		OFFICIALS 2022	
	Number of responses	Percentage of TIC	Number of responses	Percentage of TIC	Number of responses	Percentage of TIC
Rescue	3	0.0%	15	73.3%	16	68.6%
Transfer to shelter	3	66.7%	10	70.0%	11	72.7%
Investigative testimony	4	50.0%	14	78.6%	9	100.0%
Court hearing	3	33.3%	12	58.3%	10	80.0%
Care plan meeting	1	100.0%	7	100.0%	12	100.0%
Total	**14**	**42.9%**	**58**	**74.1%**	**58**	**82.8%**

Nineteen people were interviewed about the same type of interaction in 2021 and 2022. The study can draw a direct comparison within this group to know whether or not treatment for victims improved. Table 35

shows that levels of trauma-informed care did improve from 2021 to 2022. Specifically, the trauma-informed care scores improved in 40.0% of interactions, stayed the same in 40.0% of interactions, and worsened in 20.0% of interactions. As shown in the last two columns, 76.0% of interactions were considered trauma-informed in 2021, compared to 84.0% in 2022. Officials 8, 13, 18, and 19 had interactions that were not trauma-informed in 2021 but achieved trauma-informed care in 2022. By comparison, only official 6 regressed in achieving trauma-informed care.

TABLE 35. CHANGES IN LEVELS OF TIC, ACCORDING TO OFFICIALS INTERVIEWED IN 2021 AND 2022

#	Institution	Interaction	Score in 2021	Score in 2022	Change	TIC in 2021	TIC in 2022
1	CONANI	Case management	100	100	0	TIC	TIC
2	CONANI	Case management	100	100	0	TIC	TIC
3	CONANI	Case management	92	97	+ 5	TIC	TIC
4	CONANI	Case management	100	86	- 14	TIC	TIC
5	National Police	Rescue	100	100	0	TIC	TIC
6	National Police	Rescue	91	86	- 5	TIC	No TIC
		Transfer	100	74	- 26	TIC	No TIC
7	National Police	Rescue	93	100	+ 7	TIC	TIC
8	Office of the Attorney General	Hearing	80	87	+ 7	No TIC	TIC
9	National Police	Rescue	100	100	0	TIC	TIC
10	National Police	Transfer	93	100	+ 7	TIC	TIC
11	National Police	Rescue	100	100	0	TIC	TIC
		Transfer	100	100	0	TIC	TIC
12	National Police	Rescue	91	95	+ 4	TIC	TIC
		Transfer	100	100	0	TIC	TIC
13	Office of the Attorney General	Testimony	100	95	- 5	TIC	TIC
		Hearing	83	90	+ 7	No TIC	TIC
14	Office of the Attorney General	Testimony	100	94	- 6	TIC	TIC
15	National Police	Transfer	100	100	0	TIC	TIC
16	Office of the Attorney General	Testimony	100	100	0	TIC	TIC
17	National Police	Transfer	67	87	+ 20	No TIC	No TIC
18	National Police	Rescue	64	86	+ 22	No TIC	No TIC
		Transfer	74	100	+ 26	No TIC	TIC
19	Office of the Attorney General	Testimony	100	100	0	TIC	TIC
		Hearing	83	92	+ 9	No TIC	TIC
		Average	**92.4**	**94.8**		**76% TIC**	**84% TIC**

GOVERNMENT DATA ON SHORT-TERM SERVICES

There is little government data on services provided to victims of sex trafficking and CSEC. According to its annual statistics for 2020, 7.5% of victims of violence served by the Ministry of Women suffered human trafficking or smuggling of migrants. However, the Directorate for Care and Prevention of Violence of the Ministry of Women did not report legal court services for this group in 2019.

According to CONANI's administrative records from 2015–2021, shelters received 194 victims of human trafficking and 87 victims of commercial sexual exploitation. The highest volume of service was in 2015.

TABLE 36. VICTIMS RECEIVED BY CONANI SHELTERS, BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE

Source: Administrative records of the Shelters Division, CONANI 2021.

Type of violence	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Human trafficking and migrant smuggling	79	23	25	15	13	6	33	194
Commercial sexual exploitation	24	2	4	9	23	14	11	87

Interviews with officials help shed light on the reality of short-term services. Officials reported that victims arrive at shelters with very specific needs because of the trauma they have suffered. Sometimes providing proper care is a challenge because the shelter lacks staff specialized in crisis intervention or in handling the presence of drugs or because the government has no spaces where minors can be grouped according to their needs. Officials said that "CONANI needs a specialized unit" (2021) able to meet the specific needs of CSEC victims. They also mentioned the challenge of providing proper psychological and social services during victims' stay at a shelter.

In 2021, interviews revealed that there was no CSEC or sex trafficking shelter for victims, whether minors or adults. An official explained that it is sometimes difficult to find a space for adult survivors: "Once they were in my care . . . I had no safe place to take them. At the shelter they said no, they couldn't stay there . . . We were out past midnight looking for a place."

In 2022, the Ministry of Women reported having a shelter, which is a major step forward, but one official insists on the need to continue building on these efforts:

It is open, but it doesn't have staff trained in handling and dealing with victims of human trafficking. But they have put in significant work, because now when we call the Ministry of Women for a trafficking victim, they immediately show up offering to help, which we see as their effort to give victims the treatment they need. So the response really has improved [. . .]. They are offering support and assistance, but they still lack the structure and set pathway to offer tailored treatment through a multidisciplinary team that is trained on and sensitive to the nuances of trafficking and sexual exploitation.

SENSITIVE TREATMENT AT SHELTERS: CONANI STAFF

As Table 37 shows, all follow-up meetings on the care plan between CONANI and CSEC survivors provided trauma-informed care, as reported by one survivor, 7 officials interviewed in 2021 and 12 officials interviewed in 2022. In 2021, one person (14.3%) spoke about a meeting that took place the same week as the interview, 42.9% reported on meetings that had happened within the three months prior to the interview, and 42.9% spoke of meetings that had happened over six months prior. In 2022, 33.3% of the interviews were about interactions that had happened over six months prior to the interview, 16.7% in the three to six months prior to the interview, 25.0%

in the three months prior, 16.7% in the same month, and 8.3% in the same week. The survivor gave information about a case from 2016.

TABLE 37. TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE DURING CASE MANAGEMENT MEETINGS AT SHELTERS

INTERACTION	SURVIVOR		2021 OFFICIALS		2022 OFFICIALS	
	Number of responses	Percentage of TIC	Number of responses	Percentage of TIC	Number of responses	Percentage TIC
Care plan meeting	1	100.0%	7	100.0%	12	100.0%

Interviewees described a multi-disciplinary team (psychologists, social workers, educators, doctors, guides, etc.) that carries out interventions with survivors at shelters:

> The psychology department in particular evaluates all cases and provides ongoing support to victims. They are given therapy and a comprehensive response to all their needs . . . There is staff specializing in health, psychology, and social work to work with families and give them continuous assistance (CONANI psychologist, 2021).

Arriving at a shelter is a complex and unique experience. As one psychologist shared:

> Generally these girls are in a rough spot, so it's a critical time to give them hope, because, apart from the fact that they are away from home . . . When they arrive at the shelter, where they have no one to turn to, where they don't know anyone, it's a very strange experience for them and they need to feel we are there to protect them and support them (2021).

Some mentioned that they strive to affirm the voice of survivors at case management meetings. "Their experience is important. We can't minimize it. And we also explain to her and that she deserves to be listened to, and that we are there to hear her out and support her" (CONANI psychologist, 2021). One strategy for offering this validation is creating work plans together with survivors, based on their needs. As one psychologist puts it, "We can't make a plan without the victim's buy-in" (2021). This has a positive impact on survivors. One survivor remembered that the psychologist at the shelter "gave me a notebook and said, 'When you want to tell me something but I'm not here, take your notebook out and write in it, then bring the notebook to me and I'll see how I can help you.'"

Affirming survivors' voices requires deep empathy, according to one source in 2022:

> I put myself in her shoes because I know how hard it is and must have been . . . Sometimes we judge without understanding, but when you look at this person's past, it's enough to give you goosebumps. Why? How can someone have endured so much for so long?

Interviewees said they do not use inappropriate verbal or physical techniques to calm victims. However, sometimes they encounter aggressive behavior and CONANI staff use strategies that could be considered harsh:

> Sometimes, for example, adolescent victims of sex trafficking are very aggressive when they first arrive because they think that when they get to the shelter they are the boss and everyone has to do what they say. We have to explain to them that that's not how it is, that there are rules, etc. But they confront other adolescents when they arrive, in a sort of turf war. So fights often break out. And that's when we have to rein them in, within the bounds of what CONANI allows. The adolescent was very hard-headed and acted aggressively (CONANI psychologist, 2021).

This lengthy quote touches on various issues. On the one hand, it shows that the staff caring for CSEC and sex trafficking victims may stereotype them as "aggressive," as causing "fights," and as being "hard-headed." On

the other hand, it shows the unique needs of CSEC and sex trafficking victims that require specialized care, and how mixing these victims with other populations can diminish the quality of that care. This points to an underlying problem: there is no shelter exclusively for victims of CSEC.

Interviewees stressed the need for greater coordination in dealing with victims to avoid revictimization. An official interviewed in 2022 recommended setting up a reporting system where the different departments involved can enter information to avoid subjecting the victim to multiple interviews. The same person noted how victims have to participate in multiple interviews, emphasizing that this practice can revictimize them.

Finally, interviews revealed the importance of self-care for service providers and officials working with CSEC victims, since they may experience vicarious trauma. The team of consultants observed feelings of powerlessness, pain, and exhaustion in some interviewees. Being understaffed can also contribute to emotional exhaustion in these environments.

LONG-TERM SERVICES

The largest gap in the PJS's response to CSEC and sex trafficking is long-term services for survivors. The research team was not able to obtain any government data on this topic. Government services end with family reintegration. In other words, after their stay at a shelter, survivors receive no services to help them recover and heal from the trauma they suffered. In addition to a short- or long-term shelter, survivors need coordinated and comprehensive services (legal, psychosocial, economic empowerment, etc.) that continue after they are reunited with their family.

Confidence in the public justice system's response

Key findings

- Eleven of twelve officials (92%) said their confidence in the PJS as a whole improved over the last five years.
- The officials believe the system has progressed and now has a stronger response to sex trafficking and, in particular, CSEC. They say training has been crucial, giving judges, prosecutors, and police officers knowledge in this area and boosting the efficiency of investigations and proceedings.
- The increase in confidence from 2015 to 2022 was greatest for the National Police and CITIM.
- Officials cited a lack of financial, administrative, and human resources as a major obstacle for continuing to bolster confidence in the PJS's response.

CONFIDENCE IN THE PUBLIC JUSTICE SYSTEM AS A WHOLE

Interviews with senior officials reflect greater confidence in the PJS's response to sex trafficking and CSEC in 2022 compared to 2015. These leaders reported feeling "somewhat confident" in the PJS, with an average weighted score of 2.1 points (of three possible points). Eleven of twelve (92%) of officials said confidence in the PJS had improved over the past five years. [53]

Overall, the officials believe the system has progressed and now has a stronger response to sex trafficking and, in particular, CSEC. They say training has been critical, educating judges, prosecutors, and police officers and boosting the efficiency of investigations and proceedings. They point to the creation of the PETT in 2013 as key. Additionally, the PJS has begun to implement technologies and tools to improve evidence collection. In the words of one senior official:

> Prosecutors are now better trained. They're also using technologies that allow them to collect more evidence, which in turn enhances their investigations. Before, for example, cases weren't brought to trial, and now we see that they are (2021).

Other officials spoke about sustaining these efforts. One leader said, "We have made strides in this area. But we still need even more awareness among all involved in the system" (2021). The enduring challenge is the lack of resources, operational capacity, and technology. These limitations affect the process of collecting evidence; investigators don't have transportation for investigations, there are no undercover agents due to lack of resources, and there are no resources for interpreters for foreign victims. Another official stated: "We don't have a vehicle. We don't have a system for reimbursing fuel expenses. We don't have anything like that. We try to resolve cases by our own efforts" (2022).

Senior officials especially emphasized the absence of good programs for supporting and restoring victims, as well as prevention programs. As one official put it: "In my opinion, both the care we provide victims and their legal representation is lacking. They should not have to rely on an NGO wanting to help them. There should be a standardized and official service they can call on" (2022).

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[53] In IJM's baseline measurement of confidence in 2015, it did not ask about PJS as a whole, so the score of 2.1 cannot be directly compared with the score from 2015. This report therefore gives more weight to the question about improvement over the last five years.

GRAPH 18. CONFIDENCE IN PJS INSTITUTIONS, 2015/2021/2022

Scale: 1-Not very confident, 2-somewhat confident, 3-very confident
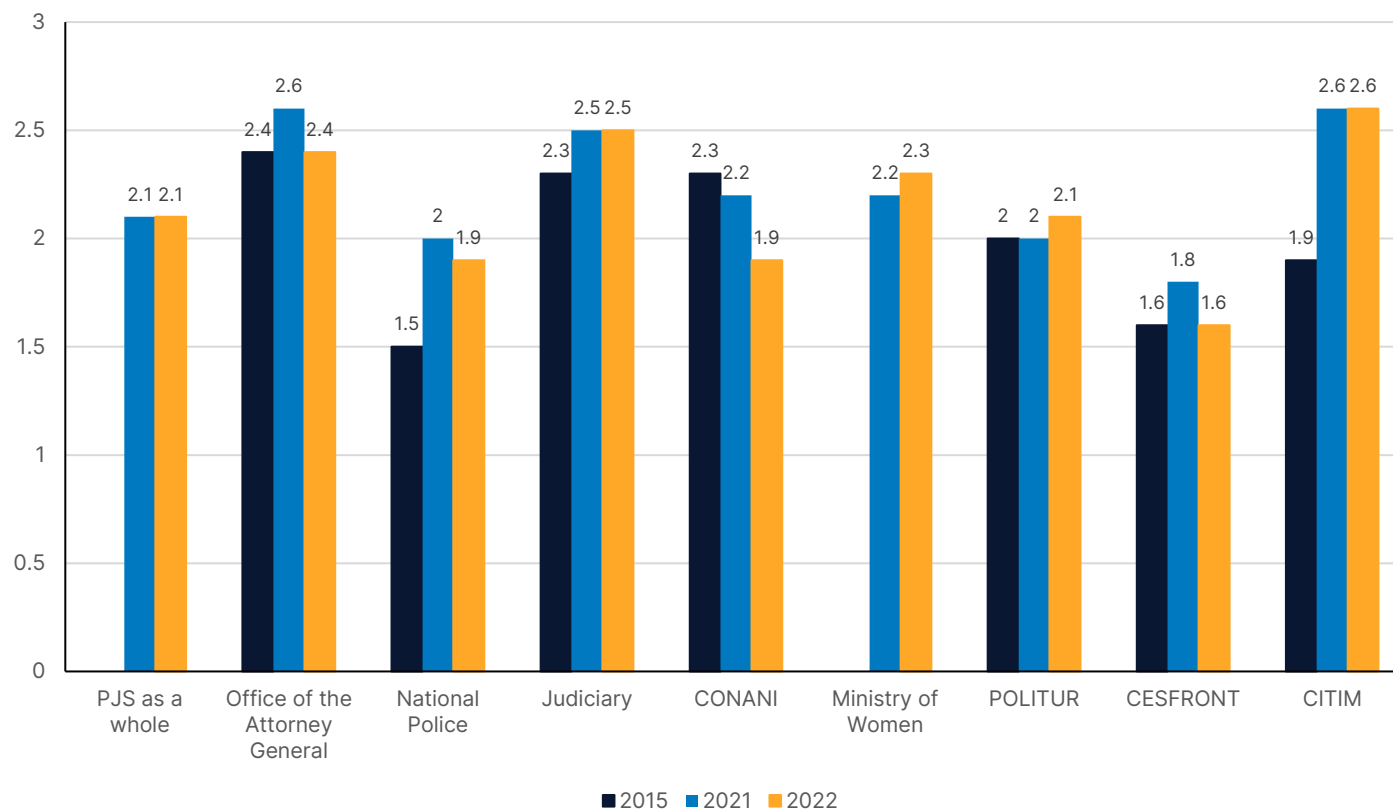
TABLE 38. CHANGES IN CONFIDENCE IN PJS INSTITUTIONS, 2015/2021/2022

Institution	Changes in confidence			% who said their confidence improved	
	Change from 2015 to 2021	Change from 2021 to 2022	Overall change from 2015 to 2022	2021 % who said their confidence improved over the previous five years	2022 % who said their confidence improved over the previous five years
PJS as a whole	-	0	-	92%	92%
Office of the Attorney General	0.2	- 0.2	0	100%	83%
National Police	0.5	-0.1	0.4	60%	92%
Judiciary	0.2	0	0.2	91%	91%
CONANI	-0.1	-0.3	-0.4	82%	58%
Ministry of Women	-	0.1	-	67%	91%
POLITUR	0	0.1	0.1	90%	100%
CESFRONT	0.2	-0.2	0	71%	50%
CITIM	0.7	0	0.7	100%	75%

As shown in Table 38, confidence stayed the same or increased for each institution, with the exception of CONANI. CITIM and the National Police saw the largest increases, followed by the Judiciary and POLITUR. IJM analyzes each institution separately below. The institutions are placed in alphabetical order based on their name in Spanish.

CESFRONT

CESFRONT has the lowest confidence ratings of any institution in this study, with a score of 1.6, or "somewhat confident," in 2015 and 2022. Only 50% of officials said their confidence in CESFRONT had improved over the previous five years. One official mentioned that CESFRONT's academic training includes "two or three modules on human trafficking, and the same for human rights and topics related to minors" (2022). However, several officials mentioned weaknesses in its offender profiling—despite having received training in this area—which results in low crime detection rates. CESFRONT's low score can be attributed to multiple causes:

> It's not just because they lack technical tools, human resources, other resources, and internal systems. It's also that the situation on the border is porous and complicated . . . I think potential risk scenarios are not well identified, and this hinders their work (2022).

CITIM

CITIM had the largest increase in confidence reported by senior officials. Its score rose from 1.9, or "somewhat confident," in 2015 to 2.6, or "very confident," in 2022. Six of eight officials (75%) said their confidence in CITIM had improved over the previous five years. In 2015, only five of the 23 people interviewed (22%) expressed an opinion about CITIM, which shows they were not familiar with the commission at the time. In 2021, ten of 12 (83%) of people interviewed shared their views, and eight of 12 (67%) had opinions in 2022.

The officials with the highest confidence in CITIM pointed to the commitment of its member institutions. The commission provides a space for creating a critical path to greater integration and synergy between institutions. Many officials recognize the coordinating role of this entity. The negative responses indicated that agreements reached at coordination meetings are not always put into practice.

CONANI

From 2015 to 2022, CONANI's score declined from 2.3, or "somewhat confident," to 1.9, still "somewhat confident." Interestingly, it lost three of the four points between 2021 and 2022, suggesting that the dip in confidence in CONANI's response could be short-term. Seven of 12 officials (58%) said their confidence in CONANI had improved over the previous five years. This is the lowest rating of all institutions that received 12 responses to this question.

Some officials recognized improvements in CONANI's level of commitment, in its training on CSEC, and in its work to identify specific places that can receive this group of minors. Others say it does not fully understand its role as a protective body. One individual stated, "It does not have a structure and staff qualified to give tailored treatment, and it does not even offer a space for comprehensive care for victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation." (2022). Officials mentioned that the institution lacks specialized programs designed around the unique challenges that trafficking victims face. This lack of resources is also an obstacle to appropriate and timely services and restorative processes for victims.

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

The Office of the Attorney General has one of the highest confidence ratings, with a score of 2.4, or "somewhat confident" but bordering on "very confident." Its confidence score did not change from 2015 to 2022. However, 83% of officials interviewed in 2022 said their confidence in the Office of the Attorney General had improved over the previous five years. An explanation for the greater confidence in the Office of the Attorney General reported by officials despite no change in the overall score is that different populations were interviewed in 2015 and 2022, and that the confidence score was already relatively high.

Officials reported greater capacity to address CSEC and sex trafficking and tied these gains to different trainings the entity received, to greater awareness about the issue, and to the dissemination of Law 137-03. They underscored the importance of advice, advocacy, training, and support from international bodies and institutions.

With regard to lingering constraints, officials consistently described the scarcity of human and administrative resources: "You obviously don't fight this crime with words; you tackle it with resources for investigators" (2022). "We need more specialized personnel in towns" (2022).

Although the Office of the Attorney General has a National Service for Legal Representation of the Rights of Victims (*Servicio Nacional de Representación Legal de los Derechos de la Víctima*- RELEVIC), as well as units that handle gender violence, one person interviewed said that "this support often does not extend to" psychosocial interventions (2022). Also, officials explained that being a victim of sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation is not the same as being a victim of another type of violence. Special psychosocial capabilities are required for these cases.

MINISTRY OF WOMEN

The current level of confidence in the Ministry of Women is 2.3, or "somewhat confident." IJM did not measure confidence in the Ministry of Women in 2015, so its primary metric for changes in confidence levels is the perception of officials, 91% of whom said their confidence in the Ministry of Women had improved over the previous five years. Officials shared that the Ministry of Women recently opened a shelter for trafficking victims. However, they stressed the importance of making sure this facility has staff trained to help trafficking victims, since the Ministry of Women has historically focused on gender violence.

JUDICIARY

The Judiciary has one of the highest confidence ratings of any institution in this study. It had a slight increase from 2.3 in 2015, or "somewhat confident," to 2.5 in 2022, or "very confident." In 2022, 91% of officials interviewed reported that their confidence in the Judiciary had improved over the previous five years.

There are still difficulties with specific judges who are not very sensitive to certain aspects of the law and treatment for victims, but officials reported a large number of judges who are trained and aware of the issue and concerned about it. Many consider the creation of centers and protocols for interviews to be an extremely important step towards bolstering confidence in the court system (see Judiciary, 2020). As one official put it:

> Having interview centers has reduced impunity. Now, with the help of technology, the victim has her voice heard in a way that respects her privacy and physical well-being. It's a step that truly gives us confidence (2022).

NATIONAL POLICE

From 2015 to 2022, confidence in the National Police's response to CSEC and sex trafficking rose from 1.5, or "not very confident," to 1.9, or "somewhat confident," a 0.4-point improvement. Additionally, 11 of 12 officials interviewed in 2022 (92%) said their confidence in the National Police had improved over the previous five years. Remarks by an official not part of the National Police point to the reason for this improvement:

> The police created specialized units that are trained to deal with victims. They have improved their level of respect and care, with a specialized unit to detect trafficking victims, and they have also improved in how they approach and treat victims. Before, the police officers themselves doubted whether they were victims or were suffering commercial sexual exploitation. Now the police provide more care and assistance and place more importance on these investigations, making greater efforts to follow up (2021).

Officials reported that police are more proactive and available to respond to cases that arise and have more training on the issue. Interviews revealed a positive assessment of the Anti-Trafficking Department of the National Police. Interviewees say it has trained officers who display a high level of sensitivity and commitment to victims. Officials pointed to high turnover among specialized staff as an ongoing risk. Interviewees had a low opinion of the sensitivity and training of non-specialized police officers, which is a significant limitation.

POLITUR

POLITUR's confidence score rose slightly from 2.0, or "somewhat confident," to 2.1, still "somewhat confident." However, 100% of officials who responded about POLITUR said their confidence had improved over the past five years. In their view, the institution has gained greater capacity to identify and respond to crimes in tourist areas. POLITUR now recognizes as serious crimes offenses it once normalized. Like other specialized units, officials reported higher levels of sensitivity to this issue at POLITUR.

However, some officials said that "the regular police have no knowledge or procedures for handling victims of exploitation" (2022), so they need further training. Another limitation is identifying inherently Dominican profiles. As one official said:

> Some profiles are standard anywhere in the world, but others are very specific to this context. I think we have yet to analyze the inputs . . . to create profiles and describe the type and behavior and use that to create indicators that will help them do their work better (2022).

Those with least confidence in POLITUR cited its limited ability to detect cases, despite training.

Reliance on the PJS

Key findings

- Of the eight survivors interviewed, five (62.5%) attempted to seek help before being rescued.
  - Four of the five survivors sought help from someone in their community, and one survivor sought help from the National Police or Office of the Attorney General.
  - Five of the eight survivors (62.5%) formally reported their abuse.
- Seven of the eight survivors (87.5%) stayed with their legal proceeding until its conclusion.
  - Although the interviewees are not statistically representative of the overall population of victims, since all of them participated in IJM's restoration program where they received free psychological, social, and legal support, their high rate of perseverance in cases shows the results possible when a victim receives this kind of support.
- In the experience of senior officials, victims need comprehensive assistance that covers both their legal needs and psychological and social needs.

Of the eight survivors interviewed, five (62.5%) tried to seek help before being rescued. Likewise, five (62.5%) formally reported their situation. In general, the survivors who sought help are the same ones who reported their abuse (four of the five who sought help also filed a report). Four of the five survivors sought help from someone in their community, and one survivor sought help from the National Police or Office of the Attorney General. This suggests that victims prefer to approach a trusted member of their community to try to address their situation and reach out to the justice system through the community. It is therefore important for communities to develop a strong fabric that denounces violence, supports and refers victims to the justice system for the assistance they need. The three survivors who did not seek help mentioned reasons like feeling ashamed, not knowing how to find help, and not seeing the situation as a problem.

TABLE 39. SURVIVOR RESPONSES ON SEEKING HELP AND FORMALLY REPORTING ABUSE

Before you were rescued, did you try to seek help?			From whom did you seek help? (n =5)		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Possible responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	5	62.5%	Police officer or prosecutor	1	20%
No	3	37.5%	CONANI, Ministry of Women, Ministry of Health, social worker, or government psychologist	-	
Did you formally report the crime?			A member of the community	4	80%
Responses	Frequency	Percentage	A helpline	-	
Yes	5	62.5%	**Total**	**5**	**100%**
No	3	37.5%			

In terms of remaining in legal proceedings, seven of the eight survivors (87.5%) remained engaged with the case until its conclusion. Again, the interview population is not representative of the overall population. The survivors interviewed met IJM's definition of restored, so they represent cases in which a great deal of support was provided. The rate of survivors who remain in legal proceedings is therefore expected to be much lower.

However, the relatively high rate of these survivors who remained in proceedings (87.5%) shows what is possible when a victim receives free psychological, social, and legal support. Survivors who remained in legal

proceedings cited family support (n = 4, 44.4%), private/community legal representation (n = 2, 22.2%), and private/community psychological and social support (n = 2, 22.2%) as the main reasons for their perseverance. The survivor who gave a different reason for remaining in their legal proceeding said, "I did not want what happened to me to happen to other people, to other girls." The survivor who withdrew from the legal proceedings cited a lack of family support.

TABLE 40. PERCENTAGE OF SURVIVORS WHO REMAINED IN LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AND REASONS FOR DOING SO

Did you remain in the legal proceeding until its conclusion?			Factor	What factors contributed to you remaining in the case? 7 survivors	What factors contributed to you withdrawing from the case? 1 survivor
Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Family support	4 (44.4%)	1 (100.0%)
Yes	7	87.5%	Restraining of perpetrator	-	-
No	1	12.5%	Government representation/legal support	-	-
			Government psychosocial support	-	-
			Private or community representation/legal support	2 (22.2%)	-
			Private or community psychological and social support	2 (22.2%)	-
			Rapid resolution of case	-	-
			Sensitivity of government officials	-	-
			Other factors	1 (11.1%)	-
			Don't know	-	-
			No answer	-	-
			Family support	4 (44.4%)	1 (100.0%)

Senior officials gave their opinions about the factors that helped keep victims from withdrawing from legal proceedings. In both 2021 and 2022, the most common response was government psychological and social support (20.0% in 2021 and 12.2% in 2022), followed by government legal support (13.3% in 2021, and 14.6% in 2022). These responses match those of survivors, who cited legal representation and psychological and social support.

In 2021, five of the nine officials who answered "other factors" mentioned trust in the PJS, or its credibility. In 2022, the 12 "other factors" responses were varied. One person recommended setting up a space with programs needed for restoration. Other officials emphasized the importance of logistical support for hearings, like transportation and food. Another person said:

> Victims need to be told what's going on. They need to feel welcomed, respected . . . When you give them confidence. . . . and psychological assistance, ongoing support, they are going to stick with the process to the end . . . If you seek them out, if you bring them, they are willing, or they would at least be more willing (official, 2022).

I think another influential factor is how quickly the justice system responds. When the system responds rapidly, the victim doesn't have to relive a painful experience . . . They are often revictimized when they have to go in 15 times to talk at a hearing (official, 2022).

One official highlighted the important role that taking pre-trial testimony plays in keeping victims from withdrawing from cases, since this practice counters the revictimizing effect of hearings: "They often have inappropriate experiences that revictimize and expose them in a way that makes them not want to continue on with the process" (2022).

TABLE 41. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SURVIVORS REMAINING IN CSEC AND SEX TRAFFICKING CASES, RESPONSES FROM OFFICIALS[54]

	In your opinion, **what factors helped** victims remain in legal cases until their conclusion?		What do you believe are the **largest gaps** in ensuring victims remain in legal cases?	
	2021 officials Answered by 11 officials	2022 officials Answered by 12 officials	2021 officials Answered by 12 officials	2022 officials Answered by 12 officials
Family support	-	4 (9.8%)	1 (4.5%)	3 (9.1%)
Restraining of perpetrator	1 (3.3%)	2 (4.9%)	-	2 (6.1%)
Government representation/legal support	4 (13.3%)	6 (14.6%)	5 (22.7%)	5 (15.2%)
Government psychosocial support	6 (20.0%)	5 (12.2%)	-	5 (15.2%)
Private or community representation/legal support	3 (10.0%)	2 (4.9%)	1 (4.5%)	2 (6.1%)
Private or community psychological and social support	4 (13.3%)	3 (7.3%)	-	2 (6.1%)
Rapid resolution of case	1 (3.3%)	3 (7.3%)	2 (9.1%)	4 (12.1%)
Sensitivity of government officials	2 (6.7%)	4 (9.8%)	4 (18.2%)	3 (9.1%)
Other factors	9 (30.0%)	12 (29.3%)	9 (40.1%)	7 (21.2%)
Don't know	-		-	-
No answer	1		-	-

As for the current gaps in the PJS in terms of keeping victims from withdrawing from cases, officials mentioned the lack of government representation and legal support (22.7% in 2021 and 15.2% in 2022) and government psychological and social support (15.2% in 2022). The "other factors" responses were varied and emphasized the need for psychological, social, and legal services. Three of the nine responses had to do with the lack of comprehensive assistance for victims and/or the scarcity of proper shelters in 2021. This issue was again mentioned in 2022:

One of our weaknesses is that we pull some victims out of sexual exploitation, for example, and what do we offer them? Where are we going to put them? In a safe place where they can continue to grow, develop, and learn a skill . . . We need this place where victims . . . whether male or female . . . can be empowered (official).

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[54] All questions in this table allowed multiple responses per interviewee.

In summary, survivor accounts show how comprehensive assistance with a focus on restoration can work to keep victims from withdrawing from cases, with 87.5% of interviewees reporting that they remained in their case to its conclusion. In practical terms, this finding means the PJS needs to provide trauma-informed care in initial interactions with officials, as well as free legal, psychological, and social services for victims until they have completely recovered and the legal proceeding has ended. Survivors also signaled the great importance of family and community support for remaining in their cases.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on an analysis of this study's data, the research team presents the following recommendations for strengthening the public justice system:

ADMINISTRATIVE TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS OF THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, NATIONAL POLICE, JUDICIARY, AND CONANI

Strengthen the administrative case management systems of the Office of the Attorney General, the National Police, the Judiciary, and CONANI to:

1) Track cases from the start of investigations to the end of the court proceeding.

2) Address potential bottlenecks in proceedings based on key performance indicators that report the frequency, speed, and quality of proceedings so cases can progress efficiently. Of particular importance are bottlenecks rooted in administrative problems like improper service of process, not bringing the suspect to the court, and not effectively coordinating hearing dates, which significantly impact the time between filing charges and the trial.

3) Integrate the case management systems of the National Police, Office of the Attorney General, and victim assistance services (like CONANI) for critical moments that require effective coordination, like rescue operations and case investigations.

4) Integrate queries of international databases like Interpol, since one in four cases has a foreign suspect.

5) Automate any reporting processes that can increase quality and reduce the time and effort it takes officials to respond to public information access requests.

6) Implement the Electronic Investigation Module of the National Police, a mobile app developed to improve the case management system, monitor the quality of investigations, and enhance coordination with the Office of the Attorney General and CONANI.

   a. Constantly monitor the quality of the National Police's digital files, specifically using indicators and programmed alerts, to minimize cases not assigned to investigators and cases with procedures that are incomplete, omitted, or not coordinated. This will maximize the likelihood of a successful operation and ensure that victims, especially minors, receive support during and after operations.

   b. Based on the results of monitoring the quality of police case files, hold regular trainings with the ATD and its partners within the police to quickly adapt when investigative quality begins to decline.

1) Invest in comprehensive, long-term services[55] so CSEC and sex trafficking victims can achieve complete recovery. Government agencies with extensive experience with cases—such as the Office of the Attorney General, CONANI, and the Ministry of Women—should lead this investment.

   a. The results show that the lack of these services is one of the largest gaps in the government's response to CSEC and sex trafficking. Both survivors and officials expressed the need for these services. They noted that comprehensive services would both have a restorative impact and lead to greater success in court cases, because they increase the chances of victims remaining in their legal case.

   b. Establish an Institute for Victims that provides free psychosocial and legal services to implement this recommendation.

2) Ensure that the Ministry of Women's shelter for victims of human trafficking has enough staff and resources to meet the needs of victims.

   a. Ideally, there should be both an initial shelter, and one that provides long-term services. There should also be a specialized CONANI shelter for minor victims of this type of crime.

   b. The best way to ensure the sustainability of any shelter would be to amend Law 137-03 to allocate permanent funding.

3) Ensure short- and long-term services for high-need groups, such as foreigners and male victims who are minors.

4) The Judiciary should use court orders to help victims achieve a complete recovery. Fewer than 5% of cases in this study had court orders for psychotherapeutic treatment or protection at a temporary shelter.

5) The Office of the Attorney General, National Police, and CONANI should strengthen their ties to communities, since survivors reported approaching a trusted member of their community to get the PJS involved.

1) Expand the resources, organizational structure, and training for specialized units like the PETT and the ATD, as well as their partners in provinces, to handle the growing volume of cases.

   a. Invest in technological systems and systematized procedures to ensure quality and speed keep pace with the increasing caseload.

   b. Empower the Academy of the Office of the Attorney General to provide ongoing training on CSEC and sex trafficking, and ensure training for all Office of the Attorney General staff promoted to the PETT.

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[55] Including psychosocial and legal support and economic empowerment.

RESCUE OPERATIONS

1) Hire more specialized personnel—whether at institutions like CONANI or the Ministry of Women or as part of specialized victim assistance teams at the PETT or ATD—to meet victims' needs during rescue operations, especially in the areas of safety, emotional distress, crisis intervention, and the possible presence of illegal drugs.

2) The Office of the Attorney General and National Police should make sure they record psychological support and sensitive treatment provided during rescue operations in order to have information on the actual treatment victims receive.

TAKING VICTIMS' VIDEO TESTIMONY BEFORE TRIAL

1) The Office of the Attorney General should use hearings to take victims' testimony before trial more frequently to raise its chances of a successful prosecution, and to ensure victims receive sensitive treatment when their testimony is taken.

    a. Prioritize sensitive treatment at all phases to help survivors feel willing to testify.

2) More consistently record the use and postponement of hearings to take victims' testimony before trial to avoid unnecessary administrative errors, make data more reliable, and minimize revictimization.

3) The Judiciary, the Office of the Attorney General, and the National Public Defender's Office should strive to make the logistics of taking victims' testimony before trial as fluid as possible to avoid revictimization. More specifically, they should work to minimize wait times, eliminate postponements, and ensure the victim and suspect are kept separate at all times in court.

PROPERLY APPLYING THE LAW

1) Prosecutors should be prepared to appeal suspended sentences and rulings with sentences below the legal minimum.

2) Judges and prosecutors should have opportunities to discuss the tradeoffs of summary proceedings in terms of a swift trial versus ensuring the victim's rights.

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Appendices

Legal dimension - Applying the correct statute(s) to the case (Art. 294 Criminal Code)	Very poor	The charges did not apply the correct statute(s) to the case.	
	Poor	The charges applied the correct statute, but had major errors in the description of the facts.	
	Average	The charges applied the correct statute, but had minor errors in the description of the facts and/or added a charge that does not match the facts.	
	Good	The charges applied the correct statute, without errors in the description of the facts.	
	Very good	The charges applied the correct statute, without errors, and cited international treaties on human trafficking that the country has ratified.	
Legal dimension - Aggravating circumstances (Art. 7, Law 137-03, 333 Criminal Code)	Very poor	The charges omitted aggravating circumstances when the facts warranted their inclusion.	
	Poor	The charges included aggravating circumstances, but with major errors in their use.	
	Average	The charges included aggravating circumstances, but with minor errors in their use.	
	Good	The charges correctly included aggravating circumstances, but left out details.	
	Very good	The charges correctly included aggravating circumstances.	
	NA	NOT APPLICABLE TO SPECIFIC CASE.	
Evidence	Very poor	The charges contain no legal evidence	
	Poor	The charges contain 50% of the evidence needed to prove them.	
	Average	The charges contain 50% to 74% of the evidence needed to prove them.	
	Good	The charges contain 75 % to 99 % of the evidence needed to prove them.	
	Very good	The charges contain 100% of the evidence needed to prove them.	
Facts - Clarity	Very poor	The wording of the charges is completely unintelligible and it is impossible to distinguish the facts from each other.	
	Poor	The wording of the charges has major flaws, and it is very difficult to understand the facts.	
	Average	The wording of the charges has some flaws, making it slightly difficult to understand the facts.	
	Good	The wording of the charges is clear and understandable, but a detail is confusing.	
	Very good	The wording of the charges is understandable, well-organized, and causes no confusion or difficulty understanding the facts.	
Facts - Accuracy	Very poor	The wording of the charges is totally inaccurate and exaggerates or minimizes the facts.	
	Poor	The wording of the charges is very inaccurate. It significantly minimizes or exaggerates the facts.	
	Average	The wording of the charges is somewhat inaccurate because it minimizes or exaggerates facts.	
	Good	The wording of the charges is quite accurate, but it slightly exaggerates or minimizes the facts.	
	Very good	The wording of the charges is accurate. It does not exaggerate or minimize the facts.	
Facts - Circumstantial details	Very poor	The facts have no supporting details.	
	Poor	The charges have few specific details or the details are not relevant to the facts.	
	Average	The charges have a few specific details, but still need more to support the facts.	
	Good	The facts are well supported with details, but some details of lesser importance are missing.	
	Very good	The wording of the charges is rich in details and includes: how and when the facts of the case occurred, address and identity of aggressor.	

Very poor 0 %, poor: 25 %, average: 50 %, good: 75 %, and very good: 100 %

Charges must earn a total score of over 70% for their quality to be considered acceptable.

Conclusions of law	Poor	The ruling does not correctly weigh the evidence. It does not apply the correct statute for the crime. It does not take into account the victim's circumstances of vulnerability or provide sensitive treatment. It does not provide a legal analysis of the facts in the statement of the grounds for the ruling.	
	Average	The ruling's assessment of the evidence is partially correct. It applies the correct statute for the crime, but does not take into account the victim's circumstances of vulnerability based on treaties and relevant case law. It provides a partial legal analysis of the facts in the statement of the grounds for the ruling.	
	Good	The ruling correctly weighs the evidence. It takes into account the victim's vulnerable condition, accords them sensitive treatment, and applies the correct statute for the crime based on treaties and relevant case law. It provides a legal analysis of the facts in the statement of the grounds for the ruling.	
Verdict	Poor	The verdict does not find the accused guilty (when it is reasonable to conclude that they are), or, in the event of a conviction, suspends the sentence. The verdict may hold the victim responsible.	
	Average	Based on the legal grounds and facts, the verdict finds the accused guilty and convicts them, but the sentence is not appropriate to the crime.	
	Good	Based on the legal grounds and facts, the verdict finds the accused guilty and convicts them, and the sentence is appropriate to the crime.	

Poor: 0 %, average: 50 %, good: 100 %

Rulings must earn a total score of over 70% for their quality to be considered acceptable.

APPENDIX 3: QUALITY CONTROL IN THE REVIEW OF PROSECUTOR CASE FILES

TABLE 42. QUALITY CONTROL IN THE REVIEW OF PROSECUTOR CASE FILES

		Data collector 1	Data collector 2	Data collector 3	Data collector 4[57]	Senior attorney	Total
2021	**Number of reviews completed**	29	23	12	2	2	**68[58]**
	Number of reviews that were formally audited	5	4	3	0	0	**12**
	Percentage of reviews audited	17.2 %	17.4 %	25 %	0 %	0 %	**17.6 %**
2022	**Number of reviews completed**	12	12	10	-	-	**34**
	Number of reviews that were formally audited	3	3	4	-	-	**10**
	Percentage of reviews audited	25.0 %	25.0 %	40.0 %	-	-	**29.4 %**

[57] Data collector 4, who spent few days with the team, was supervised by the senior attorney during the two reviews they performed.

[58] This number is larger than the study universe in 2021 because it includes 4 prosecutor case files that ended up being excluded from the prosecutor sample. IJM counted these four case files for quality control because two were part of the first three reviews audited, in compliance with the quality control protocol, for data collectors 1 and 3 (one audit each).

Since IJM is analyzing the association between qualitative variables, it needs hypotheses about the relationship between those variables. To test whether there is a relationship between taking victims' testimony before trial and securing convictions, IJM posed the following hypotheses:

- Null hypothesis: taking victim testimony in advance of trial and securing a conviction are independent of each other.

- Alternative hypothesis: taking victim testimony in advance and securing a conviction are not independent of each other.

The table below presents the number of cases with a hearing to take victims' testimony before the trial and a conviction.

TABLE 43. CASES WITH HEARING TO TAKE VICTIMS' TESTIMONY BEFORE TRIAL AND CONVICTION

	Cases with conviction	Cases without conviction	Total
Cases with hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	19	9	28
Cases without hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	11	59	70
Total	30	68	98

IJM then conducted a chi-squared test, which yielded the following values:

- Pearson's chi-squared test: X-squared = 25.6, df = 1, p-value = <0.001

When the p-value is less than 0.05, there is enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis. In other words, giving testimony in advance and securing a conviction are not independent of each other. With this result, IJM can calculate the odds ratio and other risk indicators to understand how taking victims' testimony before trial and securing convictions are interrelated.

As the following table shows, IJM calculates an odds ratio of 11.3. This means a case is 11.3 times more likely to result in a conviction when testimony is taken in advance. At a 95% confidence interval, the likelihood of securing a conviction in a case is 4.1 to 31.5 times greater when victims' testimony was taken before trial.

TABLE 44. RESULTS OF THE ODDS RATIO ANALYSIS

	Point estimate	Lower bound	Upper bound
Relative risk	4.3	2.4	7.9
Odds ratio	11.3	4.1	31.5
Risk attributable to exposure	52.1	32.9	71.4
Attributable proportion among the exposed	76.8	57.8	87.3
Risk attributable to the population	14.9	2.4	27.4
Attributable proportion for the population	48.7	22.7	65.9

APPENDIX 5. DETAILED TABLES FROM THE REVIEW OF POLICE CASE FILES

TABLE 45. POLICE QUALITY, BY AREA EVALUATED AND BY LOT

Area of quality standard	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	All lots
I. Inquiry phase	36/100	35/100	35/100	64/100	44/100
II. Identification phase	59/100	58/100	61/100	61/100	60/100
III. Investigation report and plan	74/100	74/100	67/100	68/100	70/100
IV. Evaluation of actions taken and results obtained	45/100	45/100	46/100	51/100	47/100
V. Case file management system	2/100	17/100	23/100	34/100	23/100

TABLE 46. ARRESTS AND SEARCH AND SEIZURE OPERATIONS IN SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND SEX TRAFFICKING CASES BY THE ANTI-TRAFFICKING DEPARTMENT OF THE NATIONAL POLICE, 2016–2021

Source: National Police Statistics, Open Access to Information, 2021 and 2022

INDICATOR	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	TOTAL
Search and seizure operations	15	14	11	29	17	27	**113**
Arrests	3	9	6	7	07	59	**91**

TABLE 47. FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES FOR EACH QUALITY CRITERION IN THE REVIEW OF POLICE CASE FILES, 2014–2019

QUESTION	YES	NO	NOT APPLICABLE	UNKNOWN
3. Is it a sex trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation case?	43 (100 %)	-	-	-
4. Does the case involve minors?	34 (79 %)	6 (14 %)	-	3 (7 %)
5. Does IJM appear as a partner in the investigation?	13 (30 %)	30 (70 %)	-	-
I. Inquiry into the elements that ensure victims' well-being and safety				
7. File correctly documents the **date** and references the **report of the facts of the case**	7 (16 %)	36 (84 %)	-	-
8. File identifies the **publishable acts** or alleged crimes	41 (95 %)	2 (5 %)	-	-
9. File correctly records the **dates of the facts of the case**	13 (30 %)	30 (70 %)	-	-
10. File establishes a **timeline** of events	12 (28 %)	31 (72 %)	-	-
11. File correctly documents the **location of the facts of the case**	28 (65 %)	15 (35 %)	-	-
12. File has **photographs** that document aspects related to the **facts of the case**	23 (53 %)	20 (47 %)	-	-
13. File documents basic **vehicle** identification information	6 (14 %)	8 (19 %)	29 (67 %)	-
14. File documents basic information to identify **phone numbers**	9 (21 %)	34 (79 %)	-	-
15. When there are **minor victims,** the file documents **coordination with the Office of the Attorney General/CONANI**	4 (9 %)	34 (79 %)	5 (12 %)	-
16. Officers determined the **risk** to potential victims and **urgency** of action	19 (44 %)	24 (56 %)	-	-
17. Officers checked whether there is **kinship/a family relationship** between suspect and victim	3 (7 %)	40 (93 %)	-	-
18. File documents **meeting** with prosecutor to jointly determine the steps to take in the investigation	6 (14 %)	37 (86 %)	-	-
II. Identification phase				
19. File documents the **suspects** of the alleged crime	37 (86 %)	6 (14 %)	-	-
20. File documents the **role** of the suspects of the alleged crime	35 (81%)	8 (19 %)	-	-
21. If there is a risk the suspect will flee, the police alerted Migration or Interpol	2 (5 %)	21 (49 %)	20 (47 %)	-
22. File documents the likely **number of victims** of the alleged crime	26 (60 %)	17 (40 %)	-	-
23. File correctly documents the **location** of victims and suspects	24 (56 %)	19 (44 %)	-	-
24. File documents evidence of the possible **modus operandi**	25 (58 %)	18 (42 %)	-	-
25. File records evidence of **financial activity and flows** potentially linked to the alleged crime	4 (9 %)	39 (91 %)	-	-
26. File documents possible **aggravating** circumstances	33 (77 %)	8 (19 %)	2 (5 %)	-
III. Investigation report and plan				
27. Investigation report and plan specifies **what** (punishable act)	41 (95 %)	2 (5 %)	-	-
28. Investigation report and plan specifies **how** (form and modus operandi)	27 (63 %)	16 (37 %)	-	-
29. Investigation report and plan specifies **who** (suspects)	37 (86%)	6 (14 %)	-	-
30. Investigation report and plan specifies **whom** (victims)	27 (63 %)	16 (37 %)	-	-
31. Investigation report and plan specifies **when** (point in time)	14 (33 %)	29 (67 %)	-	-
32. Investigation report and plan specifies **where** (location or locations of the **facts of the case**)	28 (65 %)	15 (35 %)	-	-
33. Investigation report and plan specifies **the purpose**	38 (88 %)	5 (12 %)	-	-

34. Investigation report and plan documents the **investigatory steps** performed	15 (35 %)	28 (65 %)	-	-

IV. Evaluation of actions taken and results obtained

35. File contains the plan for **mitigating** possible operational risks	5 (12 %)	38 (88 %)	-	-
36. File correctly documents elements found in **search and seizure operations** and the **chain of custody**	5 (12 %)	11 (26 %)	27 (63 %)	-
37. File correctly documents the **arrest** of the suspect	-	17 (40 %)	26 (60 %)	-
38. File correctly documents the **reading of the suspects' rights**	-	18 (42 %)	25 (58 %)	-
39. File correctly records **personal search**	-	18 (42%)	25 (58 %)	-
40. File correctly records **vehicular search**	-	10 (23 %)	33 (77 %)	-
41. File records measures to provide **sensitive treatment** to victims during **rescue**	5 (12 %)	13 (30 %)	25 (58 %)	-
42. File records **lessons** resulting from actions taken and results obtained	3 (7 %)	29 (67 %)	11 (26 %)	-

V. Case file management system

43. Case file is properly **stored** in a clearly labeled folder	13 (30 %)	30 (70 %)	-	-
44. The system records the **date the case entered** the ATD	6 (14 %)	37 (86 %)	-	-
45. The system documents the details of the case's **lead investigator**	13 (30 %)	30 (70 %)	-	-
46. The system documents the use of information from **databases**	7 (16 %)	36 (84 %)	-	-
47. The system documents the **EDI self-assessment**	-	43 (100 %)	-	-

TABLE 48. FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES FOR EACH QUALITY CRITERION IN THE REVIEW OF POLICE CASE FILES, 2020–2021

QUESTION	YES	NO	NOT APPLICABLE	UNKNOWN
3. Is it a sex trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation case?	19 (100 %)	-	-	-
4. Does the case involve minors?	10 (53 %)	8 (42 %)	-	1 (5 %)
5. Does IJM appear as a partner in the investigation?	6 (32 %)	13 (68 %)	-	-
I. Inquiry into the elements that ensure victims' well-being and safety				
7. File correctly documents the **date** and references the **report of the facts of the case**	11 (58 %)	8 (42 %)	-	-
8. File identifies the **publishable acts** or alleged crimes	15 (79 %)	4 (21 %)	-	-
9. File correctly records the **dates of the facts of the case**	13 (68 %)	6 (32 %)	-	-
10. File establishes a **timeline** of events	11 (58 %)	8 (42 %)	-	-
11. File correctly documents the **location of the facts of the case**	18 (95 %)	1 (5 %)	-	-
12. File has **photographs** that document aspects related to the **facts of the case**	18 (95 %)	1 (5 %)	-	-
13. File documents basic **vehicle** identification information	12 (63 %)	2 (11 %)	5 (26 %)	-
14. File documents basic information to identify **phone numbers**	9 (47 %)	10 (53 %)	-	-
15. When there are **minor victims,** the file documents **coordination with the Office of the Attorney General/CONANI**	3 (16 %)	6 (32 %)	10 (53 %)	-
16. Officers determined the **risk** to potential victims and **urgency** of action	11 (58 %)	8 (42 %)	-	-
17. Officers checked whether there is **kinship/a family relationship** between suspect and victim	1 (5 %)	2 (11 %)	-	16 (84 %)
18. File documents **meeting** with prosecutor to jointly determine the steps to take in the investigation	1 (5 %)	18 (95 %)	-	-
II. Identification phase				
19. File documents the **suspects** of the alleged crime	17 (89 %)	2 (11 %)	-	-
20. File documents the **role** of the suspects of the alleged crime	12 (63 %)	7 (37 %)	-	-
21. If there is a risk the suspect will flee, the police alerted Migration or Interpol	-	10 (53%)	9 (47%)	-
22. File documents the likely **number of victims** of the alleged crime	11 (58 %)	8 (42 %)	-	-
23. File correctly documents the **location** of victims and suspects	11 (58 %)	3 (16 %)	5 (26 %)[59]	-
24. File documents evidence of the possible **modus operandi**	10 (53 %)	9 (47 %)	-	-
25. File records evidence of **financial activity and flows** potentially linked to the alleged crime	6 (32 %)	13 (68%)	-	-
26. File documents possible **aggravating** circumstances	10 (53 %)	9 (47%)	-	-
III. Investigation report and plan				
27. Investigation report and plan specifies **what** (punishable act)	15 (79 %)	4 (21 %)	-	-
28. Investigation report and plan specifies **how** (form and modus operandi)	9 (47 %)	10 (53 %)	-	-
29. Investigation report and plan specifies **who** (suspects)	17 (89 %)	2 (11 %)	-	-
30. Investigation report and plan specifies **whom** (victims)	9 (47 %)	10 (53 %)	-	-
31. Investigation report and plan specifies **when** (point in time)	10 (53 %)	9 (47 %)	-	-

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[59]This means the file documented the location of the victim or suspect, but not both.

32. Investigation report and plan specifies **where** (location or locations of the **facts of the case**)	16 (84 %)	3 (16 %)	-	-
33. Investigation report and plan specifies **the purpose**	16 (84 %)	3 (16 %)	-	-
34. Investigation report and plan documents the **investigatory steps** performed	7 (37 %)	12 (63 %)	-	-
IV. Evaluation of actions taken and results obtained				
35. File contains the plan for **mitigating** possible operational risks	-	19 (100 %)	-	-
36. File correctly documents elements found in **search and seizure operations** and the **chain of custody**	2 (11 %)	1 (5 %)	16 (84 %)	-
37. File correctly documents the **arrest** of the suspect	2 (11 %)	1 (5 %)	16 (84 %)	-
38. File correctly documents the **reading of the suspects' rights**	-	4 (21 %)	15 (79 %)	-
39. File correctly records **personal search**	-	3 (16 %)	16 (84 %)	-
40. File correctly records **vehicular search**	-	5 (26 %)	14 (74 %)	-
41. File records measures to provide **sensitive treatment** to victims during **rescue**	1 (5 %)	4 (21 %)	14 (74 %)	-
42. File records **lessons** resulting from actions taken and results obtained	-	9 (47 %)	10 (53 %)	-
V. Case file management system				
43. Case file is properly **stored** in a clearly labeled folder	9 (47 %)	10 (53 %)	-	-
44. The system records the **date the case entered** the ATD	10 (53 %)	9 (47 %)	-	-
45. The system documents the details of the case's **lead investigator**	2 (11 %)	17 (89 %)	-	-
46. The system documents the use of information from **databases**	1 (5 %)	18 (95 %)	-	-
47. The system documents the **EDI self-assessment**	5 (26 %)	14 (74 %)	-	-

TABLE 49. FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGES OF RESPONSES FOR EACH QUALITY CRITERION IN THE REVIEW OF POLICE CASE FILES, 2014–2021 (ALL CASES REVIEWED)

QUESTION	YES	NO	NOT APPLICABLE	UNKNOWN
3. Is it a sex trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation case?	62 (100 %)	-	-	-
4. Does the case involve minors?	44 (71 %)	14 (23 %)	-	5 (6 %)
5. Does IJM appear as a partner in the investigation?	19 (31 %)	43 (69 %)	-	-
I. Inquiry into the elements that ensure victims' well-being and safety				
7. File correctly documents the **date** and references the **report of the facts of the case**	18 (29 %)	44 (71 %)	-	-
8. File identifies the **publishable acts** or alleged crimes	56 (90 %)	6 (10 %)	-	-
9. File correctly records the **dates of the facts of the case**	26 (42 %)	36 (58 %)	-	-
10. File establishes a **timeline** of events	23 (37 %)	39 (63 %)	-	-
11. File correctly documents the **location of the facts of the case**	46 (74 %)	16 (26 %)	-	-
12. File has **photographs** that document aspects related to the **facts of the case**	41 (66 %)	21 (34 %)	-	-
13. File documents basic **vehicle** identification information	18 (29 %)	10 (16 %)	34 (55 %)	-
14. File documents basic information to identify **phone numbers**	18 (29 %)	44 (71 %)	-	-
15. When there are **minor victims,** the file documents **coordination with the Office of the Attorney General/CONANI**	7 (11 %)	40 (65 %)	15 (24 %)	-
16. Officers determined the **risk** to potential victims and **urgency** of action	30 (48 %)	32 (52 %)	-	-
17. Officers checked whether there is **kinship/a family relationship** between suspect and victim	4 (6 %)	42 (68 %)	-	16 (26 %)
18. File documents **meeting** with prosecutor to jointly determine the steps to take in the investigation	7 (11 %)	55 (89 %)	-	-
II. Identification phase				
19. File documents the **suspects** of the alleged crime	54 (87 %)	8 (13 %)	-	-
20. File documents the **role** of the suspects of the alleged crime	47 (76 %)	15 (24 %)	-	-
21. If there is a risk the suspect will flee, the police alerted Migration or Interpol	2 (3 %)	31 (50%)	29 (47 %)	-
22. File documents the likely **number of victims** of the alleged crime	37 (60 %)	25 (40 %)	-	-
23. File correctly documents the **location** of victims and suspects	35 (56 %)	22 (35 %)	5 (8 %)[60]	-
24. File documents evidence of the possible **modus operandi**	35 (56%)	27 (44%)	-	-
25. File records evidence of **financial activity and flows** potentially linked to the alleged crime	10 (16 %)	52 (84%)	-	-
26. File documents possible **aggravating** circumstances	43 (69 %)	17 (27 %)	2 (3 %)	-
III. Investigation report and plan				
27. Investigation report and plan specifies **what** (punishable act)	56 (90 %)	6 (10 %)	-	-
28. Investigation report and plan specifies **how** (form and modus operandi)	36 (58 %)	26 (42 %)	-	-
29. Investigation report and plan specifies **who** (suspects)	54 (87 %)	8 (13 %)	-	-
30. Investigation report and plan specifies **whom** (victims)	36 (58 %)	26 (42 %)	-	-
31. Investigation report and plan specifies **when** (point in time)	24 (39 %)	38 (61 %)	-	-

[60]This means the file documented the location of the victim or suspect, but not both.

32. Investigation report and plan specifies **where** (location or locations of the **facts of the case**)	44 (71 %)	18 (29 %)	-	-
33. Investigation report and plan specifies **the purpose**	54 (87 %)	8 (13 %)	-	-
34. Investigation report and plan documents the **investigatory steps** performed	22 (35 %)	40 (65 %)	-	-
IV. Evaluation of actions taken and results obtained				
35. File contains the plan for **mitigating** possible operational risks	5 (8 %)	57 (92 %)	-	-
36. File correctly documents elements found in **search and seizure operations** and the **chain of custody**	7 (11 %)	12 (19 %)	43 (69 %)	-
37. File correctly documents the **arrest** of the suspect	2 (3 %)	18 (29 %)	42 (68 %)	-
38. File correctly documents the **reading of the suspects' rights**	-	22 (35 %)	40 (65 %)	-
39. File correctly records **personal search**	-	21 (34 %)	31 (66 %)	-
40. File correctly records **vehicular search**	-	15 (24 %)	47 (76 %)	-
41. File records measures to provide **sensitive treatment** to victims during **rescue**	6 (10 %)	17 (27 %)	39 (63 %)	-
42. File records **lessons** resulting from actions taken and results obtained	3 (5 %)	38 (61 %)	21 (34 %)	-
V. Case file management system				
43. Case file is properly **stored** in a clearly labeled folder	22 (35 %)	40 (65 %)	-	-
44. The system records the **date the case entered** the ATD	16 (26 %)	46 (74 %)	-	-
45. The system documents the details of the case's **lead investigator**	15 (24 %)	47 (76 %)	-	-
46. The system documents the use of information from **databases**	8 (13 %)	54 (87 %)	-	-
47. The system documents the **EDI self-assessment**	5 (8 %)	57 (92 %)	-	-

TABLE 50. ALL INDICATORS AND ALL CASE FILES REVIEWED, 2010–2021

Summary	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	Total
Cases	2	6	11	18	35	26	98
Cases with IJM assistance	0	0	6	12	3	6	27
Percent of cases with IJM assistance	0.0 %	0.0 %	54.5 %	66.7 %	8.6 %	23.1 %	27.6 %
Percent of cases with aggravating circumstances	50.0 %	75.0 %	100.0 %	76.9 %	65.2 %	81.3 %	76.8 %
Suspects or accused	5	16	28	30	84	47	210
Foreign suspects or accused	-	3	3	5	10	16	37
Percentage of foreign suspects or accused	-	18.8 %	10.7 %	16.7 %	11.9 %	34.0 %	17.6 %
Cases with foreign suspects or accused	0	2	2	5	8	10	27
Percentage of cases with foreign suspects or accused	0.0 %	33.3 %	18.2 %	27.8 %	22.9 %	38.5 %	27.6 %
Total number of victims	2	36	50	88	269	74	519
Minor victims	2	5	42	29	24	38	140
Percentage of minor victims	100.0 %	13.9 %	84.0 %	33.0 %	8.9 %	51.4 %	27.0 %
Female victims	2	33	33	81	265	58	472
Percentage of female victims	100.0 %	91.7 %	66.0 %	92.0 %	98.5 %	78.4 %	90.9 %
Foreign victims	1	-	-	48	94	20	163
Percentage of foreign victims	50.0 %	-	-	54.5 %	34.9 %	27.0 %	31.4 %
Cases with foreign victims	1	0	0	4	11	8	24
Percentage of cases with foreign victims	50.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	22.2 %	31.4 %	30.8 %	24.5 %
The investigative preparatory phase	**2010–2011**	**2012–2013**	**2014–2015**	**2016–2017**	**2018–2019**	**2020–2021**	**Total**
Cases requesting an arrest warrant[61]	1	3	8	14	27	12	65
Percentage of cases requesting an arrest warrant	50.0 %	50.0 %	72.7 %	77.8 %	77.1 %	46.2 %	66.3 %
Cases with an arrest warrant	1	3	9	12	27	12	64
Percentage of cases with arrest warrants	50.0 %	50.0 %	81.8 %	66.7 %	77.1 %	46.2 %	65.3 %
Cases resulting in an arrest	2	5	11	18	30	19	85
Percentage of cases resulting in an arrest[62]	100.0 %	83.3 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	85.7 %	73.1 %	86.7 %
Cases with a search and seizure operation	2	4	8	15	26	14	69
Percentage of cases with a search and seizure operation	100.0 %	66.7 %	72.7 %	83.3 %	74.3 %	53.8 %	70.4 %
Percentage of cases with psychologists present during the rescue	-	0.0 %	22.2 %	30.8 %	4.0 %	7.7 %	12.7 %
Cases with a hearing on restrictive measures	2	5	11	18	29	18	83
Percentage of cases with a hearing on restrictive measures	100.0 %	83.3 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	82.9 %	69.2 %	84.7 %
Cases with alternative measures	2	2	5	11	16	14	50
Percentage of cases with alternative measures	100.0 %	33.3 %	45.5 %	61.1 %	45.7 %	53.8 %	51.0 %
Cases with preventive detention at any time	2	5	10	17	20	11	65
Percentage of cases with preventive detention at any time	100.0 %	83.3 %	90.9 %	94.4 %	57.1 %	42.3 %	66.3 %

[61] For all indicators involving "requests" from the Office of the Attorney General, the percentage of cases with requests can be less than the percentage of cases with warrants. This can be attributed to recordkeeping errors.

[62] The percentage of cases resulting in an arrest is larger than the percentage of cases with arrest warrants because of arrests made during the commission of the crime that do not require a warrant.

	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	Total
Percentage of cases with a hearing on restrictive measures that had preventive detention at any time	100.0 %	100.0 %	90.9 %	94.4 %	69.0 %	61.1 %	78.3 %
Accused with restrictive measures	3	9	20	23	30	23	108
Accused with preventive detention	3	9	15	19	24	13	83
Percentage of cases with restrictive measures that had preventive detention	100.0 %	100.0 %	75.0 %	82.6 %	80.0 %	56.5 %	76.9 %
Cases in which the Office of the Attorney General requested a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	1	2	8	12	15	15	53
Percentage of cases in which the Office of the Attorney General requested a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	50.0 %	33.3 %	72.7 %	66.7 %	42.9 %	57.7 %	54.1 %
Cases in which victim testified in court in advance of trial	1	1	8	11	13	11	45
Percentage of cases in which victim testified in court in advance of trial	50.0 %	16.7 %	72.7 %	61.1 %	37.1 %	42.3 %	45.9 %

Preliminary phase	**2010–2011**	**2012–2013**	**2014–2015**	**2016–2017**	**2018–2019**	**2020–2021**	**Total**
Cases with legal charges	2	5	11	16	25	11	70
Percentage of cases with legal charges	100.0 %	83.3 %	100.0 %	88.9 %	71.4 %	42.3 %	71.4 %
Cases in which charges passed the quality standard	0	1	4	10	10	10	35
Cases in which quality of charges was evaluated	2	5	11	16	22	12	68
Percentage of cases that passed the quality standard	0.0 %	20.0 %	36.4 %	62.5 %	45.5 %	83.3 %	51.5 %
Cases in which judge allowed a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	1	1	7	9	9	1	28
Percentage of cases in which judge allowed a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	100.0 %	100.0 %	87.5 %	81.8 %	69.2 %	9.1 %	62.2 %
Cases with a preliminary hearing	2	5	10	16	24	8	65
Percentage of cases with a preliminary hearing	100.0 %	83.3 %	90.9 %	88.9 %	68.6 %	30.8 %	66.3 %
Cases with a full plea bargain (intermediate phase)	0	0	0	5	6	0	11
Percentage of cases with a full plea bargain (intermediate phase)	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	27.8 %	17.1 %	0.0 %	11.2 %
Cases with summary proceedings (full, partial, or informal plea bargain)	-	-	-	6	6	-	12
Percentage of cases with summary proceedings (full, partial, or informal plea bargain)	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	17.1 %	0.0 %	12.2 %

Trial phase	**2010–2011**	**2012–2013**	**2014–2015**	**2016–2017**	**2018–2019**	**2020–2021**	**Total**
Cases that went to trial	1	3	9	10	8	2	33
Percentage of cases that went to trial	50.0 %	50.0 %	81.8 %	55.6 %	22.9 %	7.7 %	33.7 %
Percentage of cases with charges that went to trial (excluding cases with full plea bargains)	50.0 %	60.0 %	81.8 %	90.9 %	42.1 %	18.2 %	55.9 %
Cases with a ruling[63]	2	4	9	15	12	0	42
Percentage of cases with rulings	100.0 %	66.7 %	81.8 %	83.3 %	34.3 %	0.0 %	42.9 %
Cases resulting in a conviction (summary proceedings and trial)	1	1	8	10	10	0	30
Percentage of cases resulting in a conviction (summary proceedings or trial)	50.0 %	16.7 %	72.7 %	55.6 %	28.6 %	0.0 %	30.6 %
Cases with convictions at the trial phase	1	1	8	5	4	0	19
Percentage of cases with convictions at the trial phase	50.0 %	16.7 %	72.7 %	27.8 %	11.4 %	0.0 %	19.4 %

[63] The total number of cases with rulings exceeds the sum of "cases with convictions (summary proceedings and trial)" and "cases with acquittals" by three cases. This is because IJM calculates the "cases with rulings" indicator based on the ruling date. For three cases (from 2010, 2015, and 2017), researchers were not able to determine the date of the ruling, but they were able to confirm that the case reached a resolution.

Convicts	2	3	17	13	13	0	48
Convicts in prison at the time of the ruling	1	3	6	9	6	0	25
Percentage of convicts in prison at the time of the ruling	50.0 %	100.0 %	35.3 %	69.2 %	46.2 %	-	52.1 %
Cases with acquittals	0	3	0	4	2	0	9
Percentage of cases with acquittals	0.0 %	50.0 %	0.0 %	22.2 %	5.7 %	0.0 %	9.2 %
Percentage of cases with rulings that result in acquittals	0.0 %	75.0 %	0.0 %	26.7 %	16.7 %	-	21.4 %
Cases with suspended sentences (trial and summary proceedings)	0	1	2	6	7	0	16
Number of convictions at the trial phase with suspended sentences	0	1	2	1	1	0	5
Percentage of cases with a suspended sentence (trial and summary proceedings)	0.0 %	100.0 %	25.0 %	60.0 %	70.0 %	-	53.3 %
Percentage of convictions at the trial phase with suspended sentences	0.0 %	100.0 %	25.0 %	20.0 %	25.0 %	-	26.3 %
Average years of sentence	10.0	10.7	5.4	7.1	7.0	-	6.9
Average years in prison	10.0	10.6	4.7	4.6	6.3	-	5.7
Percentage of cases that passed the quality standard for rulings	100.0 %	25.0 %	62.5 %	69.2 %	25.0 %	-	50.0 %

Treatment of victims[64]	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	Total
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified before a prosecutor	100.0 %	100.0 %	54.5 %	60.0 %	65.4 %	90.5 %	71.4 %
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified in a Gesell Chamber	0.0 %	0.0 %	50.0 %	62.5 %	45.5 %	52.6 %	48.6 %
Average number of times the victim testified in a Gesell Chamber	-	-	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified in juvenile court	50.0 %	50.0 %	30.0 %	5.9 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	10.3 %
Average number of times the hearing to take victims' testimony before trial was postponed		0.0	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.1
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified during the trial	0.0 %	33.3 %	0.0 %	8.3 %	10.0 %	0.0 %	7.7 %
Average number of times the victim testified in court	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	-	-	1.0
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified via other channels	50.0 %	60.0 %	27.3 %	46.7 %	20.0 %	14.3 %	29.2 %
Average number of times the victim testified via other channels	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.3	-	1.1
Average number of times the victim testified before a prosecutor	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.1
Median number of times the victim testified throughout the proceeding	1.5	2.0	1.5	2.0	1.0	1.0	2.0
Percentage of cases with court-ordered psychotherapeutic treatment	0.0 %	0.0 %	9.1 %	7.1 %	4.0 %	0.0 %	4.0 %

Length of proceedings	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	Total
Days between filing of case and request for arrest warrant	-	171.5	2.0	4.5	20.0	13.5	15.0
Days between filing of case and arrest	29.0	15.0	9.0	8.0	30.0	9.0	14.5
Days between filing of case and search and seizure operation	29.0	14.5	5.0	4.0	29.0	13.0	18.0
Days between filing of case and hearing on restrictive measures	31.5	5.0	12.5	10.0	31.0	20.5	22.0
Days between filing of case and legal charges	88.0	278.0	166.5	152.5	300.0	233.0	195.0
Days between filing of case and preliminary hearing	202.0	289.0	335.0	300.5	431.0	321.0	336.0
Days between filing of case and trial	443.0	610.0	559.0	533.0	853.0	218.0	610.0
Days between filing of case and ruling	964.0	622.5	582.0	416.5	775.0	-	574.0
Days between request for arrest warrant and issuance of arrest warrant	-	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0
Days between warrant and arrest	-	0.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Days between arrest and legal charges	59.0	221.5	153.5	133.0	219.5	202.0	155.5

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[64] The data is not for each individual victim. In cases with multiple victims, the instrument was only filled out for the victim who testified the most times.

Days between search and seizure operation and legal charges	59.0	221.5	164.0	133.0	237.0	183.0	167.0
Days between legal charges and trial	409.0	416.0	450.0	299.0	500.0	80.0	416.0
Days between trial and ruling	521.0	22.0	23.0	20.0	50.0	-	22.0

TABLE 51. ALL INDICATORS, PROSECUTOR CASES FILED AS SEX TRAFFICKING OR CSEC, 2010–2021

Summary	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	Total
Cases	2	5	9	15	31	26	88
Cases with IJM assistance	0	0	5	10	2	6	23
Percent of cases with IJM assistance	0.0 %	0.0 %	55.6 %	66.7 %	6.5 %	23.1 %	26.1 %
Percent of cases with aggravating circumstances	50.0 %	66.7 %	100.0 %	72.7 %	68.4 %	81.3 %	76.7 %
Suspects or accused	5	13	26	25	78	47	194
Foreign suspects or accused	-	3	3	4	10	16	36
Percentage of foreign suspects or accused	-	23.1 %	11.5 %	16.0 %	12.8 %	34.0 %	18.6 %
Cases with foreign suspects or accused	0	2	2	4	8	10	26
Percentage of cases with foreign suspects or accused	0.0 %	40.0 %	22.2 %	26.7 %	25.8 %	38.5 %	29.5 %
Total number of victims	2	30	46	71	231	74	454
Minor victims	2	0	39	22	19	38	120
Percentage of minor victims	100.0 %	0.0 %	84.8 %	31.0 %	8.2 %	51.4 %	26.4 %
Female victims	2	27	30	65	228	58	410
Percentage of female victims	100.0 %	90.0 %	65.2 %	91.5 %	98.7 %	78.4 %	90.3 %
Foreign victims	1	-	-	47	61	20	129
Percentage of foreign victims	50.0 %	-	-	66.2 %	26.4 %	27.0 %	28.4 %
Cases with foreign victims	1	0	0	3	10	8	22
Percentage of cases with foreign victims	50.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	32.3 %	30.8 %	25.0 %
The investigative preparatory phase	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	Total
Cases requesting an arrest warrant[65]	1	3	7	11	25	12	59
Percentage of cases requesting an arrest warrant	50.0 %	60.0 %	77.8 %	73.3 %	80.6 %	46.2 %	67.0 %
Cases with an arrest warrant	1	3	8	9	25	12	58
Percentage of cases with arrest warrants	50.0 %	60.0 %	88.9 %	60.0 %	80.6 %	46.2 %	65.9 %
Cases resulting in an arrest	2	4	9	15	26	19	75
Percentage of cases of resulting in an arrest[66]	100.0 %	80.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	83.9 %	73.1 %	85.2 %
Cases with a search and seizure operation	2	3	7	12	25	14	63
Percentage of cases with a search and seizure operation	100.0 %	60.0 %	77.8 %	80.0 %	80.6 %	53.8 %	71.6 %
Percentage of cases with psychologists present during the rescue	-	0.0 %	14.3 %	27.3 %	4.5 %	7.7 %	10.9 %
Cases with a hearing on restrictive measures	2	4	9	15	25	18	73
Percentage of cases with a hearing on restrictive measures	100.0 %	80.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	80.6 %	69.2 %	83.0 %
Cases with alternative measures	2	2	4	9	15	14	46
Percentage of cases with alternative measures	100.0 %	40.0 %	44.4 %	60.0 %	48.4 %	53.8 %	52.3 %

[65] For all indicators involving "requests" from the Office of the Attorney General, the percentage of cases with requests can be less than the percentage of cases with warrants. This can be attributed to recordkeeping errors.

[66] The percentage of cases resulting in an arrest is larger than the percentage of cases with arrest warrants because of arrests made during the commission of the crime that do not require a warrant.

	2	4	8	14	16	11	55
Cases with preventive detention at any time	2	4	8	14	16	11	55
Percentage of cases with preventive detention at any time	100.0 %	80.0 %	88.9 %	93.3 %	51.6 %	42.3 %	62.5 %
Percentage of cases with a hearing on restrictive measures that had preventive detention at any time	100.0 %	100.0 %	88.9 %	93.3 %	64.0 %	61.1 %	75.3 %
Accused with restrictive measures	3	6	18	18	24	23	92
Accused with preventive detention	3	6	13	16	18	13	69
Percentage of cases with restrictive measures that had preventive detention	100.0 %	100.0 %	72.2 %	88.9 %	75.0 %	56.5 %	75.0 %
Cases in which the Office of the Attorney General requested a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	1	1	6	9	11	15	43
Percentage of cases in which the Office of the Attorney General requested a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	50.0 %	20.0 %	66.7 %	60.0 %	35.5 %	57.7 %	48.9 %
Cases in which the victim testified in court in court in advance of trial	1	-	6	9	9	11	36
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified in court in advance of trial	50.0 %	-	66.7 %	60.0 %	29.0 %	42.3 %	40.9 %

Preliminary phase	**2010–2011**	**2012–2013**	**2014–2015**	**2016–2017**	**2018–2019**	**2020–2021**	**Total**
Cases with legal charges	2	4	9	13	21	11	60
Percentage of cases with legal charges	100.0 %	80.0 %	100.0 %	86.7 %	67.7 %	42.3 %	68.2 %
Cases in which charges passed the quality standard	0	1	3	9	8	10	31
Cases in which quality of charges was evaluated	2	4	9	13	18	12	58
Percentage of cases that passed the quality standard	0.0 %	25.0 %	33.3 %	69.2 %	44.4 %	83.3 %	53.4 %
Cases in which judge allowed a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	1	-	5	7	6	1	20
Percentage of cases in which judge allowed a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	100.0 %	-	83.3 %	77.8 %	66.7 %	9.1 %	55.6 %
Cases with a preliminary hearing	2	4	8	13	20	8	55
Percentage of cases with a preliminary hearing	100.0 %	80.0 %	88.9 %	86.7 %	64.5 %	30.8 %	62.5 %
Cases with a full plea bargain (intermediate phase)	0	0	0	3	4	0	7
Percentage of cases with a full plea bargain (intermediate phase)	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	12.9 %	0.0 %	8.0 %
Cases with summary proceedings (full, partial, or informal plea bargain)	0	0	0	4	4	0	8
Percentage of cases with summary proceedings (full, partial, or informal plea bargain)	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	26.7 %	12.9 %	0.0 %	9.1 %

Trial phase	**2010–2011**	**2012–2013**	**2014–2015**	**2016–2017**	**2018–2019**	**2020–2021**	**Total**
Cases that went to trial	1	2	7	9	6	2	27
Percentage of cases that went to trial	50.0 %	40.0 %	77.8 %	60.0 %	19.4 %	7.7 %	30.7 %
Percentage of cases with charges that went to trial (excluding cases with full plea bargains)	50.0 %	50.0 %	77.8 %	90.0 %	35.3 %	18.2 %	50.9 %
Cases with a ruling[67]	2	3	7	12	8	0	32
Percentage of cases with rulings	100.0 %	60.0 %	77.8 %	80.0 %	25.8 %	0.0 %	36.4 %
Cases resulting in a conviction (summary proceedings and trial)	1	0	6	7	6	0	20
Percentage of cases resulting in a conviction (summary proceedings or trial)	50.0 %	0.0 %	66.7 %	46.7 %	19.4 %	0.0 %	22.7 %

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[67] The total number of cases with rulings exceeds the sum of "cases with convictions (summary proceedings and trial)" and "cases with acquittals" by three cases. This is because IJM calculates the "cases with rulings" indicator based on the ruling date. For three cases (from 2010, 2015, and 2017), researchers were not able to determine the date of the ruling, but they were able to confirm that the case reached a resolution.

	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	Total
Cases with convictions at the trial phase	1	0	6	4	2	0	13
Percentage of cases with convictions at the trial phase	50.0 %	0.0 %	66.7 %	26.7 %	6.5 %	0.0 %	14.8 %
Convicts	2	0	15	8	7	0	32
Convicts in prison at the time of the ruling	1	0	4	6	1	0	12
Percentage of convicts in prison at the time of the ruling	50.0 %	-	26.7 %	75.0 %	14.3 %	-	37.5 %
Cases with acquittals	0	3	0	4	2	0	9
Percentage of cases with acquittals	0.0 %	60.0 %	0.0 %	26.7 %	6.5 %	0.0 %	10.2 %
Percentage of cases with rulings that result in acquittals	0.0 %	100.0 %	0.0 %	33.3 %	25.0 %	-	28.1 %
Cases with suspended sentences (trial and summary proceedings)	0	0	2	3	5	0	10
Number of convictions at the trial phase with suspended sentences	0	0	2	0	1	0	3
Percentage of cases with a suspended sentence (trial and summary proceedings)	0.0 %	-	33.3 %	42.9 %	83.3 %	-	50.0 %
Percentage of convictions at the trial phase with suspended sentences	0.0 %	-	33.3 %	0.0 %	50.0 %	-	23.1 %
Average years of sentence	10.0	-	5.3	8.8	5.9	-	6.6
Average years in prison	10.0	-	4.5	7.0	3.5	-	5.3
Percentage of cases that passed the quality standard for rulings	100.0 %	0.0 %	50.0 %	70.0 %	25.0 %	-	46.4 %

Treatment of victims[68]	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	Total
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified before a prosecutor	100.0 %	100.0 %	55.6 %	57.1 %	65.2 %	90.5 %	71.4 %
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified in a Gesell Chamber	0.0 %	0.0 %	37.5 %	64.3 %	38.9 %	52.6 %	46.0 %
Average number of times the victim testified in a Gesell Chamber			1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified in juvenile court	50.0 %	0.0 %	25.0 %	7.1 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	8.2 %
Average number of times the hearing to take victims' testimony before trial was postponed			0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.1
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified during the trial	0.0 %	50.0 %	0.0 %	11.1 %	14.3 %	0.0 %	10.0 %
Average number of times the victim testified in court	1.0		1.0	1.0	-	-	1.0
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified via other channels	50.0 %	50.0 %	33.3 %	50.0 %	18.2 %	14.3 %	28.6 %
Average number of times the victim testified via other channels	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.3	-	1.1
Average number of times the victim testified before a prosecutor	1.0	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Median number of times the victim testified throughout the proceeding	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.5
Percentage of cases with court-ordered psychotherapeutic treatment	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	9.1 %	4.8 %	0.0 %	3.1 %

Length of proceedings	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	Total
Days between filing of case and request for arrest warrant	-	171.5	2.0	4.5	20.0	13.5	15.0
Days between filing of case and arrest	29.0	15.0	9.0	8.0	30.0	9.0	14.5
Days between filing of case and search and seizure operation	29.0	14.5	5.0	4.0	29.0	13.0	18.0
Days between filing of case and hearing on restrictive measures	31.5	5.0	12.5	10.0	31.0	20.5	22.0
Days between filing of case and legal charges	88.0	278.0	166.5	152.5	300.0	233.0	195.0
Days between filing of case and preliminary hearing	202.0	289.0	335.0	300.5	431.0	321.0	336.0
Days between filing of case and trial	443.0	610.0	559.0	533.0	853.0	218.0	610.0
Days between filing of case and ruling	964.0	622.5	582.0	416.5	775.0	-	574.0
Days between request for arrest warrant and issuance of arrest warrant	-	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0

[68] The data is not for each individual victim. In cases with multiple victims, the instrument was only filled out for the victim who testified the most times.

Days between warrant and arrest	-	0.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Days between arrest and legal charges	59.0	221.5	153.5	133.0	219.5	202.0	153.5
Days between search and seizure operation and legal charges	59.0	221.5	164.0	133.0	237.0	183.0	167.0
Days between legal charges and trial	409.0	416.0	450.0	299.0	500.0	80.0	416.0
Days between trial and ruling	521.0	22.0	23.0	20.0	50.0	-	22.0

TABLE 52. ALL INDICATORS, PROSECUTOR CASES WITH CSEC OR SEX TRAFFICKING CONVICTIONS, 2010–2021

Summary	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	Total
Cases	1	1	5	7	7	-	21
Cases with IJM assistance	0	0	4	6	2	-	12
Percent of cases with IJM assistance	0.0 %	0.0 %	80.0 %	85.7 %	28.6 %	-	57.1 %
Percent of cases with aggravating circumstances	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	83.3 %	42.9 %	-	75.0 %
Suspects or accused	2	3	12	9	14	-	40
Foreign suspects or accused	-	-	1	4	100.0 %	-	6
Percentage of foreign suspects or accused	-	-	8.3 %	44.4 %	7.1 %	-	15.0 %
Cases with foreign suspects or accused	0	0	1	4	1	-	6
Percentage of cases with foreign suspects or accused	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	57.1 %	14.3 %	-	28.6 %
Total number of victims	1	6	21	25	87	-	140
Minor victims	1	5	18	14	8	-	46
Percentage of minor victims	100.0 %	83.3 %	85.7 %	56.0 %	9.2 %	-	32.9 %
Female victims	1	6	4	23	86	-	120
Percentage of female victims	100.0 %	100.0 %	19.0 %	92.0 %	98.9 %	-	85.7 %
Foreign victims	1	-	-	3	48	-	52
Percentage of foreign victims	100.0 %	-	-	12.0 %	55.2 %	-	37.1 %
Cases with foreign victims	1	0	0	2	3	-	6
Percentage of cases with foreign victims	100.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	28.6 %	42.9 %	-	28.6 %
The investigative preparatory phase	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	Total
Cases requesting an arrest warrant[69]	0	0	3	6	5	-	14
Percentage of cases requesting an arrest warrant	0.0 %	0.0 %	60.0 %	85.7 %	71.4 %	-	66.7 %
Cases with an arrest warrant	0	0	4	5	5	-	14
Percentage of cases with arrest warrants	0.0 %	0.0 %	80.0 %	71.4 %	71.4 %	-	66.7 %
Cases resulting in an arrest	1	1	5	7	7	-	21
Percentage of cases of resulting in an arrest[70]	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	-	100.0 %
Cases with a search and seizure operation	1	1	3	7	4	-	16
Percentage of cases with a search and seizure operation	100.0 %	100.0 %	60.0 %	100.0 %	57.1 %	-	76.2 %
Percentage of cases with psychologists present during the rescue	-	0.0 %	25.0 %	50.0 %	0.0 %	-	21.4 %
Cases with a hearing on restrictive measures	1	1	5	7	7	-	21

[69] For all indicators involving "requests" from the Office of the Attorney General, the percentage of cases with requests can be less than the percentage of cases with warrants. This can be attributed to recordkeeping errors.

[70] The percentage of cases resulting in an arrest is larger than the percentage of cases with arrest warrants because of arrests made during the commission of the crime that do not require a warrant.

	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	Total
Percentage of cases with a hearing on restrictive measures	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	-	100.0 %
Cases with alternative measures	1	0	3	5	3	-	12
Percentage of cases with alternative measures	100.0 %	0.0 %	60.0 %	71.4 %	42.9 %	-	57.1 %
Cases with preventive detention at any time	1	1	4	7	7	-	20
Percentage of cases with preventive detention at any time	100.0 %	100.0 %	80.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	-	95.2 %
Percentage of cases with a hearing on restrictive measures that had preventive detention at any time	100.0 %	100.0 %	80.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	-	95.2 %
Accused with restrictive measures	2	3	12	9	10	-	36
Accused with preventive detention	2	3	7	7	9	-	28
Percentage of cases with restrictive measures that had preventive detention	100.0 %	100.0 %	58.3 %	77.8 %	90.0 %	-	77.8 %
Cases in which the Office of the Attorney General requested a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	1	1	4	5	6	-	17
Percentage of cases in which the Office of the Attorney General requested a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	100.0 %	100.0 %	80.0 %	71.4 %	85.7 %	-	81.0 %
Cases in which victim testified in court in advance of trial	1	1	4	4	6	-	16
Percentage of cases in which victim testified in court in advance of trial	100.0 %	100.0 %	80.0 %	57.1 %	85.7 %	-	76.2 %
Preliminary phase	**2010–2011**	**2012–2013**	**2014–2015**	**2016–2017**	**2018–2019**	**2020–2021**	**Total**
Cases with legal charges	1	1	5	7	7	-	21
Percentage of cases with legal charges	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	-	100.0 %
Cases in which charges passed the quality standard	0	0	3	5	4	-	12
Cases in which quality of charges was evaluated	1	1	5	7	7	-	21
Percentage of cases that passed the quality standard	0.0 %	0.0 %	60.0 %	71.4 %	57.1 %	-	57.1 %
Cases in which judge allowed a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	1	1	4	4	5	-	15
Percentage of cases in which judge allowed a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	83.3 %	-	93.8 %
Cases with a preliminary hearing	1	1	5	7	7	-	21
Percentage of cases with a preliminary hearing	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	-	100.0 %
Cases with a full plea bargain (intermediate phase)	0	0	0	3	4	-	7
Percentage of cases with a full plea bargain (intermediate phase)	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	42.9 %	57.1 %	-	33.3 %
Cases with summary proceedings (full, partial, or informal plea bargain)	0	0	0	4	4	-	8
Percentage of cases with summary proceedings (full, partial, or informal plea bargain)	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	57.1 %	57.1 %	-	38.1 %
Trial phase	**2010–2011**	**2012–2013**	**2014–2015**	**2016–2017**	**2018–2019**	**2020–2021**	**Total**
Cases that went to trial	1	1	5	4	3	-	14
Percentage of cases that went to trial	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	57.1 %	42.9 %	-	66.7 %
Percentage of cases with charges that went to trial (excluding cases with full plea bargains)	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	-	100.0 %
Cases with ruling	1	1	5	7	7	-	21
Percentage of cases with ruling	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	-	100 %
Cases resulting in a conviction (summary proceedings and trial)	1	1	5	7	7	-	21
Percentage of cases resulting in a conviction (summary proceedings or trial)	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	-	100.0 %

	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	Total
Cases with convictions at the trial phase	1	1	5	4	3	-	14
Percentage of cases with convictions at the trial phase	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	57.1 %	42.9 %	-	66.7 %
Convicts	2	3	12	9	9	-	35
Convicts in prison at the time of the ruling	1	3	3	6	6	-	19
Percentage of convicts in prison at the time of the ruling	50.0 %	100.0 %	25.0 %	66.7 %	66.7 %	-	54.3 %
Cases with acquittals	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
Percentage of cases with acquittals	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	-	0.0 %
Percentage of cases with rulings that result in acquittals	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	-	0.0 %
Cases with suspended sentences (trial and summary proceedings)	0	1	2	4	4	-	11
Number of convictions at the trial phase with suspended sentences	0	1	2	1	0	-	4
Percentage of cases with a suspended sentence (trial and summary proceedings)	0.0 %	100.0 %	40.0 %	57.1 %	57.1 %	-	52.4 %
Percentage of convictions at the trial phase with suspended sentences	0.0 %	100.0 %	40.0 %	25.0 %	0.0 %	-	28.6 %
Average years of sentence	10.0	10.7	6.5	7.8	8.8	-	8.0
Average years in prison	10.0	10.6	5.4	5.5	8.8	-	7.0
Percentage of cases that passed the quality standard for rulings	100.0 %	100.0 %	80.0 %	85.7 %	28.6 %	-	66.7 %
Treatment of victims[71]	**2010–2011**	**2012–2013**	**2014–2015**	**2016–2017**	**2018–2019**	**2020–2021**	**Total**
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified before a prosecutor	-	100.0 %	40.0 %	60.0 %	66.7 %	-	58.8 %
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified in a Gesell Chamber	0.0 %	0.0 %	60.0 %	50.0 %	83.3 %	-	57.9 %
Average number of times the victim testified in a Gesell Chamber	-	-	1.0	1.0	1.0	-	1.0
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified in juvenile court	0.0 %	100.0 %	20.0 %	14.3 %	0.0 %	-	15.8 %
Average number of times the hearing to take victims' testimony before trial was postponed	-	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.5	-	0.2
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified during the trial	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	-	0.0 %
Average number of times the victim testified in court	-	1.0	1.0	1.0	-	-	1.0
Percentage of cases in which the victim testified via other channels	100.0 %	100.0 %	20.0 %	42.9 %	33.3 %	-	40.0 %
Average number of times the victim testified via other channels	1.0	1.0	-	1.3	1.0	-	1.2
Average number of times the victim testified before a prosecutor	-	1.0	1.0	1.3	1.3	-	1.2
Median number of times the victim testified throughout the proceeding	1.0	3.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	-	2.0
Percentage of cases with court-ordered psychotherapeutic treatment	0.0 %	0.0 %	20.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	-	4.8 %
Length of proceedings	**2010–2011**	**2012–2013**	**2014–2015**	**2016–2017**	**2018–2019**	**2020–2021**	**Total**
Days between filing of case and request for arrest warrant	-	-	0.0	4.0	20.0	-	7.0
Days between filing of case and arrest	9.0	0.0	0.0	13.0	64.0	-	8.0
Days between filing of case and search and seizure operation	9.0	0.0	0.0	8.0	96.5	-	6.0
Days between filing of case and hearing on restrictive measures	11.0	3.0	6.0	8.5	71.0	-	10.0
Days between filing of case and legal charges	34.0	194.0	155.0	151.0	244.5	-	166.5
Days between filing of case and preliminary hearing	179.0	288.0	384.0	335.0	329.0	-	335.0
Days between filing of case and trial	443.0	610.0	1,010.0	478.5	720.0	-	679.0
Days between filing of case and ruling	964.0	744.0	1,031.0	416.0	731.0	-	677.5
Days between request for arrest warrant and issuance of arrest warrant	-	-	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0

[71] The data is not for each individual victim. In cases with multiple victims, the instrument was only filled out for the victim who testified the most times.

Days between warrant and arrest	-	-	0.0	1.5	5.5	-	2.0
Days between arrest and legal charges	25.0	194.0	155.0	131.0	130.5	-	142.0
Days between search and seizure operation and legal charges	25.0	194.0	155.0	133.0	258.5	-	150.0
Days between legal charges and trial	409.0	416.0	496.0	311.0	475.5	-	416.0
Days between trial and ruling	521.0	134.0	21.0	23.0	55.0	-	24.0

TABLE 53. USE AND ACCEPTANCE OF HEARINGS TO TAKE VICTIMS' TESTIMONY BEFORE TRIAL

Indicator	2010–2011	2012–2013	2014–2015	2016–2017	2018–2019	2020–2021	Total
All cases reviewed							
Cases in which the Office of the Attorney General requested a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	1	2	8	12	15	15	53
Cases in which victim testified in court in advance of trial	1	1	8	11	13	11	45
Percentage of cases in which victim testified in court in advance of trial	50.0 %	16.7 %	72.7 %	61.1 %	37.1 %	42.3 %	45.9 %
Cases in which judge allowed a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	1	1	7	9	9	1	28
Percentage of cases in which judge allowed a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	100.0 %	100.0 %	87.5 %	81.8 %	69.2 %	9.1 %	62.2 %
Cases filed as CSEC and sex trafficking (including convictions and non-convictions)							
Cases in which the Office of the Attorney General requested a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	1	1	6	9	11	15	43
Cases in which victim testified in court in advance of trial	1	-	6	9	9	11	36
Percentage of cases in which victim testified in court in advance of trial	50.0 %	-	66.7 %	60.0 %	29.0 %	42.3 %	40.9 %
Cases in which judge allowed a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	1	-	5	7	6	1	20
Percentage of cases in which judge allowed a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	100.0 %	-	83.3 %	77.8 %	66.7 %	9.1 %	55.6 %
Cases with CSEC or sex trafficking convictions							
Cases in which the Office of the Attorney General requested a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	1	1	4	5	6	-	17
Cases in which victim testified in court in advance of trial	1	1	4	4	6	-	16
Percentage of cases in which victim testified in court in advance of trial	100.0 %	100.0 %	80.0 %	57.1 %	85.7 %	-	76.2 %
Cases in which judge allowed a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	1	1	4	4	5	-	15
Percentage of cases in which judge allowed a hearing to take victims' testimony before trial	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	83.3 %	-	93.8 %

TABLE 54. CRIMINAL STATUTE AND SENTENCE APPLIED IN CASES WITH FULL PLEA BARGAINS

Criminal statute applied in ruling	Crime	Sentence (years)	Years person convicted will spend in prison
Law 136-03 Art. 396-A, B and C and Art. 410	Physical, psychological, and sexual abuse; CSEC	2	1
Law 136 Art. 396-B and Art. 397	Psychological abuse; abuse by parents or guardians	2.5	0.5
Law 136-03 Art. 410 and 411	CSEC; child pornography	3	0.33
Law 136-03 Art. 396-B and C and Art. 410	Psychological and sexual abuse; CSEC	3	0
Law 136-03 Art. 396-A, B and C and Art. 411; Law 137-03 Art. 3	Physical, psychological, and sexual abuse; child pornography; human trafficking	10	0.083

Law 136-03 Art. 396-A, B and C, Art 410 and Art 411; Law 137-03 Art. 3 and Art 7-C, D and E	Physical, psychological, and sexual abuse; CSEC; child pornography; human trafficking with aggravating circumstances	5	0.8333
Law 137-03 Art. 3 and 7; Law 72-02 Art. 1, 3, 4 and 5; Law 155-17 Art. 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 Law 631-16 Art. 66 and 67	Human trafficking with aggravating circumstances; money laundering; arms trafficking	5	1,167
Law 136-03, Art. 410; Law 137-03 Art. 3	CSEC and human trafficking	3	0.5833
Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 334	Pimping	3	0
		3	3
Law 136-03 Art. 396-C, Art. 410	Sexual abuse; CSEC	2	0
Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 334	Pimping	5	0

TABLE 55. NUMBER OF FOREIGN VICTIMS PER CASE

Case number	Victims
Case 1	44
Case 2	33
Case 3	20
Case 4	12
Case 5	11
Case 6	5
Case 7	4
Case 8	4
Case 9	4
Case 10	3
Case 11	3
Case 12	3
Case 13	3
Case 14	2
Case 15	2
Case 16	2
Case 17	1
Case 18	1
Case 19	1
Case 20	1
Case 21	1
Case 22	1
Case 23	1
Case 24	1
Total	**163**

TABLE 56. EVALUATION OF QUALITY CRITERIA FOR LEGAL CHARGES IN CASES FILED IN 2010–2013

QUALITY CRITERION	VERY POOR	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD	VERY GOOD
Applying the correct statute(s) to the case	2 (28.6 %)	-	3 (42.9 %)	2 (28.6 %)	-
Aggravating circumstances	-	1 (25.0 %)	-	1 (25.0 %)	2 (50.0 %)
Evidence	1 (14.3 %)	-	2 (28.6 %)	4 (57.1 %)	-
Factual clarity	-	-	4 (57.1 %)	3 (42.9 %)	-
Factual accuracy	-	1 (14.3 %)	3 (42.9 %)	3 (42.9 %)	-
Circumstantial details	-	1 (14.3 %)	4 (57.1 %)	1 (14.3 %)	1 (14.3 %)

TABLE 57. EVALUATION OF QUALITY CRITERIA FOR LEGAL CHARGES IN CASES FILED IN 2014–2017

QUALITY CRITERION	VERY POOR	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD	VERY GOOD
Applying the correct statute(s) to the case	7 (25.9 %)	-	7 (25.9 %)	12 (44.4 %)	1 (3.7 %)
Aggravating circumstances	1 (4.8 %)	1 (4.8 %)	4 (19.0 %)	12 (57.1 %)	3 (14.3 %)
Evidence	-	5 (18.5 %)	5 (18.5 %)	12 (44.4 %)	5 (18.5 %)
Factual clarity	1 (3.7 %)	3 (11.1 %)	8 (29.6 %)	8 (29.6 %)	7 (25.9 %)
Factual accuracy	1 (3.7 %)	3 (11.1 %)	8 (29.6 %)	6 (22.2 %)	9 (33.3 %)
Circumstantial details	-	2 (7.4 %)	10 (37.0 %)	5 (18.5 %)	10 (37.0 %)

TABLE 58. EVALUATION OF QUALITY CRITERIA FOR LEGAL CHARGES IN CASES FILED IN 2018–2021

QUALITY CRITERION	VERY POOR	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD	VERY GOOD
Applying the correct statute(s) to the case	6 (17.1 %)	1 (2.9 %)	8 (22.9 %)	13 (37.1 %)	7 (20.0 %)
Aggravating circumstances	3 (13.0 %)	-	6 (26.1 %)	10 (43.5 %)	4 (17.4 %)
Evidence	1 (2.9 %)	3 (8.6 %)	6 (17.1 %)	13 (37.1 %)	12 (34.3 %)
Factual clarity	1 (2.9 %)	2 (5.7 %)	4 (11.4 %)	18 (51.4 %)	10 (28.6 %)
Factual accuracy	-	2 (5.7 %)	4 (11.4 %)	15 (42.9 %)	14 (40.0 %)
Circumstantial details	-	2 (5.7 %)	7 (20.0 %)	15 (42.9 %)	11 (31.4 %)

TABLE 59. EVALUATION OF QUALITY CRITERIA FOR RULINGS IN CASES FILED IN 2010–2013

QUALITY CRITERION	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD
Legal grounds	1 (20.0 %)	2 (40.0 %)	2 (40.0 %)
Verdict	2 (40.0 %)	1 (20.0 %)	2 (40.0 %)

TABLE 60. EVALUATION OF QUALITY CRITERIA FOR RULINGS IN CASES FILED IN 2014–2017

QUALITY CRITERION	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD
Legal grounds	4 (19.0 %)	9 (42.9 %)	8 (38.1 %)
Verdict	5 (23.8 %)	4 (19.0 %)	12 (57.1 %)

TABLE 61. EVALUATION OF QUALITY CRITERIA FOR RULINGS IN CASES FILED IN 2018–2021

QUALITY CRITERION	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD
Legal grounds	4 (30.8 %)	5 (38.5 %)	4 (30.8 %)
Verdict	6 (46.2 %)	4 (30.8 %)	3 (23.1 %)

Note: The number of legal charges evaluated (69) exceeds the number of cases with legal charges evaluated (68) because charges were filed twice in one case. The same thing happened with rulings evaluated (39) and cases with rulings (38) because one case had two rulings.

TABLE 62. EVALUATION OF KEY OFFICIALS' CONFIDENCE IN THE RESPONSE OF THE DOMINICAN PUBLIC JUSTICE SYSTEM TO CSEC AND SEX TRAFFICKING, 2015 TO 2021

| Institution | 2015 | | 2021 | | | | 2022 | | | |
	Number of respondents (out of 23)	Confidence 1-3*	Number of respondents (out of 12)	Confidence	Number of respondents (out of 12)	% who said their confidence improved over the previous five years	Number of respondents (out of 12)	Confidence	Number of respondents (out of 12)	% who said their confidence improved over the previous five years
PJS as a whole	–	–	12	2.1	12	92 %	12	2.1	12	92 %
Office of the Attorney General	20	2.4	12	2.6	11	100 %	12	2.4	12	83 %
National Police	18	1.5	12	2	10	60 %	12	1.9	12	92 %
Judiciary	19	2.3	11	2.5	11	91 %	12	2.5	11	91 %
CONANI	16	2.3	12	2.2	11	82 %	12	1.9	12	58 %
Ministry of Women	–	–	9	2.2	9	67 %	10	2.3	11	91 %
POLITUR	14	2	11	2	10	90 %	11	2.1	9	100 %
CESFRONT	5	1.6	10	1.8	7	71 %	9	1.6	8	50 %
CITIM	5	1.9	10	2.6	9	100 %	8	2.6	8	75 %

*Scale: 1-Not very confident, 2-Somewhat confident, 3-Very confident

TABLE 63. RESPONSES ABOUT CONFIDENCE, 2021 INTERVIEWS

INSTITUTION	NOT VERY CONFIDENT	%	SOMEWHAT CONFIDENT	%	VERY CONFIDENT	%	DON'T KNOW	%	PREDOMINANT CONFIDENCE LEVEL
PJS as a whole	2	16.7	7	58.3	3	25	–	–	Somewhat confident
Office of the Attorney General	1	8.3	4	33.3	7	58.3	–	–	Very confident
Judiciary	–	–	6	50.0	5	41.7	1	8.3	Somewhat confident
National Police	4	33.3	4	33.3	4	33.3	–	–	No rating predominated
POLITUR	1	8.3	8	66.7	2	16.7	1	8.3	Somewhat confident
CESFRONT	4	33.3	3	25.0	3	25.0	2	16.7	Not very confident
CONANI	1	8.3	8	66.7	3	25.0	–	–	Somewhat confident
CITIM	–	–	3	25.0	7	58.3	2	16.7	Very confident
Ministry of Women	1	8.3	5	41.7	3	25.0	3	25	Somewhat confident

TABLE 64. RESPONSES ABOUT CONFIDENCE, 2022 INTERVIEWS

INSTITUTION	NOT VERY CONFIDENT	%	SOMEWHAT CONFIDENT	%	VERY CONFIDENT	%	DON'T KNOW	%	PREDOMINANT CONFIDENCE LEVEL
PJS as a whole	-	-	11	91.7	1	8.3	-	-	Somewhat confident
Office of the Attorney General	-	-	7	58.3	5	41.7	-	-	Somewhat confident
Judiciary	-	-	6	50.0	6	50.0	-	-	Somewhat/very confident
National Police	3	25.0	7	58.3	2	16.7	-	-	Somewhat confident
POLITUR	2	16.7	5	41.7	4	33.3	1	8.3	Somewhat confident
CESFRONT	4	33.3	4	33.3	1	8.7	3	33.3	No rating predominated
CONANI	3	25.0	7	58.3	2	16.7	-	-	Somewhat confident
CITIM	-	-	4	33.3	4	33.3	4	33.3	Somewhat/very confident
Ministry of Women	1	8.3	4	33.3	5	41.7	2	16.7	Very confident

APPENDIX 9: ADDITIONAL TABLE ON TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE RESULTS

TABLE 65. SCORE FOR EACH TIC VALUE FOR ALL INTERACTIONS, OFFICIALS, AND SURVIVORS

Survivors (interviews conducted in 2021 about interactions that took place between 2014 and 2019)

TIC dimension	Rescue	Transfer	Testimony	Hearing	Case management
Trustworthiness	33.3 %	91.0 %	67.5 %	75.0 %	100.0 %
Safety	93.3 %	96.3 %	73.8 %	74.3 %	100.0 %
Collaboration	N/A	100.0 %	N/A	N/A	100.0 %
Empowerment	N/A	100.0 %	100.0 %	N/A	100.0 %
Choice	N/A	N/A	33.3 %	83.3 %	N/A
Connectedness	N/A	100.0 %	N/A	N/A	100.0 %

Officials interviewed in 2021

TIC dimension	Rescue	Transfer	Testimony	Hearing	Case management
Trustworthiness	90.0 %	88.2 %	92.5%	87.0 %	92.0 %
Safety	95.1 %	92.3 %	92.1 %	90.1 %	100.0 %
Collaboration	100.0 %	95.0 %	N/A	N/A	83.3 %
Empowerment	N/A	100.0 %	96.2 %	N/A	94.3 %
Choice	28.6 %	N/A	92.3 %	77.3 %	N/A
Connectedness	N/A	100.0 %	N/A	N/A	100.0 %

Officials interviewed in 2022

TIC dimension	Rescue	Transfer	Testimony	Hearing	Case management
Trustworthiness	87.5 %	93.8 %	93.9 %	88.3 %	90.6 %
Safety	93.4 %	93.0 %	100.0 %	97.8 %	98.3 %
Collaboration	91.7 %	100.0 %	N/A	N/A	58.3 %
Empowerment	N/A	100.0 %	94.4 %	N/A	95.0 %
Choice	N/A	N/A	77.8 %	85.7 %	N/A
Connectedness	N/A	95.0 %	N/A	N/A	90.9 %