

Trafficking in Human Beings in the Balkans



# *Trafficking in Human Beings in the Balkans*



**SDC**

SWISS AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION  
ŠVAJCARSKA DIREKCIJA ZA RAZVOJ I SARADNJU

*Jelena Bjelica*

TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN THE BALKANS  
Manual for Journalists

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**Manual for Journalists - Trafficking in Human Beings in the Balkans**

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## INTRODUCTION

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*„Women and children are not property, but human beings. The international community should declare, loudly and more strongly than ever, that we are all members of the human family. Slavery simply has no place in a world of human rights“.*

(UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan)

Trafficking in human beings, especially of women and children, is an insufficiently researched but demanding, complex and attractive topic for journalists, representing a real challenge for reporters. According to the experiences so far from the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the media's approach to the topic is mostly sensationalist. Serious research that sheds light on the essence of this form of organised crime is rare.

This manual is the result of one-year research of modern slavery in the Balkans. Its aim is to inform, educate and instruct journalists and anybody interested in various aspects of the traffic in human beings.

These organised criminal networks, like any other, cannot be discussed properly if one deals only with one country and only one ethnic group. It is well known that national and ethnic divisions, so characteristic for the Balkan region, are not a barrier for criminal groups whose only aim is the profit from sold or bought women, children and men.

Around 200,000 women from southeastern Europe have been the victims of the traffic in human beings during the last couple of years. One of the most important factors in the growth of this form of organised crime is surely the social and economic situation in these countries as well as in the countries of the former Soviet Union. In a search for better life and earnings, many women become easy prey for the unscrupulous traffickers of human beings. Once they are caught in the chain, the victims do not have any way out...

The basic aim of this manual is to increase consciousness among journalists about the gravity and extent of the problem, but also to explain of the terminology connected with the trafficking in human beings. Above all, it stresses the fact that the trafficked women are victims not 'tramps,' 'queens of the night,' 'meat,' or 'whores' as the journalists often humiliatingly and inhumanely call them.

The manual also aims to show that the fight against this form of organised crime needs synchronised efforts by legislative and executive organs as well as

by representatives of the media. Its final aim is to call all journalists who get involved in writing about the trafficking in human beings to the necessary professional responsibility and consistence to the profession.

*Jelena Bjelica, author*

## DEFINITION OF THE TERM

**Slaves of the 21st century:** Trafficking in women, as well as trafficking in children, is a part of the new terminology in presenting the problem of slavery of women and children. The term trafficking means ‘the recruitment and/or transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits, or by use of other forms of force with the purpose of sexual or economical abuse in order the third person and/or a group (pimp, procurer, merchant, go-between, brothel owners and other employers, clients or criminal groups) to gain profit’ (from the Protocol of the United Nation on the trafficking in human beings, September 2000).

International institutions and nongovernmental organisations are aware that this is one of the most profitable illegal businesses of the previous decade, which threatens to spread even more in the 21st century.

Trafficking in human beings is based on sheer exploitation of the persons who are in an servitude. A clear distinction should be made between the smuggling of human beings and trafficking in human beings. In most cases smuggling becomes trafficking in human beings.

Thus, if the smuggling of human beings is “the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a state party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident’ (from the Protocol of the United Nations against the smuggling of migrants, December 2000), then there is an important distinction between a migrant who wants to be brought across a border and ‘a victim of trafficking’ because in the latter case the victim does not have any choice.

Secondly, the smuggling of human beings implicitly includes crossing an international border, while that is not the case with trafficking.

Thirdly, ‘exploitation’ is not a relevant term for the smuggling of human

beings. 'Victim' is the key term that defines trafficking in human beings.

Considering the Universal Declaration Of Human Rights (1948) and its first five articles, trafficking in human beings is a direct violation of human rights and freedoms:

1. All human beings are born free.
2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration.
3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.
4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and servitude shall be prohibited in all their forms.
5. No one shall be subjected to torture.

The trafficking in human beings has consequences for all countries connected with it – the country of origin of the victim, transit country and destination country. Thus, all countries must cooperate in the fight against the problem. The fact is that illegal migration is connected with international organised crime, money laundering, drug smuggling, etc. Trafficking in human beings is itself a form of organised crime.

The purpose of trafficking in human beings, among other things, can be the following: forced prostitution, forced au pair work, illegal work, debtor slavery, forced marriage, false adoption, sex tourism or entertainment, pornography, begging, usage in criminal activities, etc.

Considering that, with the increasingly strict policies of western European countries towards migrants, the number of regular migrations has been reduced, many people, especially from Eastern Europe, have sought a solution in illegal channels. Many women who decide to emigrate that way will end up, in the worst case, instead of in the country they wanted, in a country of the western Balkans where they will be forced into prostitution. The most common reasons that a woman or a girl leaves her country are of economic nature or the unequal position of women, especially in the countries of Eastern Europe. Instead of finding a better life, women are often raped during the journey, their documents are taken away from them, they are deprived of food, etc.

The last global estimation from 1998 (US State Department) presents the horrifying data that 700,000 – 2,000,000 women and children are trafficked across international borders every year. According to estimates from the period 1990 to today, traffickers in human beings earn 7–13 billion dollars a year. According to Amnesty International, more than 23 million people in the world currently work under coercion.

#### THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT TERMS IN WRITING ABOUT TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

**Prostitution:** There have been many definitions of prostitution throughout history. One of these, especially current, is the feminist one that sees prostitution

as 'the money by which a man pays for female meat' (Zorica Mrsevic, preface for the book *Trafficking In Women*, ASTRA). Prostitution, which used to be understood as 'the oldest profession,' 'a necessary evil,' or 'an activity that reduces the number of rapes, has existed in various forms since ancient times.

In ancient Greece, Solon, the legislator and philosopher, instituted Dicterion in the 6th century B.C., the ancestor of the modern brothel. The regulation on the inventory of prostitutes was brought in the Roman Empire in 180 B.C. There were concubines in Japan. Rajas in India had their harems.

Prostitution today is characterised by violence, threats, coercion and other forms of humiliation. Opposed to this prostitution under coercion, associations of Western Europe prostitutes, organised internationally, managed to establish the term 'free prostitution,' which means that they use their bodies and that they are the ones who have chosen to do this job.

*There are three legal regimes in the world by which the countries most often regulate the problem of prostitution:*

- prohibitionism, which regards prostitution as an offence. The prostitute, the procurer and the client can be prosecuted (some states in the United States);
- reglementarism, which regards the prostitution as a 'necessary evil' that can be controlled and channelled as a public service regulated by laws (Germany and the Netherlands) and
- abolitionism, which regards the legalisation of prostitution. This regime prohibits and inflicts a punishment on procuring and recruiting of clients (France).

**Smuggling of human beings:** 'the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a state party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident.'

**Trafficking in human beings:** 'the recruitment and/or transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits, or by use of other forms of force with the purpose of sexual or economic abuse in order for the third person and/or a group (pimp, procurer, merchant, go-between, brothel owners and other employers, clients or criminal groups) to gain profit.'

Many young women from countries in economic crisis like in Eastern Europe who seek a job abroad eventually end up in a brothel. They respond gullibly to job advertisements – for babysitters, maids, waitresses, models or dancers – that usually are the first step at the entrance of the well-established women in trafficking channels. The employers even visit their families, promising them a well paid job abroad and regular sending of monthly support to the families.

Some women and girls are aware that they will work in the sex industry, but

they are not aware of the unbearable conditions. Those who come to work as erotic dancers or strippers are also forced to prostitute themselves. On the other hand, some of them agree to work as prostitutes until they earn enough money to live a normal life in their home country. But they rarely achieve that goal. Like other women they would be sold several times in several countries or cities in order to fulfill the clients' and new club owners' expectations for new and fresh faces ('fresh meat,' as they say).

As soon as they arrive their passports and all other documents are taken from them. In order to 'break' them some individuals or groups of criminals deprive them of food, drug, beat and rape them several times a day. When they succeed in exhausting the women so much that they are not able to defend themselves, they are then forced to work day and night, sometimes with 15 or 20 clients a day.

The mediators or traffickers often cooperate with the local authorities or the police, buy and sell the women across the border. They rarely use official border crossings, but rather illegal ones via mountains, lakes or rivers. It is also common for women to have student, tourist or valid work visa.

The trafficked woman is exploited and in a position under control where she does not have the freedom to decide whether or how she will work as a prostitute, nor to stop doing it if she wants to. She doesn't have her passport. She does not have a return ticket to the place she came from. She does not have direct access to her earnings. The exploiter gives the woman's earnings or a part of them to a third person. She must earn a certain minimum sum of money per day or per week. She owes the exploiter or third person a huge amount of money for the smuggling, traveling expenses, clothes, etc., that she must give back before she will have access to her earnings or before she will be able to quit the job. Or the exploiter has paid a certain sum of money for 'taking possession' of the woman, and she must pay it. Her freedom to move is limited as are the contacts or relations with the third person. She is under constant surveillance. She spends 24 hours a day in the club where she is exploited. She cannot refuse certain clients or certain indecent acts. She did not know that she would work as a prostitute or under what conditions. She cannot stop working or to go back home when she wants. She looks frightened. She does not speak freely. She isolates herself or other women in the club isolate her. There are visible marks of maltreatment on her.

#### ECONOMIC DIMENSION – FEMINISATION OF POVERTY

Economic and social inequalities between and within the countries probably are the most important specific cause of trafficking. Besides that, considering their unequal position and lack of possibilities in their homelands it is not a coincidence that the majority of trafficked people are women. Poverty and unemployment, small salaries, discriminatory working practices, violence, patriarchal and social structures and insufficient social support to single mothers all force women to migrate (and thus increase merchants' chances for easy prey).

The biggest increase in trafficking has been observed in Eastern and Central

## THE VICTIMS

Europe and in the countries of the former Soviet Union. Many experts noticed the connection between trafficking and the turmoils linked with economic transition, especially with the rise in poverty and unemployment among women.

With some exceptions, few of the countries and the police structures within them regard trafficking in human beings seriously enough, far less seriously than trafficking in arms or drugs, and their approach to it is above all as an immigration problem. Only some of them are completely aware of the brutality of the crime. Prejudice, confusion and mistrust connected with the matter contribute to the lack of political will for the more efficient fight against this evil. In many countries, for example, trafficking in women is wrongly characterised as 'prostitution of foreign citizens' or the 'black labour market' not as a form of slavery. The consent of the trafficked person is assumed or the problem is rejected as an abuse committed by individuals for whom the state is not responsible by international law.

The law, in many countries, is used against the trafficked persons rather than against the people who commit the crime. In a typical raid in a brothel, for example, the police arrest, interrogate, hold in custody and deport the women (illegal prostitution or for illegal work) and the pimps and brothel owners get away with it (they are not punished in any way). If the merchants are prosecuted, they mostly get moderate penalties like 'profiting from immorality' or 'harbouring illegal immigrants.' They are regularly set free on bail and often get release on parole and/or small fines. Even though the majority of countries have regulations in their criminal codes for rape, threat by physical violence, blackmail, fraud and illegal captivity, as well as acts that prohibit labour exploitation and slavery, these acts are seldom used in the cases of the trafficking in women.

One of the biggest obstacles for the effective fight against trafficking and protection of the victims – identified by police and prosecutors as well as by NGO representatives – is the fact that the trafficked persons are illegally or work illegally in the country and thus they are immediately deported in accordance with the country's act on foreigners or immigration.

In most cases, the police or immigration authorities do not try at all to establish whether these persons are the victims of trafficking or other crimes like slavery. Thus, they fail to inform those who should be concerned (even their own government), or to help and protect the victims or to conduct further investigations. Strict immigration rules and procedures connected with the deportation of the illegal migrants or workers clash with the efforts both to punish the crimes of trafficking in women and to protect the human rights of the victims. The threat of immediate deportation keeps the victims from asking for help from the police or other official institutions. The arrested victims or the victims who escaped their traffickers do not receive any necessary help or protection that is their right according to international human rights standards<sup>1</sup>. Actually, in most cases, they are further victimised by the crime and immigration regulations of the country<sup>2</sup>;

Nongovernmental organisations that try to help the victims of trafficking are not willing to cooperate with the police. Efficient realisation of the law is seriously undermined by the fact that the victims do not want or are not able to testify against the traffickers<sup>3</sup>.

*Source: Trafficking in Human Beings – implications for the OSCE/ODHIR background paper*

When we talk about trafficking in human beings on the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia, Montenegro and the international protectorate of Kosovo) the available estimates (there are no official data) say that 10,000 – 100,000 women and children might have been trafficked across the country's borders, whether from or to Yugoslavia. In almost all international studies that deal with the problem it is stressed that Yugoslavia is the main and well-known transit route in the region, above all due to the fact that the trafficking in human beings during the ten years of the Milosevic regime was an absolutely marginalised problem.

According to a report from the International Helsinki Foundation For Human Rights, these problems as well as other forms of violence against women and children in Serbia were not dealt with by the judiciary or police during the regime of Slobodan Milosevic.

Although the current Criminal Code mandates a sentence of six months to ten years imprisonment with its Article 155 -- 'On slavery and transportation of person in servitude' – in practice prosecutors almost never used it.

Considering the wars on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, the trafficking in human beings was hidden and a still unknown problem. There was no serious fight against trafficking in human beings during the Milosevic era. Under his ten-year regime, Yugoslavia was the worst state in the region in terms of fighting this form of organised crime. Thus, it gained the label of the main transit and destination country of the victims.

However, Yugoslavia was recognised also as a country of origin of victims of trafficking in human beings in the second half of the 1990s when the newspapers were full of advertisements offering jobs for escorts, waitresses in restaurants and cafés in other countries, or in personals. 'Three months job abroad for

attractive 18 – 30 y.o. women,' an ad published in the daily newspaper Blic in July 1999, is an illustrative example.

After Milosevic was deposed on Oct. 5, 2000, Yugoslavia signed the international Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime with the additional protocols.

Meanwhile, under the patronage of the federal Interior Ministry official Brankica Grupkovic, four working groups within a National Team for the Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings were formed.

The first group deals with prevention and an awareness raising campaign; the second group helps and supports the victims; the third is the working group for improvement of laws and changes of the regulations that deal with the issue and the fourth group does research work.

However, Belgrade unofficially has become the crossroads of the international routes for the traffic in women and the main supplier of the countries in the region. According to officials close to the organisations that fight the traffic in human beings, there are at least three big traffickers in the suburbs of Belgrade who are well connected with the pimps and brothel owners of the region, who hold even up to 15 women in their private prisons.

*The following is the list of the countries from which the victims usually originate, via which they cross and where they end up as the victims of the traffic in human beings:*

**Home countries of the victims:** Moldova, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, Russia, Belarus, Yugoslavia, Albania, etc.

**Transit countries of the victims:** Yugoslavia, Hungary, Italy, Greece, Macedonia, Kosovo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Germany, Netherlands, etc.

**Destination countries of the victims:** Italy, Cyprus, Netherlands, Germany, Yugoslavia, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, etc.

*Women of Albanian nationality in Kosovo, as well as Roma women, are mostly sold in Italy. According to the newspaper Blic from September 1999, it was estimated that around 7,000 Romas left Serbia and went to Italy in a period of only few weeks. Romas in Italy mostly are sold or 'kept' for begging. In Hungary pornography is highly developed.*

#### SERBIA

There are several towns functioning as small regional centres for the trafficking in human beings. The trafficking occurs mostly in public places like restaurants, hotels, motels, nightclubs, etc. or in private apartments. Above all, these are the restaurants along the Belgrade – Subotica road, along the Ibar highway, then in Pozarevac, Sabac, Novi Pazar, Kraljevo, Novi Sad, Kragujevac and Belgrade. Since the arrival of a great number of soldiers to the Balkans (in 1995 in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in 1999 in Kosovo) the business 'bloomed' near all big military bases, as well as near the US military base Bondsteel near Urosevac or Casablanca near Suva Reka, as well as near the military bases in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

*1. In the majority of cases, deportation is conducted regardless of the trauma the victim suffered or the danger she will face on return. Only a few countries of origin are able to ensure the trafficked person any medical, psychological or legal help, or to protect her from revenge or new trafficking by criminal groups connected with the merchants in her home country.*

*2. In many cases victims of trafficking, especially minors, want to return to their home countries. However, the fact that they were deported as illegal immigrants can have immense and long-term consequences for the trafficked person. In some countries, for example, the deported persons are legally prosecuted and imprisoned after their return because of the prostitution or illegal exit from the country. In other countries, deportation as 'person non grata' keeps them from traveling legally many years after the experience with trafficking is over. In some cases, the trafficked persons or their families are required to pay the expenses for the return to the home country, which only enlarge their previous debts.*

*3. A recent media report from Great Britain illustrates this point: In that case, the police burst into a massage parlor following media reports. According to the report, the authorities knew or suspected that eight Thai women who were working in the salon were trafficked and forced to prostitute. After the raid, however, the women were immediately deported and thus unable to testify against the merchants.*

## EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM IN YUGOSLAVIA

When the Mayor of Vrsac, the border town at northeast of Vojvodina, was asked how he dealt with the illegal border crossings and potential traffickers, he answered, half joking, 'How many women do you need?' He looked like it was burning under his feet. Does it mean that he cannot solve the problem?

In the border regions, according to the Mostar office of the international organisation 'La Strada,' girls are bought at market places. 'There are these market places in several places: One is in Debrecen, Hungary; another at the border between Serbia and Romania; and a third one between Serbia and Bulgaria. The women come there seeking help to cross the borders without visas. These women are mostly young and naive and come from the rural regions where the standard of living is under any minimum required to live. A well-paid doctor's salary in Moldova is 15-20 US dollars, and the price of a passport is 50 US dollars,' the research of the organisation reports. The situation in the Sandzak region on the border with Kosovo is no better. According to sources from Sandzak, the girls are mostly from Eastern Europe. They are brought across the border to Kosovo or to Montenegro, but everything depends on the boss and his deals with the owners of nearby brothels. If they cross the border at the official crossing, then it is mostly with the false documents made for them in Kraljevo. Regardless of whether the girl wants it or not, she is obligated to go with the client to the room, and the price of her services, ordered by the boss, is from 25-50 Euros.

In Belgrade, one source named a certain 'Pera The Prostitute,' a former Belgrade police head who was one of the main men in the chain of the trafficking in human beings on the route that passes through the capital. It is not a surprise because the police often take part in the trafficking openly, by ignoring or by inactivity. Corruption, obstruction, confusion and passivity are often present at all police apparatus levels; it is shown in the experts' analyses.

According to the research of the nongovernmental organisation ASTRA (Anti Sex-Trafficking Action) from 2001 a great number of girls from Romania, Russia

and Ukraine were found in the night clubs and bars in Homolje, Stig, Resava, Pomoravlje, Veliko Gradiste, Pozarevac, Svilajnac, Zajecar and Negotin. A few hours or a whole night with them costs between 10-250 Euros depending on the 'service.'

The victims are obtained in several ways, but above all via newspaper advertisements for escorts, for waitresses in a café or restaurant, and marriage personals. According to data from 1997, 32 agencies for business escorting were registered in Belgrade alone. The number of these that were working illegally is certainly much higher.

According to ASTRA research, girls from three agencies -- Lolita, Think Pink and Call Girls -- work in the striptease club located in the Metropol hotel in the centre of Belgrade. Pimps offer the girls' services in the club. There is also information that some of these prostitutes are from Russia, Ukraine and Romania, but there is no evidence that they are the victims of the trafficking in human beings.

'At the beginning of the 1990s, higher class prostitutes have appeared, in contrast to those who were working in the streets and in hotels until then.' (*Dnevni Telegraph, May 6, 1998*)

Finally and unfortunately, there are no systematically collected data in Serbia (either in governmental nor in nongovernmental organisations) on the trafficking in women.

The case of Ivana Jovanovic, 19, who committed suicide because the procurers, the brothers Danijel and Predrag Markovic, sold her for 300 Euros, will remain to remind us of the days of legalised prostitution via 'business escorting,' striptease night clubs that were cropping up as if after a rain in almost all parts of Belgrade as well as of further victimisation of the victims.

#### IOM STATISTICS

The following statistics are taken from the database of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) office in Belgrade and refer to the period August 2001 – May 2002 during which the organisation has helped 65 victims (all of the victims were women) of the trafficking in human beings in Serbia.

Nationality	Number	Percentage
Moldova	33	50.77
Romania	18	27.69
Ukraine	11	16.92
Belarus	2	3.08
Russia	1	1.54
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100</b>
Intended destination	Number	Percentage
Country		
Italy	23	51.11
Romania	6	13.33
Bosnia-Herzegovina	6	13.33

Macedonia	5	11.11
Hungary	2	4.44
Slovakia	1	2.22
Greece	1	2.22
Germany	1	2.22
Gender of the Recruiter		
Answer	Number	Percentage
Female	35	53.85
Male	23	35.38
male/female	6	9.23
N/A	1	1.54
How was the victim freed?		
Answer	Number	Percentage
Police	39	60
Her/himself	15	23.08
A client	8	12.31
Other	2	3.08
Entry Port into Belgrade		
Answer	Number	Percentage
Romania	50	76.92
Hungary	7	10.77
Macedonia	5	7.69
Were the borders crossed legally?		
Answer	Number	Percentage
All	31	47.69
Some	18	27.69
None	15	23.08
Why did the victim leave the home country?		
Answer	Number	Percentage
Work	55	84.92
Was Forced	4	6.15
None of above	2	3.08
Tourism	2	3.08
N/A	1	1.54
Visit a Relative/Friend	1	1.54
Education		
Answer	Number	Percentage
Middle school	30	46.15
Elementary school	27	41.54
High school	3	4.62
University	3	4.62

N/A	1	1.54
<b>Age of the victims:</b>		
Age Range	Number	Percentage
Below 15	1	1.54
15-17	3	4.62
18-24	36	55.38
25-30	19	29.23
Over 30	6	9.23
<b>Knew about Sex Work?</b>		
Answer	Number	Percentage
No	60	92.31
N/A	2	3.08
Yes	2	3.08
Partially	1	1.54
<b>Abuses while Trafficked (Mental)</b>		
Yes		49
No		13
N/A		3
<b>Abuses while Trafficked (Physical)</b>		
Yes		42
No		20
N/A		3
<b>Abuses while Trafficked (Sexual)</b>		
Yes		36
No		24
N/A		5

## MONTENEGRO

The real number of bought or sold women in Montenegro is unknown, but it is clear that it is enormous. Due to the lack of legal means -- there is no article in the Montenegro Criminal Code that deals with the trafficking in human beings -- there is no information on trials against the traffickers. According to official data 143 foreign female citizens who worked as prostitutes were deported from Montenegro during 1999 alone. In 2000, 93 foreign female citizens were caught while crossing the border illegally. Information has been published recently in Montenegro that 18 Montenegrin women were found during a raid in Albania, which could be expected considering the difficult economic situation and high degree of unemployment in the country that increasingly affects the female population.

For the majority of the women from Russia, Romania and Moldova

Montenegro is a destination or transition country. The majority of the girls are found in Podgorica, Bar, Rozaje, Ulcinj, Budva and Berane.

Montenegro is above all a transit route between Serbia and Albania and Western Europe. A special police anti-trafficking and -smuggling team conducted two big raids in nightclubs in Podgorica in 2001. During the second raid in autumn last year 10 nightclubs were investigated and the arrested women were deported to the border with Serbia. In a raid in Bar at the beginning of October 2001 the police found three women from Ukraine who were trafficked in a nightclub. The nightclub owner was arrested.

According to the report of a Montenegro nongovernmental organisation, the situation in Montenegro is disturbing. Ten women (seven from Moldova, two from Romania, and one from Ukraine) came via the Cop border crossing, where a group of men from Serbia met them and gave them false documents explaining them that the passports with stamps would protect them from possible problematic situations. They ended up as the victims of the trafficking in human beings. The girls trusted them because 'the gentlemen seemed courteous and kind.'

Seven girls from Moldova were accommodated in Zitoradja, southern Serbia, in a house of 'a gentleman who has a huge family.' The host was considerate and recommended they not leave the house until the employment agencies owners appeared and took them over. A few days later, two men from Belgrade and Podgorica took the girls to Belgrade where they joined the group of 10 women. The seven girls from Moldova realised soon that they had been deceived and that the modern dance they had thought they would be performing did not mean demanding exercise and occasional sore muscles, but that it would be a life full of humiliation, physical and emotional suffering and permanent re-sale. They were lined up and asked to spin around in order for the three 'jury members' to be able to observe and judge their profiles, behinds and teeth. After that the men demanded they take their clothes off for the three-member jury to be able to estimate their health. Two girls refused to do that, but the beating they received silenced them and the other girls. The youngest and the most attractive of them were sold for 1,500-2,000 Euros. The others were given bus tickets and were escorted to Montenegro.

The bus driver made jokes and other travelers laughed at them. Everybody knew who they were and where they were going. Their presence on the bus did not attract any additional attention as the trafficking in women is common and normal. They were even more horrified when the bus stopped for a break in Bijelo Polje. Two of them were sold, taken away and never seen again.

The same happened one more time somewhere in the northern part of Montenegro, this time to the Romanian woman. The seven women from Moldova managed to stay together in the same club until the very end. When they met their bosses, they were told that they were expensive and thus they would not be able to give them any compensation for the next three months. They were promised that after that period they would receive 25 Euros per client and that, if they were good, they would receive even more. They arrived in

Podgorica at the end of September 1999 and by February 2000 they had still not received anything except for a bit of cosmetics and underwear. They were often beaten, poorly fed, and slept only a few hours a night.

One of the channels of trafficking in human beings from Montenegro goes via Lake Shkodra to Albania. Often, with the help of the police, the girls are transported illegally on ships to Albania and from there on to Greece, Macedonia and Kosovo.

One case from Montenegro is illustrative. The police came to the local shelter for the victims of trafficking in human beings and took ten girls in an unknown direction. After the case was reported, the local OSCE office answered that the OSCE does not have the right to meddle in police affairs.

There were a great number of young women (15-20 years old) from Romania, Russia and Moldova in Ulcinj. They were accommodated in 'Velika plaza' and Ada Bojana and worked as prostitutes, but there was no evidence that they were trafficked.

#### KOSOVO

Kosovo is never mentioned. The recruiter, a woman in most cases, usually offers girls 'a well paid job' in Italy as a baby-sitter, cleaner, waitress, or caretaker for old people in their homes. She unfailingly shows the contract as proof, but after several months of bitter journey the girl most usually ends up in one of 104 nightclubs in Kosovo where forced prostitution was recorded. Girls and women are brought from Moldova, Romania, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Albania and Russia, the local IOM office reports. The IOM helped 254 victims of trafficking in human beings in Kosovo in the period from February 2000 – December 2001.

Forced prostitution is one of the main problems in an increasingly corrupt Kosovo. At the beginning of January 2001 the UN mission there (Unmik) brought a new regulation on the prohibition of trafficking in human beings by which even the persons who know that a person is a trafficking victim or persons who know that and use their sexual services shall be punished. Punishment for the pimps and other people involved in the trafficking chain by the regulation is 5 months to 15 years in prison.

'Even with such an enlightened regulation, forced prostitution is not declining. From the well-known Miami Bar on the road to Podujevo, to the private houses at Sunny Hill, the elite neighbourhood of Pristina, the girls are forced to sell their bodies for 50 Euros. They often don't see the money,' said one IOM official in Pristina.

'The price goes from 50 Euros per hour to 250 Euros for the whole night for foreigners, but the majority of them, even 80 percent, never see the money they earned,' the same source said.

The price the pimps pay the merchants for the girls varies between 750-2,500 Euros, depending on age, whether the girl is a virgin, and whether she is beautiful. The girls are usually abused while being trafficked via Hungary, Serbia or Macedonia and sold even three to six times.

'Sometimes when a pimp, for example from Macedonia, sells a girl to a pimp from Kosovo, the price depends on whether the girls has good recommendations,' the same source said explaining that a 'good recommendation' means that the girl does not speak too much and that she is good with the clients.

According to the IOM report around 56 percent of the girls are 18-24 years old. About 69 percent of them had lived with their families before they left their countries, and around 86 percent stated a 'better job' as the reason for leaving for another country. Around 75 percent of them earned less than 500 Euros a month while abroad.

'When a girl comes to us, she is frightened, lacks travel documents and is in very bad condition,' said Pristina IOM Spokeswoman Tamara Osorio. Among the majority of the girls, after a medical examination vaginal and sexually transmittable diseases (STDs) were found.

'The girls are forced to have unprotected sex, as well as group sex. Some of them have even nine clients per night,' an IOM official said.

Girls come primarily from the countries in deep social crisis. In some of them the monthly salary is less than ten Euros. Searching for a better opportunity, lacking good education and absolutely uninformed, they become an easy prey for well organised trafficking networks. Even ten percent of the women were kidnapped.

For all of them the living conditions while in Kosovo (from one to six months) are horrible. They sleep in the bar, on chairs or sharing a sofa where they also service the clients. Their access to food is limited. They do not have freedom of movement. They are often beaten or raped if they do not cooperate with the pimps. Most of them are rescued in the raids organised by the police investigation unit for trafficking and prostitution (TPIU).

The Balkan route is one of the best-known channels of organised crime and trafficking. The wars in the Balkans have dramatically changed the social structure and created bad conditions, that affect women especially. Many young women looking for a job abroad easily become trafficking victims. Due to strict visa regimes in EU countries towards migrants from Eastern and Southeastern Europe, the roads of the trafficking in women are concentrated in Balkan countries whose borders traffickers still most easily cross due to war, corruption and well-established smuggling channels.

The following text describes the methods the traffickers in human beings use while crossing the poorly protected borders between Hungary and Yugoslavia, Yugoslavia and Macedonia, Macedonia and Albania as well as the transport of persons across the Adriatic Sea between Albania and Italy.

## ON THE TRAIL OF STOLEN FREEDOM

The last house in the village of Miratovac in southern Serbia is only 500 meters from the border with neighboring Macedonia. There, in the basement lived Agim Aglushi, known as Ibro, with his wife and three children. In the mid-1980s Ibro worked as a pimp in Belgrade and kept 'five prostitutes in front of the Slavija hotel.' Today, after the last event when 'Serbian police seized his unsuccessfully smuggled washing machine' he stayed 'in this basement which is a bedroom, living room and guestroom, here in the house of my brother.'

The village of Miratovac has more than 700 houses, and almost 60 percent of its population lives in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Due to the proximity of the border the majority of male population is involved in smuggling. 'We lived well from it before the war. We transported flour, cooking oil, sugar, oil and oil derivatives, sometimes even people – mostly Romanians,' Ibro said.

In organised networks of trafficking in human beings the inhabitants of villages like Miratovac or neighboring Slavujevac have a key role. They are the only ones who know all the goat paths and shortcuts around the badly protected borders. They are the only ones who can tell you how you would, hidden by trees and bushes, following a dirt path, stay out of view of border guards and approach Lojane or Kumanovo in Macedonia.

According to P.P. from the village of Strezovac, mostly populated by Albanians, 'one Moldovan woman was recently sold for 2,500 Deutsche Marks. It is said that an owner of a nightclub in Macedonia phoned somebody in Serbia to ask him whether he had a girl. Then, they said, he hired someone from Slavujevac, a neighboring Serbian village, to transport her to Kumanovo,' P.P. said.

'It's mostly Serbs who do this business, they get along with the police. Even when the police catch them, they don't do anything to them, but to Albanians they will,' P.P. complained. According to Sinisa Antonijevic, an immigration inspector with the Vranje police, 'we have been working on the problem for years and some of the main channels are cut.' However, as P.P. claimed, 'the link still functions.'

The Balkan route of trafficking in human beings has been for a long time on police maps, since the fall of the iron curtain and arrival of numerous foreign soldiers to the Balkans. It contains two long shanks: one that goes via Belgrade towards the south, to Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro and west to Bosnia; the other goes via Macedonia to Greece and Albania. The map misses a small line between Albania and Italy as a special channel that has been known for years in the studies of illegal migration and trafficking.

**Via Belgrade:** 'Yes, I gave them a lift. You just know what they're doing. Frightened, shy, they don't speak,' said N.N., a former van driver on the Cop (Ukraine) – Belgrade route. Once a week, when the van arrives in front of the main railway station in Belgrade, there is a danger that several women who started seeking a better way of life one more time will end up in some of the apartments in the suburbs of Belgrade where they will be raped, beaten and abused, emotionally, physically and otherwise.

During the previous years, after the bombardment, some of the women this man transported were beaten. Recalling his former job, he said he always kept their passports with him during the 14-hour journey. Serbian police have started a series of actions in the last six months against the organisers of this new form of slavery. However, the biggest and the most dangerous criminals are not arrested yet. That is proven by the fact that in the Belgrade underground, a strict division of the businesses and territories is enforced, i.e. each organised criminal group deals with a certain business.

The arrest of Rade Spalevic, the owner of Kazanova motel near Pancevo, who has been in this criminal network for a long time, showed the existence of one of these groups, but there is certainly another in Belgrade, if not several organised groups of criminals who deal with the trafficking in human beings. They have close contacts with the other mafia groups throughout the former Yugoslavia.

The other border regions in Yugoslavia function in the same manner as the aforementioned model of transporting across the border. Thus, the connection between Serbia and Bosnian Republika Srpska mainly functions via the Drina river. Goods and people are transported by boats and rafts all along the river. The connection in Bosnia follows the route Bjeljina – Brcko – Tuzla. At the eastern border of Serbia towards Bulgaria and Romania, the people in the border regions are transported partly via the Danube river and partly via the mountains.

Once the victim is in Belgrade, it is a question via which channels she/he will be further transported and how many times he/she will be sold, whether to Kumanovo via Slavujevac, to Republika Srpska via the Drina river, to Kosovo via Mitrovica or Novi Pazar, or to Montenegro via the regular highway.

**Kumanovo – Struga:** Eighteen-year old Emilija (who also has a Muslim name, Turkaje), a member of the Turkish minority from Bulgaria, has been living and working as a belly dancer for the last three years in the nightclub Dollar near Tetovo.

‘At Dollar I feel like I’m at home. The boss is great. There are seven of us here and we are allowed to go to town during the day,’ says Turkaje while sitting in the night club Dollar, her working place in the village of Kamjan, on the mountain road from Tetovo to Gostivar. She came to Macedonia via Nis, the recommendation of her father’s friend who has been living and working in Italy. As she says, she earns 1,000-1,500 Euros per month.

‘I don’t work as a prostitute. The boss doesn’t force me to have sexual intercourse with the clients. If some of them offer me money, it’s up to me to decide whether to go to the hotel and to have intercourse with him,’ naively explains Turkaje as if her ‘life is a poem’ in the night club in the middle of nowhere where some of the former National Liberation Army commanders from Macedonia regularly come.

According to her in the Dijana nightclub, less than a kilometer away, the girls are forced to prostitute. ‘Their bosses beat them and don’t let them go out,’ she explains to me while we are agreeing that both of us will be silent about this

little women’s conspiracy just in front of the faces of the former rebels.

According to the IOM office in Skopje 181 victims passed via their transit centre in 2001. The Belgrade shelter, according to the Belgrade IOM office, accepted around 65 victims of forced prostitution in the period from August 1, 2001 to May 1, 2002. Fifty percent of the victims in Macedonia and Serbia were Moldovan women.

According to Skopje IOM mission head Tommaso de Cataldo ‘time will be needed for this regional problem to be solved, because these are criminal organisations with international and regional connections. It might be expected that the problem will grow in the coming years, but it is good that in Macedonia the women are recognised as the victims, not as illegal migrants or prostitutes,’ he concluded.

According to the Skopje IOM, there are two main channels for trafficking in women – one is via Kumanovo (the link via Serbia), from where the women are sold throughout Macedonia and further on to Greece, Albania and Turkey; the other one via the Bulgaria-Macedonia border.

**The Self-proclaimed King Leku:** It is quiet at the Sveti Naum border crossing between Ohrid and Prespa lakes. According to the customs officer around a hundred people cross the border daily, mostly those who have relatives in Pogradec (Albania) or Ljubaniste (Macedonia). No Ukrainian, Romanian or Russian woman has tried to cross this border crossing. On the other side of Lake Ohrid, at the Quaf e Thane border crossing near the town of Struga, the situation is slightly different.

According to residents, Dilaver Bojku, known as Leku, is ‘the self-proclaimed mafia king in this region.’ Leku’s name has been connected with night clubs in Velesta, the nearby village with a population of around 6,000 and more than ten night clubs, from ‘Casablanca’ to ‘Ferrari.’ The myth around his power says that he was informed during the preparations of Macedonian police ministry to conduct raids in his bars, so that the night of the scheduled action he invited ‘two or three heads of the local police in Struga’ to his clubs, who were then caught in action.

According to Nuriya Zaku, an activist with the Albanian women’s non-governmental organisation ‘Aureola,’ there are around 90 women victims in Struga and nearby villages at the moment, but the number always varies.

‘We have tried to make contact with them but they are very scared because they are under constant surveillance,’ Nuriya said, adding that the women in Velesta are depressed due to the large number of night clubs.

The local general practitioner witnessed the injuries of a woman who worked in a bar in Velesta. That night, when he was called to come to the club, he found her lying on the floor, beaten, covered with bruises. After the examination, he was forced to be silent about everything he saw. However, Leku is today, thanks to the money he made by re-selling and using women, the owner of the ‘Bern’ hotel situated a few kilometers from the Quaf e Thane border crossing. He says that the business has not gone well since the beginning of the crisis in Macedonia. The tourist season was poor last year, and the nightclub in the hotel was closed because they were working without a license.

While Leku was speaking, a folk singer with long black hair stepped on the stage and started singing. Excited, Moni, his wife, says to me that it is a cover of Serbian folk singer Jelena Karleusa's song in Albanian.

'You know that one 'My best man, my brother'....' she sings to me in Serbian while my eyes were following the three 'gorillas' who did not move from the table of 'scantly, but expensively dressed folk singers.' I found out later that two of the four, through Leka's mediation, were in Switzerland and worked as strippers.

**Albania:** After the fall of the Enver Hoxha regime and the opening of Albania after 50 years of enmity with the whole world (with the exception of 'brotherly China'), migration fever took hold of the country. From the peak of the Karaburun peninsula the speed boats that can top 60 knots go daily towards Italy carrying their precious cargo: marijuana and migrants. The whole region around the Vlore harbour is rich in, besides olive plantations, Indian cannabis. According to Tirana IOM figures from 2001, around 30,000 Albanian women work as prostitutes in Italy.

As the harbour workers said, there is no other possibility in Albania. 'The government fucks with us, the only profitable things are smuggling and tourism.' Everybody is involved in the trafficking in human beings, from the ones who are silent about it, to the ones who give the services. Forged Italian visas can be obtained in Vlore without any problem, for the price of some 150,000 leks (about DEM 3,000). The Italian coast, only 60 nautical miles away, can be reached in just a few hours.

'The main problem in Albania is not the corrupt police, but the fact that everybody is involved in trafficking in human beings and thus it is hard to break, because we don't know who does what,' says Frank Ledwidge, an official with the OSCE office in Tirana. According to him, Albania, in which 58 percent of the state budget depends on foreign donations, 'is mildly blackmailed' by the international community to urgently do something in the fight against the trafficking in human beings.

All things considered, a long time will pass before the Albanian government does something. One of the few people who took seriously the recommendation of the international community, Fier police chief Xhavit Shalla, recently lost his job when the new police minister was appointed. According to Shalla, the minister himself was threatened by the big mafia bosses to remove him from the duty.

However, Shalja's activities in the municipality of Fier (Mallakaster, Lushnja, Fier and the surrounding villages) were reflected in various actions in the fight against trafficking in human beings. Thus, in the yard of the Fier police station he, on his own initiative, made a shelter for the victims deported by the Italian government. While they stayed at the shelter, Shalla and his officers collected testimonies on the ground of which they conducted further investigations and arrests.

According to one research project, around 116 marijuana breeders were registered in Fier municipality in 1999, while last year, after the police actions, there were just 17 breeders. Shalla pushed for the re-legalisation of prostitution (pro-

## THE BALKAN ROUTE

stitution was legal in Albania during the Italian occupation, in the 1940s), because such a move would make police work much easier.

**Victim:** In the Fier police station shelter I met 24-year-old A.A., an Albanian woman from Mallakaster, who went towards Western Europe in October, 1998 with her boyfriend at the time with whom she was in love. A few months later she was forced to work as a prostitute on the streets of Venice. A.A. is of small height and small but balanced bones, with a high intelligent forehead and big black eyes. She was lucky that Shalla was still on duty because, according to international officials 'the police keep women in prisons in very bad conditions.' She was returned to Albania from Italy because she was caught without papers.

The two last years in Italy, from the moment she reported her pimp (ex-boyfriend) to the police, she kept on working as a prostitute, supporting herself and paying for school with that money; she did not manage to finish it because she was deported.

'When we arrived in Italy, he demanded that I go to the street and to start working. I refused. He took a beer bottle and went towards me...' A.A. said in a low and calm voice, while her eyes were looking somewhere remote and reflected off the white plastic fence of the shelter. 'I was working every night from 9 pm to 3 am, in a mini skirt and high heeled boots. He was always there, watching me from the corner of the street...He always needed money for drugs,' she recalled.

According to Vlore-based NGO Vatra head Elinda Haniti, of the 93 victims the organisation has helped, 67 were of Albanian nationality. Seventy were victims of forced prostitution, and 23 were illegal migrants. Vatra offers victims various programs for reintegration into the local environment, from sewing courses to computer training courses. However, according to sociologists, the biggest problem is reestablishing relations with the families that in the meantime have disowned them.

'We usually contact a person from the family who protected the victim while

she was living in the family house. Then we try to let the family members know that if they don't accept her again, they will be responsible for her return to the street,' Haniti explained. Women the organisation help, according to her, 'are confused, they suffer with depersonalisation and cannot accept their bodies, because they blame their bodies. That's the reason they often cut their veins, beat themselves and punish themselves in other ways, or obsessively wash their hands and body,' she explained.

A.A. said she would return to Italy again to finish school, because she does not have any future in Albania. She would work again as a prostitute. While we were leaving the shelter she was already going to take a shower, to wash off all the filthiness of the story she told us.

#### CENTRAL EUROPEAN ROUTE

The trafficking in women network that goes via the Czech Republic towards Austria and Germany is organised under similar principle as 'the Balkan route.' The following text describes the notorious Highway 55, along which are dozens of nightclubs turned into brothels where women from Russia, Ukraine and Moldova work.

#### THE 'BIHAC' HOTEL

Kristina, 21, from Slovakia and Dijana, 20, from the Czech Republic work as prostitutes on Highway E55, near Teplice on the road to Duby, in Sudet region. Less than five kilometers from the busy border crossing of Cinovec, in front of one of several dozens of night clubs and hotels for German tourists, the two blondes dance with the sounds from the sound system placed in the window of the bar the two work in. Kristina, with very long legs and a very short skirt, is in a friendly mood. While she was inviting us for a coffee, saying that it would cost around 1,000 krunas (around 33 Euros), the boss moved the curtain away from the window. After that, Kristina, waving her hands, asked us to leave.

According to Jitka Gjurickova, director of the police ministry department for crime prevention, there are several hundreds of prostitutes in this border region; they are mostly Slovak, Czech and Roma women. However, the trafficking in women from the countries of the former Soviet Union is conducted via the Czech Republic, which is the transit but also the destination country of the victims, primarily due to its geographic position. The extent of sex trafficking is unknown, but it is estimated to be several thousands of victims in the last two years. 'There is no language barrier between the pimp and the victim, which is one of the reason for rise in trafficking in women in the Czech Republic,' Gjurickova explains.

Thus, in an elite hotel 'Bihac' in Duby, owned by Hazim Halilagic, there are several girls from Russia who work there. They are very private among themselves, they refuse even to look at the foreigners who are not potential customers, and compared to other street prostitutes in this border region they are

dressed in a more expensive and better quality clothes.

In the Czech Criminal Code prostitution is not an offence. However, trafficking in women is forbidden under Criminal Code Article 246, that regulates, among other things, 8-12 years in prison if the crime is committed within an organised group or against a minor, a person who suffers from mental disease or is mentally retarded, and if heavy health consequences, death or some other very serious consequence occurs.

'We have been trying to change the law on the local and international level, because the Czech Criminal Code punishes only the trafficking of women from the Czech Republic into some other country,' said an activist from the Czech office of the NGO 'La Strada.' The NGO works on the prevention of the problem and also aids victims. Around 80 victims of trafficking in women passed through the shelter in one year, the majority of them from the countries of the former Soviet Union. According to Gjurickova, the prices for the prostitutes' services are a third lower than in neighboring Austria or Germany, which is one of the reasons for transit of the victims via this country.

In the following section the situation in each country of the region including Moldova and Ukraine is presented, especially legal regulations, the level of police engagement, the citizens' ability to pay, as well as the level of corruption in the state apparatus. Through the following data we will try to present a basic picture of the countries in the region, useful for further research on the topic of the trafficking in human beings.

## ALBANIA

**Category:** origin, destination and transit country.

**Population:** more than 3,119,000, according to OSCE data for 2001.

**Per Capita Income:** 17,218 leks, i.e. 100 Euros (third quarter 2001, source: OSCE statistics).

**Corruption Level:** According to research of the international organisation 'Transparency International' the level of administrative corruption in Albania is 4.0 (10.0 means that there is no corruption in the country, while 0.0 means the highest corruption level). The state institutions (parliament, central bank, criminal courts, etc.) are classified as moderately involved in corruption (the classification can be only moderate and high). Source: 'Global corruption report 2001.'

**Legislation:** Trafficking in human beings is punishable under the Criminal Code of January 27, 1995. It regulates punishment from 5-15 years in prison. The law treats trafficking in women for prostitution in order to obtain material and other benefits as a specific crime. The regulated punishment for the crime is from 7-15 years imprisonment. Prostitution is illegal in Albania today. During the Italian occupation in the period 1939 –1944 prostitution was a legal industry.

**Special police units:** In October 2001 a special police unit for the fight against trafficking in human beings was formed, and the security guards for the shelters for the victims of trafficking in human beings were educated.

**Centres of the trafficking in human beings/routes:** Vlore, Tirana, Fier, Shkodra, places along the borders with Greece and Macedonia.

**Criminal groups:** Today the owners of the speed boats in the coastal region have good connections with police structures and administration and function as an organised mafia group which has the access to forged documents.

**Number of trials begun:** In the period between March and November 2001, the police arrested 150 persons under the suspicion that they were involved in the trafficking in human beings in various ways. In only ten percent of the cases were any charges laid.

**International organisations and the nongovernmental sector:** IOM, Vlore Women Heart, Vatra.

**Number of trafficked women:** More than 100,000 women were trafficked during the last ten years from Albania to the countries of Western Europe and the Balkans, according to the Council of Ministers report from November 2001.

**Number of shelters:** One in Vlore, two in Tirana and a certain number within the police stations.

**Recruiting methods:** The vast majority of the cases show that the women were taken away from Albania by deception, mostly by a false promise of marriage and going to Italy in a search for a better future.

## BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

**Category:** destination, transit and origin country.

**Population:** 3,724,582 according to the estimates from 1999.

**Per Capita Income:** There is a majority which earns 300 convertible marks (150 Euros) a month (according to the UNDP annual report 2000). According to the Economist magazine research the salary for April 2002 in the Bosnian-Croat Federation was 235.22 Euros.

**Corruption Level:** Bosnia-Herzegovina is not on the Transparency International list of the corrupt countries in the world. It is mentioned as a useful example of the international institutional disorder.

**Legislation:** Republika Srpska Criminal Code from 2000 regulates the punishment for the trafficking in human beings for the purposes of prostitution. The regulated punishments are six months to five years in prison, and if the victim is a minor, one to 12 years imprisonment. In order to balance the laws, in the summer of 2002 in the Bosnian-Croat Federation there was a draft before adoption by which the crime of trafficking in human beings would be identically formulated as in the Republika Srpska Criminal Code. Prostitution in Bosnia-Herzegovina is illegal.

**Special police units:** STOP team has around 200 members. This is a special unit of the international police IPTF for the fight against trafficking in human beings, founded in July 2001. Raids are conducted by the local police members trained for special actions. The joint action of both entities' police ministries was conducted in March 2001 entitled 'Makro' ('The Pimp'). During a single night raids were conducted in 39 nightclubs, where 177 women were found.

**Centres of the trafficking in human beings/routes:** The majority of the women come to Bosnia-Herzegovina illegally. The market places 'Arizona' near Brcko, 'Virdzinija' near Kalesija (Tuzla canton), between Bihac and Bosanski Petrovac or 'Crni pauk' night club in Orasje are only a few points where the merchants in women get their supplies.

**Criminal groups:** In both entities of Bosnia-Herzegovina, in Republika Srpska and in the Federation, there are several criminal groups working.

**Number of trials begun:** 84 cases against the night bars and brothel owners were started in the period July 2001 – June 2002 in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

**International organisations and the nongovernmental sector:** IOM, La Strada from Mostar, Lara from Bjeljina, and other members of the Ring group.

**Number of trafficked women:** IOM had helped 440 women as of December 2001; 370 were returned home. The true number of trafficked women via and within Bosnia-Herzegovina is unknown.

**Number of shelters:** one in Mostar, one in Bijeljina, two in Sarajevo

**Recruiting methods:** Women from Eastern Europe most often come for a good job and easy money. They are promised work as waitresses or dancers in night-clubs, and the guarantee for good income is the large number of foreign soldiers.

## BULGARIA

**Category:** origin and transit country.

**Population:** 8,336,000, data from 2000.

**Per Capita Income:** According to the Economist the average salary in March 2002 was 135 Euros.

**Corruption Level:** Very high, 2.1. The state is classified as highly involved in corruption.

**Legislation:** There have been initiatives within the Bulgarian government since 1999 for the adoption of an act against trafficking in human beings. In 2000 the Justice Ministry prepared a new article of the Criminal Code (280a) on trafficking in human beings. The draft was sent to the parliament in spring 2001. Although it passed the first reading, the act was not adopted due to the change of the government. After the new elections and appointment of the new government, the process should be repeated. Prostitution is legal in Bulgaria.

**Special police units:** The police ministry established a special unit for the fight against trafficking in human beings consisting of people from the national service for the fight against organised crime, national police and border police and gendarmerie. In June 2001, the South European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) coordinated the action of Bulgarian, Moldovan and Ukrainian police in breaking the illegal channels of the trafficking in human beings organised by the Greek criminal groups.

**Centres of the trafficking in human beings/routes:** mostly the border regions in the northeast of Bulgaria, Dobrich, Varna and Rousse, and in the southwest: Blagoevgrad, Kyustendil and Petrich.

**Criminal groups:** according to data from the border police and police for combatting organised crime, in 2000 there were eight small organised criminal groups (from two to eight men) involved in trafficking or smuggling in human beings. Ten organised groups were discovered in the first half of 2001.

**Number of trials begun:** 175 were detained in 2000 because they were involved in or helped the illegal border crossings; 14 cases were started in 2001.

**International organisations and the nongovernmental sector:** IOM.

**Number of trafficked women:** More than 2,500 women from Bulgaria have so far been the victims of the trafficking in human beings, 888 women were expelled from Bulgaria in 2000 to their home countries. Bulgarian women are mostly sold in Germany, Greece and Poland.

**Number of shelters:** two shelters.

**Recruiting methods:** Via direct contact or advertisement for the job of model, dancer or direct offer for prostitution. Roma girls are often sold to merchants by their families.

## CROATIA

**Category:** Transit, destination and origin country.

**Population:** 4,481,000, data from 2000.

**Per Capita Income:** According to the Economist, the average salary in March 2002 was 489 Euros.

**Corruption Level:** Very high, 1.1. Corruption is mostly conducted in the state institutions.

**Legislation:** In Croatia, as in Yugoslavia, there are several acts within the Criminal Code, which are in use until Croatia fulfils its obligation it accepted by signing the Palermo Protocol to bring an article on the trafficking in human beings. The articles in use are identical to those in force in Yugoslavia, and these are 'On slavery and transportation of human beings in servitude' (175), illegal border crossing (177) and mediating in the commission of prostitution (178). Prostitution is illegal in Croatia.

**Special police units:** There is no organised unit within the police ministry for the fight against organised crime, but Croatia has signed the 'Contract on cooperation for prevention and fight against transnational crime' of the SECI.

**Centres of the trafficking in human beings/routes:** In summer the biggest centres for trafficking in human beings is Herzegovina in the border region with Bosnia-Herzegovina. The nightclubs are usually located in the suburbs of small towns, but more often in Zagreb, Split and Dubrovnik. During the war and the increased presence of the international forces prostitution increased, but since then it has been in constant decline.

**Criminal groups:** Unknown.

**Number of trials begun:** Five persons were sentenced on the grounds of Criminal Code Article 175 and 21 persons were sentenced on the grounds of the Crime Code Article 178 in the period 1998 - 2000. In period 1995 - 2000 56 persons (among them six women) were arrested for mediating in prostitution.

**International organisations and the nongovernmental sector:** IOM.

Number of trafficked women: 198 foreign citizens were deported from Croatia to their home countries while about ten Croat female citizens were found in Spain, Switzerland and Italy.

**Number of shelters:** Women and children who are detained as illegal migrants are not treated as possible victims of the trafficking in human beings.

**Recruiting methods:** Croatia is mostly a transit country, thus the means of recruiting are mostly well-paid jobs in Italy, Switzerland and Spain.

**Note:** In 2000 in Croatia 180 unaccompanied children were found. The majority of them were from Turkey, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Romania, Yugoslavia and Bangladesh. Among them 27 girls were sexually abused during the journey via Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina or Yugoslavia.

## MACEDONIA

**Category:** Destination and transit country.

**Population:** 1,999,000, data from 2000.

**Per Capita Income:** According to the Economist the average salary in March 2002 was 179.3 Euros.

**Corruption Level:** 'In the regions where the slaughter was successfully avoided, corruption has remained the main way of doing business. Countries in Southeastern Europe have the opportunity to learn from the mistakes of their neighbors,' according to the Global Corruption Report.

**Legislation:** There is no specific article within the Criminal Code on the trafficking in human beings, although there is a draft awaiting adoption. In special cases an article from the Criminal Code is used, which refers to the slavery and transport of human beings in servitude. Prostitution is not illegal in Macedonia, but organising and mediating are illegal.

**Special police units:** A special unit for the fight against trafficking in human beings was founded in 2000. The unit members are arranged throughout Macedonia.

**Centres of the trafficking in human beings/routes:** surroundings of Kumanovo, border with Serbia, surroundings of Tetovo, border with Kosovo and border regions with Bulgaria. Also, the border region with Greece (Dorjan and Gevgelija). Within Macedonia the majority of the nightclubs are along the Tetovo-Gostivar-Debar road.

**Criminal Groups:** Mostly the organised criminal groups of ethnic Albanians and Macedonians.

**Number of trials begun:** 147 persons were arrested for trafficking in human beings in the period 1995-2001. In the period 1997-2001, according to a report from the public prosecutor office, there were 80 trials against merchants in human beings. Thirty cases have been finished so far. One person was sentenced to five years in prison. The rest were fined. 47 cases are still unresolved.

**International organisations and the nongovernmental sector:** IOM, Aurora (Struga), La Strada and other women's organisations.

**Number of trafficked women:** It is estimated that 1,500-2,500 women in Macedonia have been the victims of trafficking in human beings.

**Number of shelters:** one government shelter with the support of IOM.

**Recruiting methods:** The majority of the trafficked women were from Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria.

**Note:** During the conflict in 2001, the trafficking in human beings was replaced by the more profitable and at the time more 'necessary' trafficking in arms.

## MOLDOVA

**Category:** origin country of victims.

**Population:** 4,378,000, data from 2000.

**Per Capita Income:** US \$34.17 a month, according to World Bank data from 1999. About 55 percent of the population lives under the poverty line. 68 percent of the unemployed are women and women with jobs receive 70-80 percent of the salary a man will receive for the same job.

**Corruption Level:** Medium, 4.0. Mostly state institutions.

**Legislation:** The Criminal Code Article 'Illegal trafficking in human beings' was adopted in July 2001. The act forbids the recruiting and organizing of trafficking in human beings across Moldova's borders. The crime is punishable by three to seven years in prison or a fine of 3,000-5,000 minimum personal incomes, as well as the possibility of confiscation of real estate. This act also regulates even more strict punishment – 7-12 years in prison – if the crime is committed in order to use a person in an armed conflict, slavery, sexual exploitation or in the pornography industry, as well as for other loathsome purposes. Even though this act is not strictly in accordance with the Palermo Protocol, it also regulates the most serious form of this crime and punishments from 15-25 years in prison if the crime is repeated, or if the crime is committed against two or more persons, by abusing, use of force, endangering the victim's life or health, if it is conducted against a pregnant woman, abuse of the inability of the victim to defend herself, for transplantation or giving of organs, or if it is committed by a criminal organisation. Prostitution is illegal.

**Special police units:** The national unit for fighting trafficking in human beings within the police forces was created in November 2000.

**Centres of the trafficking in human beings/routes:** The most common and cheapest way of transporting women is in large groups, by bus or by van to Romania. There are more than 250 brothels in Chisinau, and sex is sold at bus and railway stations.

**Criminal Groups:** Unknown.

**Number of trials begun:** 33 cases against the merchants in human beings were started as of September 2001. Fifteen cases that had been started before were amnestied and thus nobody received punishment.

**International organisations and the nongovernmental sector:** IOM, La Strada, Save the Children Moldova, Association of Women Lawyers.

**Number of trafficked women:** The number is enormous. It is estimated that only in the last ten years 130,000 young (14 –24 year old) women from Moldova have migrated.

**Number of shelters:** In the case of Moldova it is more important to mention that with the help of many international governmental and nongovernmental organisations victims receive the necessary help after return, but later too, during reintegration, with allowance of loans and other assistance. Of the 50 percent of the girls who returned to Moldova by 2001, about 85 percent who agreed to be tested were positive for STDs.

## SITUATION IN THE REGION

**Recruiting methods:** Direct contacts with the girl or her family by the merchants. The recruiters are often women from the same village who used to work as prostitutes or were trafficked and who since became merchants. The family often is given an advance on the girl's salary and she is obligated to return the money by further work. Also, newspaper advertisements are used for jobs abroad (nowadays it is more and more often for the offer to be for the job of prostitute). Via tourist agencies (it is estimated that there are around 3,000 of these in Moldova) that offer complete services in managing passports and Schengen visas, but also via job agencies.

## ROMANIA

**Category:** origin, transit and destination country.

**Population:** 22,474,000, data from 2000.

**Per Capita Income:** According to the Economist the average salary in April 2002 was 132 Euros.

**Corruption Level:** High, 3.2. Mostly state institutions.

**Legislation:** The result of the Working Group in Romania efforts (on the initiative of the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe, each country in the region forms a national team/group that coordinates action against trafficking in human beings, usually consisting of representatives from the justice ministry, police and foreign ministries, the nongovernmental sector and international organisations) is that the Romanian government has adopted a draft on the fight against trafficking in human beings and prevention of corruption and at the moment it is waiting for the parliament to pass it. Prostitution is illegal.

**Special police units:** An anti-trafficking squad is a part of the division against organised crime and has around 40 representatives in 15 countries. It should be stressed that the Institute for Research and Crime under the police ministry started the new initiatives, among others for research on prostitution and training for new police officers. In March 2001 the police organised the action 'Luna' ('The Moon') during which they arrested prostitutes in Bucharest, kept them a few hours in the police station, and then released them.

**Centres of the trafficking in human beings/routes:** Timisoara is often mentioned as the centre of the trafficking in human beings on the road from Moldova, via Romania to Hungary and further to Western Europe. The prostitutes in the streets of Bucharest are mostly Romanian women.

**Criminal Groups:** Romanian police have broken 64 organised criminal groups.

**Number of trials begun:** 110 cases against the traffickers in human beings have been started since January 2001. So far 148 cases have been started against merchants, pimps, smugglers and recruiters.

**International organisations and the nongovernmental sector:** IOM, UNAIDS, Fundatia SEF, ARCA, SCOP, Artemis, Pro Familia.

**Number of trafficked women:** Just in the first half of 2001 there were 31,838 persons refused entrance into Romania, and 21,000 persons were caught illegally crossing borders. In the period January 2000-July 2001 484 trafficked women and children were returned to Romania via the help of IOM and local NGOs. Most victims from Romania come from the poorest northwestern part of the country, Iasi and Suceava.

**Number of shelters:** There are several shelters in Romania, both for the women trafficked across the borders and for women trafficked within Romania.

**Recruiting methods:** Considering that they are affected by increasing unemployment, young women have few chances for a job in Romania.

**Note:** There are often cases when a woman is trafficked in her own town/city. Due to the limited freedom of movement, the woman might be, for example, in her own neighborhood.

## UKRAINE

**Category:** origin country.

**Population:** 50,861,000, data from 2000.

**Per Capita Income:** US \$62.50 a month, according to World Bank data for 1999). More than 30 percent of the population lives under the poverty line.

**Corruption Level:** Medium, 4.4. Mostly in state institutions.

**Legislation:** From September 1, 2001 trafficking in human beings or other treatment that refers to the transportation of human beings is a crime. This article of the Criminal Code is focused on the sale, transfer or any other non-lawful treatment in legal or illegal transport of the persons across the borders of Ukraine for the purposes of further re-selling or transfer to other person for the purposes of sexual exploitation, involvement into the pornography industry, criminal activities, keeping in slavery and other reasons. The regulated punishment is from three years in prison. The crime is dealt with more seriously if it is committed against a minor, against several persons, if it is repeated, or if some of the mentioned activities are taken over for the previous agreement of the group of people or by misuse of the official position, or by a person the victim depends on financially or in some other way. The regulated punishment is 8-15 years in prison along with confiscation of property. Prostitution is illegal.

**Special police units:** In 1999, the police ministry founded a special unit for the fight against trafficking in human beings at the national and regional level. The units have been in operation since 2000.

**Centres of the trafficking in human beings/routes:** Cop, Odessa and the places along the border with Romania.

**Criminal Groups:** According to local reports there are indications that some operatives from the special units and some public persons are involved in the trafficking in human beings.

**Number of trials begun:** 37 cases against the traffickers in human beings were started by 2001, but the majority of them avoided imprisonment. One of them was sentenced to seven years in prison, and two women were both sentenced to five years in prison for the crime of trafficking in human beings. Also, in 1999 one person was accused of selling women to brothels throughout the former Yugoslavia. Three more people were arrested under the suspicion that they sold 200 young women and girls to sex clubs in Turkey, Greece and Cyprus.

**International organisations and the nongovernmental sector:** IOM, La Strada.

**Number of trafficked women:** In 1998 IOM came out with data that 100,000 persons were trafficked since 1991. According to data from Italian officials, at least 30,000 women are in the situations where they are exploited.

**Number of shelters:** In Ukraine, along with the shelters, there are centres for victims aid in Lviv, Dnipropetrovs'k, Chernivstvi, Kherson, Rivne and Zhytomyr. The centres offer job training, SOS phones and also serve as referral centres for health, first aid and psychological help.

**Recruiting methods:** Women most often reply to job advertisements, thus the vast majority of them have regular documents. They are deceived by the prom-

ises that they would work as waitresses, dancers or maids. Or they are offered potential husbands by marriage agencies.

If a society in the widest meaning is a form of connection between people based on willingness, friendship, common interests and goals, then civil society is one where the civilised state has been established. If we say that the market connects individuals on the grounds of economic interest, which is the basic integrative element of civil society, then the public has become the element of balance in the relation between the public and private in the civil society.

Relations between people in civil, civic, open society are different from the natural condition where the rule of stronger is in force, and it is a civic, civil condition of the society that is not characterised by force but by contract. By that contract, whose written form is represented by the constitution of the country, individuals renounce the use of force in possible disputes and by it they give permission to the authorities they elected and created by the contract that they the only ones that might use force to resolve a conflict.

The authority the power has in relation with society is very limited. The essential element of the civil society is the rule of the law. The civil society places the individual in the centre of social life as a political and economic subject. Thus is organised economic activity ensured. Another important aspect of civil society is the autonomy of society in relation with the state. Above all, it refers to the autonomy of various social parts and associations (companies, trade unions, university, press, science, citizens' associations, certain professions and branches) in relation with which the state creates the rules of the game, acts that shall be obeyed by everyone in order to ensure that in the use of her/his rights and freedoms nobody endangers the same rights and freedoms to other members of society. Economic, social, political and cultural pluralism are the alpha and omega of civil society. The civil society is the one that is aimed towards peace, tolerance and freedom of movement both of people and ideas.

In the case of Yugoslavia, the concept of the civil society has been being revived as an alternative to authoritarian socialism. The human image is to be given back to the post socialist society. The image of a citizen should be rehabilitated, i.e. to return to a person political and economic subjectivity as well as moral, religious and creative autonomy. Because it is difficult to suppose that a person would consider him/herself as a free being until the economic monopolies of any kind are not exclusive and unavoidable frameworks within which the individual must create and gain means for his/her biological existence, without the possibility of self-employment or offering 'in his own arrangement' products or his/her mental and physical services.

#### ROLE OF THE LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Prostitution is an offence according to the Criminal Code of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In modern European legislation prostitution is not regarded as a criminal activity or offence, it is even legalised in the Netherlands and Germany. In all European countries trafficking in human beings is regarded as a serious criminal act punishable by several years imprisonment.

In Yugoslav Criminal Code Article 155 'On slavery and transportation of human beings in servitude,' one part of organised crime is regulated by law. It

shall be used in the case of criminal activity of trafficking in human beings. The article refers to the following categories of the crime:

1. giving the status of slave to a person.
2. trafficking in human beings who already are in servitude.
3. forcing someone to sell her/his freedom or the freedom of a person who depends on him/her, or of a child.
4. transferring of persons who are in an servitude or in any similar position.

Two more articles of the Criminal Code, due to the lack of a specific article that directly refers to trafficking in human beings, are used in the fight against this form of organised crime: Article 249, on illegal border crossing and Article 251, on the mediating and practicing of prostitution.

After the October 2000 changes in Serbia, the three articles are still in force and changes in that direction have not yet occurred. Various nongovernmental organisations have started initiatives and have presented drafts on the parts of the act on organised crime that refer to trafficking in human beings, but these have not yet been adopted. However, the new authorities have signed the UN Convention against transnational organised crime and additional protocols, which were published in the Legal Gazette on June 27, 2001. According to this document, the Yugoslav authorities are obligated to balance their legislation in accordance with the Convention.

The NGO Victimology Society of Serbia suggests that the person that 'by use of force or other forms of coercion, of fraud, of deception, or the abuse of authority, trust, dependent relation or difficult position, and for receiving of material benefits within the country or abroad, recruits, transports, transfers, gives, sells, buys, mediates in selling or giving, harbours or keeps another person for the purpose of sexual exploitation, use in pornographic industry, commission of criminal activities, placing in the debtor or other enslaved position or relation similar to slavery, adoption, use in armed conflicts, forced labour or other forms of enforced illegal control by another person' shall be punished with sentence of three-ten years in prison.

The Victimology society suggests the same punishment if a person commits this crime without use of force, fraud, deception or other mentioned means if the crime was committed against the person under 18 years old. For this crime committed against the minor over 14 years old a punishment of 5 - 15 years in prison is suggested, and for those younger than 14 the punishment shall be at least ten years imprisonment.

According to the recently adopted act on organised crime, it is regulated that newly created institution of the special prosecutor will start criminal procedures against the persons who committed the crimes defined by the UN Convention on transnational organised crime, i.e. by the aforementioned Palermo Protocol, by which the crime of trafficking in human beings is defined.

The special governmental bodies for the fight against organised crime, among them special police units, were created by the act. Current special police units, i.e. gendarmerie units, will be engaged in the fight against the trafficking in human beings. The act also regulates special measures for the police that will

enable them to tap phones, follow and record people who deal with the trafficking in human beings.

One of the big problems of this legislation is the witness protection program, considering that the women who pass through the Belgrade shelter for the victims of trafficking might be the key witnesses in the procedures against the people who committed this crime. The Act on special prosecutor, however, shall regulate the institution of the privileged witness, commonly called the 'insider.' The system of protected witnesses is well known in the countries of the EU, but the cases begun worldwide against people who initiated, participated or organised the trafficking in human beings may be counted on the fingers of one hand.

A large problem for the legislative authority is that the victims, due to fear or other reasons, refuse to testify against their recent pimps. The problem is often of a psychological nature because the victim often identifies her pimp as a protector, i.e. husband, who gives her security and protection. There are often cases of depersonalisation of the victim upon return to a normal environment. She separates herself into good and bad persons and often hurts herself because she thinks that her body is to blame for everything that happened to her and everything she experienced.

The most important international legal documents that regulate the trafficking in human beings:

1. Universal Declaration On Human Rights (1948);
2. Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others (1950);
3. UN Convention on the Right of the Child (1989);
4. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979);
5. International Convention on Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families;
6. International Pact on Civil and Political Rights;
7. International Pact on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
8. Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment and Punishment;
9. Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and
10. International Agreement for the Suppression of the Slave Trade (1904).

*The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Constitution recognises most international conventions and declarations.*

#### THE ROLE OF THE POLICE

According to the Serbian police minister Dusan Mihajlovic, appointed after the October 2000 changes, 'police officers will continue suppression of this form of crime under the abovementioned Yugoslav Criminal Code articles in force.'

In his speech at the round table 'On Trafficking in Human Beings' held on April 19, 2002 in Belgrade, Mihajlovic said 'As the result of the strengthened control, around 200 legal measures and measures of cancellation of residence were conducted against female citizens of Eastern European countries during 2000. Also, 41 charges were laid against the owners of the bars and restaurants as well as against the persons involved in the illegal trafficking. Due to the grounded suspicion that they committed the criminal act of 'mediating in the commission of prostitution,' Republic of Serbia police ministry officials laid 15 charges against 22 persons in 2000. During the first three months of 2001 several charges were laid due to the abovementioned acts, one of them the charge against a bar owner for the crime of establishing the servitude and transport of persons in servitude from the FRY Crime Code Article 155,' Mihajlovic said.

A year and a half later, this is how the result of the fight against trafficking in human beings, officially stated by Minister Mihajlovic, looks: Due to small punishments (two-five years in prison) and without strong evidence against the merchants, only two persons got the softened prison sentences. The person charged on the grounds of Criminal Code Article 155 (keeping and transferring of the persons in servitude) still awaits trial.

According to the weekly magazine Vreme from March 2002, there is a document circulating among police that says that in 27 towns in Serbia there are 50 operating criminal gangs (with a total of 230 members) and 59 individuals. From that number there are 13 organised criminal groups in Belgrade, ten in Sabac, nine in Pozarevac and on average three in each town. Of that 230, two groups (with a total of four members) and 22 individuals deal with the trafficking in human beings in Serbia. Only Rade Spalevic, owner of the 'Kazanova' night club near Pancevo has been arrested so far.

According to the OSCE report on the Republic of Serbia police made by Scotland Yard inspector Richard Monk, published in July 2001, 'the problem of trafficking in women is marginalised.' Monk concluded that there are a small number of women within the Serbian police, but the data on the exact number of women in police was not available even to him. He also said another big problem is forgery of the documents which facilitate business for organised criminal networks of the traffickers in human beings. According to a police official, the forgers work in Republika Srpska and in Macedonia, but the forged passports and visas are bought in Serbia. In the collective refugee centres, Monk said, Roma and other minority women who are forced to prostitute themselves suffer most. One of the interesting things the police expert said is that the Serbian police do not have enough translators, because the statements of the victims are often in foreign languages (the victims of the trafficking in women mostly come from Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Russia, etc.). The report also said that the owners of bars and restaurants where prostitution happens are rarely prosecuted, that the victims are frustrated and often do not give enough evidence for charges to be laid. Monk recommended more women investigators in the police, as well as formation of expert teams to work on the suppression of this form of crime.

'The police often collaborate, openly, by ignoring or by inactivity. Corruption, obstruction, confusion and passivity are often present at all levels of the police apparatus. Considering the international character of the phenomenon, there is agreement that an effective fight against this modern form of slavery would mean coordination and a multidisciplinary approach of all participants at the national, regional and international level,' said Dr. Helga Konrad, chair of the SEE Stability Pact Task Force on trafficking in human beings.

But what if an average policeman, full of prejudices, sees a victim of the trafficking in human beings, frightened by her pimps or by contact with the police, as a 'prostitute' who does not have valid documents, if any, and thus treats her like a criminal? It is commonly known that in many countries of the world the police discriminate against certain groups, who are always guilty for everything. As a rule, they are always the members of a minority group, like homosexuals, ethnic or racial minorities or prostitutes.

Thus the victims of trafficking in human beings, who are seen as ordinary prostitutes in many countries, and not so long ago in Yugoslavia as well, are further victimised by the executive power representatives, from whom they expect help and understanding. Due to this fact it is often difficult to gain their trust later, in the cases when the victim needs to testify and cooperate with the police.

The police in a democratic and civil society have a key role in the suppression of this form of crime. The police ministries must not be led by political, ethnic, racial, religious or other criteria in the fight against this and other forms of organised crime.

#### ORGANISATION OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS NETWORKS

At the European Conference for the fight against the trafficking in women in 1996 the following types of networks and traffickers were classified:

##### *Types of Traffickers*

1. In border regions 'the occasional traffickers' who provide local or international transportation. They are usually owners of taxis, small boats, trucks or vans that can carry individuals or small groups of people across a poorly secured border. This type is not organised.
2. Small, well-organised trafficking rings often specializing in trafficking certain nationals out of a certain country, using similar routes consistently
3. Organised, international trafficking networks are the most sophisticated, often the most dangerous and difficult to combat. These networks have access to fraudulent documents, or authentic, usually stolen ones. They have the capability to produce these themselves. They can change routes when a traditional route is blocked.

##### *Types of Trafficking in Human Beings Networks*

1. The large-scale network is based on a structure of international contacts at

different political and economic levels in the countries of origin and destination. These use various recruiting methods. This type of network often uses transit countries.

2. The medium scale network is distinct because it does not sell women to other groups. It keeps the women under its control and forces them to prostitute in its own clubs and brothels.
3. The small-scale network usually works in the following manner: A club owner in a destination country needs some new women for his club. Through contacts with people in the business he replaces or buys new women. The contacted person recruits the woman, accompanies her to the destination and delivers her.

#### THE ROLE OF POLITICIANS

The politicians should initiate the enactment of adequate laws that regulate the fight against the trafficking in human beings in detail, but also to constantly point out and warn in public about the problem, as well as to closely cooperate with neighboring countries and the countries in the region on the prevention and suppression of this form of crime. The politicians should not give prejudiced statements by which they accuse only one nation or minority group for the organisation and participation in the 'business.'

Trafficking in human beings is not a new form of organised crime. The first cases occurred at the beginning of the 1990s, but in the last few years, in the era of globalisation and its subsequent effects such as poverty, undeveloped economy and unemployment – especially for women in transition countries – the problem gained drastic scope.

This form of the organised crime does not know ethnic barriers. Dr. Konrad, said that 'there is evidence that Serbs and Albanians closely cooperate in this form of crime.' Trafficking in human beings is one of the most profitable illegal businesses of the modern world, with small risk and high profits. It is becoming one of the most lucrative and most popular forms of crime. The whole industry has been developed with the participation of the international mafia, procurers, forgers, brothel owners, 'job agencies,' and others.

'No institution or country is able to fight alone effectively against the trafficking in human beings which has become the most profitable worldwide business, especially considering the abuse of women and children. The trafficking in human beings is increasing around the world due to the enormous profit, with little or no risk for the organisers and mediators,' said Dr. Konrad.

In regions where wars and other forms of conflicts have been waged for ages, such as the region of the western Balkans, the trafficking in human beings, according to Konrad, has been additionally aided by the lack of legal regulations. Thus the Southeastern Europe Stability Pact organised a national team for the fight against trafficking in human beings, consisting of representatives from both the nongovernmental and governmental sectors, as well as from the media. By the same principle, other countries in the region founded national working

groups and appointed national/governmental coordinators for the fight against this form of crime.

'Through the central body, such as the Information Centre in Belgrade, the standards for the shelters where the victims live will be established, as will a regional referential system that takes care of efficient identification, acceptance and voluntary return or reintegration of the victim into the local environment. Regional informative centres will collect and analyze information and produce statistics on current cases of trafficking in human beings,' Konrad said.

According to Gerard Studman, director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the problem of trafficking in human beings is a security problem of all of Europe:

'We must consider this problem as a threat to the security of Europe and further European integration. This will kill the region, this will kill freedom of movement, because more and more countries will make stricter policies towards migrants, which will be counterproductive. There is also a terrorist aspect of this problem, because this network can function only via international borders, and that requires logistical support. And that is the structure terrorist networks need. There are some very clear signs that in Southeastern Europe terrorists use organised crime networks', Studman said.

#### THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA

The role of the media is important for raising awareness about this criminal activity, to accurately inform the public as well as to confront the problem, to educate the wider public about the potential dangers and situations that may occur to all of us. Media should balance its terminology of trafficking in human beings: We should talk about 'victims' rather than 'prostitutes' and certainly newspapers should not accept advertisements obviously dedicated to the recruitment of people.

One of the most important things is surely avoiding sensationalist approaches to the topic, which blur the essence of the story and blame the victims. Journalists who decide to research this topic must be freed of prejudices and not only approach it professionally, but also be ready to get involved in such a delicate issue.

Writing on trafficking in human beings means fieldwork among people unwilling to give information. Journalists must be trained for meetings with the procurers, pimps and other organised criminals, as well as for meetings with victims who are mostly distrustful of the media. One must always have in mind that the victims are heavily traumatised, that their confidence should be gained and never misused. The journalist must not pose a single question by which the victim will be placed in the position where she will feel guilty for the things happened to her and could have not influenced, even in the situation when she did have some other choice. Further, the victim should not be condemned or accused. Even if she does not request anonymity, she should not be named in full in the story because of the consequences it might bring her. At meetings with criminal groups the journalist should know that journalists are not welcome

or popular within these circles. It is a matter of personal judgment and responsibility how the journalist will verify out the information or gain information used to meet criminals.

A journalist is obliged not to hide information on possible involvement of politicians or the police in organised crime networks and to stay consistent in the objective informing the public about the problem.

Editors' obligation is to protect its journalist and the anonymity of his/her sources, even though in Yugoslavia there is no law that regulates it.

Journalistic sources can be both governmental and nongovernmental, international and domestic organisations, that due to the nature of the business are familiar with the problem of trafficking in human beings.

The journalist shall report, in a manner as detailed as possible, on the experiences of other countries in this domain and to use international standards in this domain, but also to report about the situation in other countries impartially and fairly.

#### PRESS CODE

Every journalists' association works in accordance with a code that represents the moral norms for journalism. In accordance with these there are also sanctions for those who do not respect them. The press code is different in every country. Below are presented parts of honor codes from Croatian, Bosnian, German and Serbian associations of journalists that in the widest sense relate to the writing and reporting about the trafficking in human beings.

##### *Croatian Press Association Code*

According to the honor code of the Croatian association of journalists from 1993, journalists are obliged by the general principles that he/she in his/her work will defend human rights, dignity and freedom, respect pluralism of ideas, contribute to the strengthening of the state with the rule of law and 'as a democratic part of the public shall participate in the control over the activities of the authorities and politicians, as well as promote culture and the ethics of the public world and respect the achievements and values of the developed civilisation.'

The code mandates that 'journalists shall protect a person's privacy from unjustified or sensationalist exposure in the public. Special attention and responsibility is demanded when he/she reports on accidents, family tragedies, illness, children and minors and in court, respecting the presumption of innocence, integrity, dignity and feelings of all parties in dispute.'

Regarding confidentiality of sources, the code of the Croatian association of journalists says that 'the journalist shall be obliged to report true, balanced and verified information. He/she shall name the persons or institutions from which he/she receives the data, information or statement. Journalists also have the right to not reveal the source of information, but he/she is morally, materially and legally responsible for published facts.'

##### *Bosnia-Herzegovina*

##### *Independent Professional Journalists Union Code*

As the Independent Professional Journalists of Bosnia-Herzegovina press code from 1999 regulates, 'the journalists shall at every moment carry out their job in the spirit of justice, truth and decency during the collection of the information, reporting and presenting of opinions.' Its Article 4 on discrimination says that 'newspapers and periodicals must avoid prejudice and offensive allusions to someone's ethnic group, nationality, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental illness or disability.' Article 9 refers to the violation of privacy and mandates: 'the processing of coverage that includes personal tragedies shall be done considerably, and the affected persons shall be approached discreetly and sympathetically.' Regarding confidential sources of information, Article 13 regulates that 'whenever it is possible, journalists shall relay on open, identified sources of information. These sources shall be preferred to anonymous sources whose honesty and accuracy the public cannot judge. Journalists and their publications, however, shall be obliged to protect the identity of those who gave information in confidence, regardless whether they strictly demand the confidence.'

The Independent Commission for Media brought the code on television and radio editing in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1998 (supplemented in 1999 and 2000).

The code is, as it is written in the preamble, regulated in the manner to be in accordance with the right of freedom of expression as regulated by the European Convention on Human Rights and other instruments mentioned in the Bosnia-Herzegovina Constitution, at the same time respecting generally accepted standards of decency, nondiscrimination, justice and accuracy.

'Radio and television stations should respect the general cultural standards of decency and courtesy in all programs and terms of broadcast, with special attention paid to protecting the interests and sensitivities of children. Language that might instigate violence, turmoil or hatred must not be used. The groundless use of language that may cause offence must be avoided. Radio and television stations must be considerate in their choice of material for reports on the consequences of natural disasters, accidents or human violence. Before the presentation of such scenes radio and television stations must find a balance between the desire to serve the truth and desire to show sympathy and the risk of sensationalism that could cause pain or the possibility of unjustified disturbance of privacy,' according to Article 1, paragraph 2.

##### *German Press Council Press Code*

According to the Code (with guidelines for editorial work) of the German Press Council 'respect for truth, protection of human rights and accurate informing of the general public are the overriding principles of the press' (Article 1). The following parts of the German Press Code refer to reporting on the trafficking in human beings:

##### **Guideline 8.1, Publication of names/photographs**

(1) As a general rule, there is no justification for publishing the names and

photographs of offenders or victims in reports on accidents, criminal offences, criminal investigations or court proceedings. In all cases, care must be taken to weigh the public's right to be informed and the personal rights of the individual concerned. Legitimate public interest, however, does not justify sensationalism.

- (2) Victims of accidents or crime are entitled to special protection from disclosure of their names. The identity of the victim is irrelevant for understanding the events surrounding an accident or crime unless it involves a person of contemporary history or occurs in circumstances touching on issues of wider public interest.
- (3) It is not permissible to publish names and photographs of relatives or other affected persons who have nothing to do with a crime or an accident.
- (4) The publication of the full name and/or photographs of suspects charged with a capital offence is only justified if this is in the interests of crime detection and the requirements for issuing a warrant of arrest are satisfied, or the crime was committed in front of the public's eyes. In any case where there are indications that the suspect may not be guilty, names and photographs should not be published.
- (5) When reporting on juvenile crime and juvenile court proceedings, the press should restrain from mentioning their names and publishing their photographs out of consideration for the future of the young people concerned.
- (6) In the case of persons in public office or with public mandate, the publication of names and photographs is admissible if there is a connection between their office or mandate and the offence in question. In the case of persons of contemporary history, the publication of names and photographs may be justified if the offence with which they are charged is in contradiction to their public image.
- (7) The names and photographs of missing persons should be published, however, with the agreement of the relevant authorities.

#### **Article 9**

It is contrary to journalistic decorum to publish unfounded allegations, especially allegations of a defamatory nature.

#### **Article 10**

The publication of text or pictures whose form or content could deeply offend the moral or religious sensibilities of a particular group of persons is incompatible with press responsibility.

#### **Article 11**

Violence and brutality should not be sensationalised. Reporting must take due account of need to protect young people.

#### **Guideline 11.1. Indecent reporting**

Indecent sensationalistic reporting degrades a person and treats him/her only as an object. It is especially the case in reporting on persons who are dying, suffer physically or mentally and in the manner that surpasses the public interest and readers' interest.

#### **Guideline 11.2. Reporting on violence**

When reporting on acts of violence, even terrible ones, the press must carefully weigh the public's interest of information and the victims and persons concerned. Reports on such events must be unbiased and accurate but the press must not become the tool of criminals or make any unauthorised attempt to mediate between criminals and police.

Interviews should not be made with the criminals while a crime is in progress.

#### **Guideline 11.3. Accidents and Disasters**

The bounds of acceptable reporting on accidents and disasters are exceeded where the suffering of victims and the feelings of their families cease to be respected. Those hit by misfortune must not become victims a second time because of insensitive media coverage.

#### **Guideline 11.4. Collaboration with authorities/ news blackouts**

Without neglecting its fundamental duty to inform, the press should exercise restraint in reporting on threats of violence of any kind. Collaboration between media and police should only occur if the lives and health of victims or other persons involved can be protected or saved by the journalist's action. Where requests are received from criminal prosecution authorities for a temporary, complete or partial cessation of reporting in the interests of crime detection, the press will comply with such request provided they are backed by cogent arguments and are not connected with news blackouts by official agencies.

#### **Article 12**

There must be no discrimination against anyone on grounds of sex, race, ethnic background, religion, social group or nationality.

German Press Code Article 5.1. regulates confidentiality: 'Where an informant agrees to supply information for publication only on condition that he/she remains unidentified and protected as a source, this stipulation shall be respected. A bond of confidentiality may only be broken where the informant in question relates the planning of a criminal act, in which case the journalist has a duty to report the matter to the authorities. Nor need confidentiality be observed if, after careful consideration of material and other interests, important reasons of state are deemed predominant. This situation can arise, in particular, if constitutional order is likely to be affected or endangered. Reporting on plans and activities which are designated secret is permissible if, after careful consideration, the need to inform the public is found to outweigh the stated reasons for secrecy. This does not, however, justify the committing of unlawful acts to acquire information.'

It is further said that 'All members of the press shall maintain professional confidentiality, shall respect the media's reputation and respect a business secret,' as well as that 'he/she shall exercise the right to refuse to give evidence and refrain from disclosing the identity of informants without their explicit consent.'

#### *Independent Journalists Association of Serbia Code*

Introductory Note:

*This code has been founded on the respect of professional and ethical norms and values in performing journalist work in public media.*

Principles:

1. The duty of every journalist is to follow the highest professional and ethical standards.
2. The journalist is in all situations and with no exceptions to defend principles of press freedom and other public information media, protect the right to information and expression of commentary and critical attitude, keeping to the old rule that the facts are obligatory, and that the attitudes are free.
3. The journalist on every occasion is to fight for the free circulation of news, against the distortion of the facts and against censorship.
4. The journalist is obliged to express true, verified, complete and prompt information. By listing persons and institutions from which he/she has obtained data or a statement, he/she keeps his/her right to not reveal the information source (which does not deprive him/her the right to what has been stated).
5. The journalist is obliged promptly to correct each inaccuracy which can be of damage by correcting it and apologizing to the individual or institution in question, and by allowing the persons criticised to answer if it is a subject worthy of discussion.
6. In obtaining the information, photos and illustrations, the journalist is to use means corresponding to dignity and the tradition of journalism, keeping to the rule that all parties should be heard.
7. Taking care of the right of the public to know all relevant facts from all fields of life, the journalist is to try to avoid facts and intonation that damage the privacy of citizens, their right to private sorrow and mourning.
8. The journalist is decisively to avoid all privileges that could influence independent performance of his professional duties.
9. Only in the case that the facts are relevant and necessary, is a journalist to mention in his/her reports and information the race of a certain person, skin colour, religion, nationality, legitimacy of birth, physical disability, marital status and sexual preference.
10. The journalist is not to privately use advantages gained by the information that he/she has received while performing his/her professional work before the information is available to the public.

Final note:

*The journalist working in the spirit of these rules enjoys the support of his/her professional organisation. The IJAS press code defines measures and sanctions for violations of this code.*

*In Belgrade, 26th of March, 1994*

The above is the English translation from the IJAS website ([www.nuns.org.yu](http://www.nuns.org.yu)).

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA

Astra activists have followed reporting on the trafficking in women from the press-clipping archives of INDOK within AWIN. The analysis included more than 100 media reports collected from April 1998 - April 2001. They have paid special attention to the texts from the dailies Politika, Blic, Danas, Glas Javnosti and Vecernje Novosti. Although not all dailies were writing about the problem with the same intensity, the most commonly used terms are:

*Prostitutes*, thus in accordance with the term all possible stereotypes:  
*In distress, young, unpaid, deported, imported, hookers, harlots, women of easy virtue, ladies of the night, Jezebels, comfort girl, practitioners of the oldest profession, sexual workers, cheap sellers of love.*

*White Slaves:*  
*White slaves, white she-slaves, sex she-slaves, modern she-slaves, slaves of the streets, female slaves.*

Finally, the terms among as a result of which many question the literacy and humanity of some journalists:  
*pretty women, ladies, hostesses, unfortunates, naive girls, naive and deceived women, fresh meat, sex objects, some strange students, imported girls, gullible, collected from the street, the night shift, inventory of our kafanas (Serbian traditional restaurants), illegal girls, protégées, fresh blood for the West, goods, immigrants, goods from the East for truck drivers, cheap labour force.*

Terminology in use for the traffickers in women as well as for the trafficking in human beings is irresponsible. The same terms are in use, and on the grounds of these terms a clear picture about the whole problem cannot be created, nor about the role of the merchants in the trafficking in women. The most commonly used terms are: *pimp, procurer, bosses, owners, smugglers*; while the

terms that stigmatise Albanians can be grouped as:

*Albanian mafia, Albanian owners, Shiptar (derogatory word for Albanians) mafia, pimps-to-be ethnic Albanians, Albanian managers, former members of KLA, Albanians, Albanian criminals, Albanian rapists, Albanian gangsters.*

Even the terminology in use for the trafficking in women is not focused on the essence of the problem, but on sensationalism; things are not named by their proper names: prostitution, smuggling, Balkan business with human bodies, white slave trade. The proper terms are very rarely used: trafficking in women, trafficking in human beings.

### CONSEQUENCES OF THE USE OF THESE TERMS

Usage of certain terms over time leads to the formation of stereotypes that are difficult to change subsequently (the language used in the Yugoslav media over the last ten years is a good example). When the abovementioned terms are considered, it is not difficult to conclude what picture the public might create about the trafficked women. Terminology like this reflects the insensitivity to the problem and in a way shows what idea this society has about women. The terms portray them as 'unfortunates' who are here due to their naiveté or imprudence, or 'imported goods' from the former communist countries to whom prostitution represents the realisation of their life dream.

When traffickers, women and the problem itself are in question, a lot of things are trivialised when through the trafficking in women a desire to show the 'cruelty of Albanians' or 'immorality' of foreigners present in the Balkans (who are most often mentioned as clients) is evinced.

The questions - who are the trafficked women, who trafficked them, how, why - in almost all texts are answered in terms of other nations, ethnic groups, countries, except for Serbs. Besides that, which can be characterised as a perfidious version of 'hate speech' known in our media, the very existence of Serbian organised crime and mafia, which certainly deals with the business no less than Albanians, is completely neglected.

### WHITE SLAVES

An article published in a prestigious daily at the end of the 19th century drew the attention of the British public to the existence of child prostitution and trafficking in women in Great Britain. In order to present the situation of the girls as authentically as possible to the readers, the author compared their position to that position of black slaves in the United States, thus from that comparison came the 'white slaves' neologism that referred to young British women who were drawn into the prostitution chain. Although the term has stayed in usage until now, it has completely lost its meaning and acceptance it had at that time and social context - in Victorian England.

It is not disputable that the trafficked women are enslaved. However, the first

problem one encounters with the usage of the term ‘white slaves’ is that trafficking in women does not affect only white women. The victims also are Asian, African, Roma women, etc.; thus, it does not affect women only from one certain ethnic, racial or social group.

Use of the term ‘white slaves’ is also dehumanizing, i.e. it ignores the fact that in questions is a human being. A ‘slave’s’ position is unchangeable, she/he remains in the position of a passive victim who will be that way until the end of his/her life and with whom ‘nothing can be done.’ The position of trafficked women is completely mystified by that; the public is not compelled to do anything. It is as if any effort is in vain, so the situation is accepted as it is – horrible and ‘far away from us.’

#### PROSTITUTES

There are various approaches to the problem of prostitution and trafficking in women in the women’s movement. On one side, there is a camp that advocates the position that the two phenomena are indivisible. Prostitution can never be voluntary, thus in every case it means trafficking in women – due to the marginalised and powerless position they have in society, women are forced to sell their bodies to men absolutely against their will.

There is another camp that advocates the completely opposite position. A woman has the right to use her body as she wants, thus prostitution can also be her voluntary choice. By that, trafficking in women is strictly separated from prostitution – when the woman is a victim of trafficking, she does not have any freedom of choice and does not have any control over things that happen to her. She cannot choose what she wants to do, how, for how long, with whom, and she does not have any earnings.

In the Yugoslav media, trafficking in women is always identified with prostitution, and trafficked women are called prostitutes. The consequence of that is the stereotype created during the few last years in the Serbian public about ‘some’ Russian, Moldovan, Ukrainian women who work as prostitutes ‘because they wanted it’, ‘because it is the best and the fastest way for them to earn money.’

Thus, one shall always have in mind what attitude exists in our society towards prostitutes. In that context, any violence committed against them is not condemned and is considered as something that is ‘part of the job description.’ As something ‘women like that’ deserve.

#### THE OFFICIAL INTERNATIONAL TERMS CONNECTED WITH THE TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS:

**Trafficking** - trade, in this context the trade in human beings.

**Trafficking in women** – trade in women.

**Trafficked person** – a victim of trafficking, a person who is recruited, transported, bought, sold, transferred or harboured with the aim of sexual or economic exploitation for the profit or benefit of (an)other person(s).

**Sending country** – the country or origin of the trafficked person.

**Receiving country** – the destination country of the trafficked person.

**Transit country** – a country between the sending and receiving countries, often with the purpose of preparation of false passports, wedding documents, visas, etc.

**Trafficker** – merchant in human beings, i.e. the person who commits, intends to commit, participates the recruitment of, transport, buying or selling of the human beings.

The role of international organisations in the fight against trafficking in human beings is of great importance. Primarily because of the necessary financial support, but also because of advice and guidelines to the governments in the region for the fight against this form of organised crime.

#### ORGANISATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE (OSCE)

The organisation is engaged in all countries in the region in various domains for the fight against the trafficking in human beings, improvement of laws, public awareness raising campaigns about the problem, research on the problem, training and help to the local nongovernmental sector. The activities of the OSCE office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is focused on the prevention and protection of the human rights.

#### COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Council of Europe has been engaged for years in the fight against the trafficking in human beings. The organisation, through the Southeastern Europe Security Pact, since 1999 has actively been helping local authorities in their efforts for the fight against this form of organised crime in Albania, Romania, Moldova and Yugoslavia.

#### INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM)

IOM is the main organisation for helping the victims of trafficking in human beings as well as for the prevention of trafficking. In May 2001, IOM signed a memorandum on understanding with the SECI centre in the domain of helping repatriated victims in the Balkans. IOM has also initiated programs of reintegration of victims in the countries of origin as well as awareness raising campaigns about the problem.

#### UN AGENCIES

At least four UN agencies are active in the fight against trafficking in human beings. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Population Fund (UNFPA), UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).

The following are testimonies from victims of the trafficking in human beings. These are the stories of young women who in various ways ended in nightclubs and bars in Serbia or Bosnia-Herzegovina.

#### *Jana from Moldova*

Jana is 32 years old. She was born in Moldova and is a member of the Polish minority. She was working in Kiev, Ukraine, in the army at the time of the disintegration of the former Soviet Union. She lost her job. A female acquaintance of hers told her on the grounds of her own experience about well-paid jobs in Bosnia, where there were a lot of foreigners...

'When I went to Bosnia on November 4, 1999, I was sure I would work as a waitress,' she says.

During the journey, her passport was taken away with the explanation that she would cross the border more easily this way. The journey was long because it took them a long time to find a poorly maintained crossing between Romania and Serbia. When she arrived in Bosnia she was left in Dobož. She was sold from the nightclub in Dobož for DEM 1,700 to the owner of the 'Stari Most' nightclub in Zenica. Her passport was given to the club owner on purchase.

'He told me I had to pay the debt, that I had to give back the money he paid for me and that then I would be able to get my passport back,' she says.

Jana was working in the club almost a year. She was not abused during that period. When the following winter came, the club owner needed money for electricity. He sold her to a club owner in Travnik for DEM 1,400 to pay his debts. There were 15 women in the Travnik club.

'It's like a prison in the club. The owner always has one or two girls who work as his informants. There is no confidence, no friendship. You are left to your self,' says Jana, who among other things tried to escape from the Zenica club but was caught and taken back.

'When I was sold to the Travnik club owner I didn't want to work any more, but if I had resisted a few days more I would not have been alive now', says Jana, remembering the horror she went through. She was beaten in the Travnik club, she was kept in the basement and did not have freedom of movement. She was also forced to work in the house.

She was rescued by chance, when the club owner sent her on a trip through Bosnia with a customer. The driver seemed suspicious to a traffic policeman. They stopped them. Jana did not and still does not have her passport; it is still with the club owner. The traffic policeman informed the STOP team members and Jana was transferred to the shelter for victims of trafficking in human beings where she remains.

In outbursts of anger and helplessness she wants revenge, but then she raises her hands and says:

'I know he's responsible for two murders, and he has not been in jail even a month for that. Why should I expect justice from this country then?'

#### *Lena, 26, from Belarus*

'I came to Budapest in December 2000, as a tourist with a girlfriend. During the journey, in the bus, we met a Hungarian woman who invited us to stay as guests at her place in Budapest. We went out that night for a drink in a nearby café, and while we were chatting, we were drinking champagne,' Lena says.

There was probably some narcotic in the drink because the victim did not remember anything until she woke up in a car on the way to Belgrade where she saw her friend and two merchants in human beings.

'We were taken to an apartment in Belgrade where they kept us locked a whole night. The following day two new men appeared. The two said to us that there was a police raid, they confiscated our documents and took us by car to Kraljevo. There, we were given to the 'XXX' café owner who wanted to force us to dance as strippers. When I politely refused, he told me I owed him money for the return ticket. Then we agreed that I would work in the bar as a waitress for couple hundred Deutsche Marks. I was working, I served the customers, cleaned the bar, but I didn't receive money. After the New Year, two armed men appeared and took us by force from the bar to Podgorica. We went to Podgorica by car. There we were sold to the owner of the 'YYY' nightclub. The following two and a half to three months I worked again as a waitress and cleaner. During that period the owner forced us to work as strippers and prostitutes. We were beaten often and abused because we refused to do any sexual services without medical examinations. I think I am very fortunate because I went through all that abuse without physical or health consequences.'

According to the victim's statement, meals were regularly served but she did not have freedom of movement.

'In March 2001, a bar guest Ivan rescued me. He helped me escape. After that we were living together for a while in Podgorica. Later we went to an apartment of a friend of Ivan's in Aleksandrovac,' she recalls.

At the end of June the same year, she was caught in a police raid and taken to the police station to give a statement. She did not have any personal documents. For the offence she was sentenced to ten days in prison. She served the sentence in the Krusevac prison. After she served her sentence she was transferred to the Belgrade reception centre for illegal migrants where she spent the following three or four weeks, while the procedure of getting the new documents was under way.

The Federal Police Ministry reported the case to the IOM on July 30.

*Greta, 20, from Romania*

'I left home because of the bad economic situation, I chose Yugoslavia because I heard that it was easy to find a job here. On the journey from Timisoara to Yugoslavia I met a woman who promised me she would find me a job. We went together to Vrsac and she took me to a man who was working at the vegetable market there. I followed him because I was told he would find me a job. Then we met another person from Belgrade. I saw that the grocer received DM 3,000 after he sold me.' From there she was taken to a house somewhere on the outskirts of Belgrade.

'Another girl was in the house, who didn't want to speak to me. I think she was from Romania too. I spent two days locked in the house until a new man appeared and bought us both. We left the house at the same time, but by two different cars,' she says.

During the journey the victim was raped by one of the men in the car. They took her to Kosovo (she does not know where) where she spent another night locked in a house.

'I tried to escape through the window, but without success. The next morning the three of them took me to a new house where they took my passport away. That evening I went to a night club where I was supposed to work.'

From that moment she did not have freedom of movement, because she was escorted wherever she went.

One night she agreed with another girl to escape as soon as possible and they succeeded the following day. They were running through fields until they met some people who offered them accommodation for the night. The other girl had some money and they ordered a taxi to reach the border with central Serbia. Albanian police stopped them and took to the police station where they were interrogated and released. They were told to go to the border by bus. Hitchhiking, they reached Nis, and then they took a taxi to Belgrade. When they arrived in Belgrade, the other girl who was with the victim called 'XXX' and he took them both to the house where the victim was taken after the grocer from Vrsac had sold her. She escaped the following morning and reported herself to the police station.

*Tanja, 17, from Romania*

'Two young men, who spoke very bad Romanian, and my escort, suggested I go abroad to work. They promised they would manage the passport. From Orsova, the town where I was living, we went to Moldova Nova. I was forced to have sex with one of them during the journey.'

They spent only a few hours in an apartment in Moldova Nova, then the two merchants transferred her to another apartment and she spent one day in the same place.

The following day, a Romanian trafficker drove her to the Danube, which they crossed illegally by boat. The victim was hidden under a blanket during the transit across the river. On the Yugoslav shore, a trafficker, a Serb, took her over and paid some money to the Romanian. The Serb took her to a house (the location is unknown to the victim) and kept her locked there three days. There she met other trafficked Romanian women.

The victim received meals regularly and was not exposed to sexual or psychological abuse. When the trafficked women went to shop, the policeman asked for her personal identity card and passport. Since the victim did not have her passport she was taken to the police station for interrogation, and after that she was placed in the reception centre in Padinska Skela (shelter for the victims/temporary accommodation until the return to the country of origin).

*SOS info telephone ASTRA – +381 (11) 334-7817*

#### SPECIFIC CASES FROM THE WAR IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

##### *Testimonies of Muslim women raped during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina*

The testimony was published under the code-name 'Zaga' in 'I Was Begging Them To Kill Me!', published by Bosnia-Herzegovina Centre for Research and Documentation and the Bosnian Association of the Camp Inmates.

More than 30,000 Bosnian Muslim women went through various forms of torture and sexual abuse during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This woman was born in Gacko and expelled with her family on May 26, 1992 to the village of Borac, at the foot of the Zelengora mountain. The mass of the refugees who went across Mt Zelengora on July 1, 1992 towards Konjic, a part of her column lost the guide.

'Thinking that they would not maltreat women, children and old people, we decided to surrender to Chetniks,' said this woman, who is also a witness at ICTY, recalling the events of July 4, 1992.

'My story is a story of Muslim young woman of 15 years who was captured by Chetniks...We were treated like slaves, like cattle. They raped us and gave vent to their low instincts on us, they insulted our Muslim religion... All of that was difficult to stand, as well as the acknowledgement that they sold and bought us among themselves...One of the Chetniks bought me at the end of September 1992 from Gojko and Zaga to be only his, to marry me. The agreement was that after the final payment they would give me to him on October 1, 1992, as it was done. From that moment I started to hope for something... I started living with Zdravko and since then I didn't have forced contacts with any Chetniks...'

This woman has two children with Zdravko, and escaped from Republika Srpska to Sarajevo on April 22, 1998.

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