

Trafficking in human beings in Serbia

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Abstract:

Trafficking in human beings is a serious and very complex social problem. In the last fifteen years the international community has undertaken a number of significant steps in confronting this phenomenon. First, in the United Nations Convention against transnational crime i.e. in its additional protocol which refers to the prevention and combating trafficking in human beings, an Institute for trafficking in human beings was set which helped greatly to the certain countries to designate and identify this phenomenon in their national legislation as a criminal offense which carries an appropriate penalty. Second, the countries were instructed to adopt national strategies whose goals are preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, as well as informing the public i.e. potential victims of this phenomenon through a variety of activities, and through education and training of prevention programs. Without adequate data on trafficking in human beings it is not possible to determine the true scope and nature of the problem. The authors of this paper try to analyse the current state of trafficking in human beings in the world, and above all provide statistical overview of criminal offenses of trafficking committed in the territory of the Republic of Serbia for a certain period.

Keywords: *trafficking in human beings, a victim, organized crime groups, the Republic of Serbia.*

1. Introduction

As a form of transnational organized crime, trafficking in human beings is just one in a line of criminal activities organized crime groups are engaged in. This phenomenon brings with it considerable human and social risks, it violates basic human rights, it spurs corruption, money laundering, illegal labour, causing a demographic destabilization, migration processes, in a word it represents a great social evil. Victims are subjected to various forms of exploitation such as sexual, labour, illegal child adoptions, trafficking in organs, forced marriages, involvement and participation in armed conflicts, involvement in specific criminal activities, etc.

In principle, every country should have its own prevention strategy that would target each possible cause of human trafficking. Likewise, the countries should further strengthen their institutions and create adequate regulations, because it's the only way to successfully respond to the activities of human traffickers and suppress more efficiently making profits through exploiting other human beings.¹

Until 2003, the crime of Trafficking inhuman beings was not regulated in criminal legislation of the Republic of Serbia, so many of the offenders of this crime remained unpunished or they went on a trial for minor offences. By accepting and adopting United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its two accompanying protocols that relate to trafficking and smuggling of migrants, the legal basis to start a successful fight against this type of crime was provided for many countries. A certain number of countries in the world has ratified this Convention and associated protocols. The Republic of Serbia, introduced criminalization of human trafficking into the Criminal Code in 2003 for the first time, defining it in a similar way as it had been defined in the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime, i.e. in its Protocols. However, the criminal legislation of the Republic of Serbia went through some changes, so that on 1st January 2006 the new Criminal Code came into force, where the crime of trafficking in human beings underwent certain changes.

In *The Criminal Code* of the Republic of Serbia, under Article 388, *Human Trafficking* is committed by whoever by force or threat, deception or maintaining deception, abuse of authority, trust, dependency relationship, difficult circumstances of another, retaining identity papers or by giving or accepting money or other benefit, recruits, transports, transfers, sells, buys, acts as intermediary in sale, hides or holds another person with intent to exploit such person's labour, forced labour, commission of offences, prostitution, mendacity, pornography, removal of organs or body parts or service in armed conflicts.

There is a case of severe form of offense if the offense is committed against a minor, where the offender shall be punished even if there was no force, threat or any of the other above-mentioned methods of perpetration. Second, there shall be a possible case of severe form of offense if the commission of an offense resulted in grave bodily injury of a person or a minor, while the most severe form of the offense, if the offense committed against a person or a minor resulted in the death of one or more persons. A special case of offense shall exist if someone commits a criminal offense against persons or minors, or the offense is committed by groups, or if the offense is committed by an organized crime group. Also, there shall be a special form of offense if someone knew or could have known that a person is the victim of trafficking, so he used her/her position or made it possible for others to take advantage of his/her position for exploitation. The consent to exploitation or establishing of slavery or similar status referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall not affect the existence of this offence.²

2. The current situation of human trafficking in the world

Considering the problem of human trafficking, many countries in the world have started the development of appropriate national strategies that incorporate specific

¹ Matijašević, J., Pavlović, Z., *Trafficking the Influence and Consequences on Human Rights*, Year XXVI, Novi Sad, July - August 2009, No. 7-8, p. 21-33.

² Criminal Code of the Republic of Serbia, 2006.

measures and actions which should gradually solve problem of human trafficking. These measures and actions are primarily:

- Legal framework;
- The identification of victims and adequate punishment of the offenders;
- The establishment of special centres with specialized staff to assist victims of trafficking;
- Prevention;
- Education;
- International cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organizations;
- Raising public awareness and organizing a large number of information campaigns on the harmful effects of human trafficking;
- Coordination of activities.

According to some reports, it is estimated that there are more than two million victims of human trafficking in the world; between 800,000 and 900,000 victims are women and children; 50% of women are forced into prostitution and forced labour; the profit that criminal organizations gain from trafficking in the course of one year is between 7 and 13 billion dollars, and so on.

In a broader context, in the beginning, human trafficking for sexual exploitation was considered the most widespread form of exploitation, but by expanding knowledge of this phenomenon this view has been changed now. The latest trends show that trafficking for sexual exploitation may be the most widely recognized form of trafficking, but that does not mean that it is the most widespread. It cannot be said with certainty which category of exploitation is prevalent in figures, and this often depends on the location considered. For example, it is likely that in the European Union, trafficking for sexual exploitation is the most widespread category, while in other parts of the world, especially in regions that include the countries of origin, such as Central and South-eastern Asia, Southern and Western Africa and South and Central America, the situation is less clear and it is likely that the number of victims trafficked for different exploitation of forced labour such as those in agriculture, illegal factories etc., is greater than the number of victims of sexual exploitation.³

Based on the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's database service, it can be concluded that 127 countries in the world are the countries of origin, 98 states are transit countries and 137 are destination countries. The largest number of organized crime groups in the world originated in Asia and Central and Eastern Europe. Considering the fact that trafficking often has a transnational character, we come to a conclusion that there has to be a wider cooperation between the countries in order to suppress it.

Organized crime groups can operate successfully only in those cases where there is some coordination between those who recruit, transport and exploit. These three interconnected networks are separated only by their 'products' (final result), which in cases of trafficking are exploited individuals⁴. The existence of groups for recruitment, transportation and exploitation is documented in court records and specific studies in

³ Holms, P.: *Trafficking in persons for the Western Balkan Region*, 2006, p. 41.

⁴ Albanese, J.S: Cases of Human Trafficking in the United States: A Content Analysis of a Calendar Year in 18 Cities, *International Journal of Comparative Criminology*, 2004, p. 104.

different parts of the world. A study conducted in Albania, for example, indicates that Albania was primarily a transit country between Romania and Ukraine, Moldova, Serbia and Italy and Western Europe. When 371 girls (174 found in Italy, 115 in Albania) were interviewed it was discovered which entry and exit smuggling routes were used. The victims were recruited as follows: 35% were recruited voluntarily, 35% were given false promises, 25% were promised to get a job and 5% were sold or kidnapped. Out of the total number, 95% of the victims crossed the border without proper documents, while 2/3 experienced sexual or physical abuse, and some victims were forced to take drugs.⁵

2.1. Models of the trafficking business of organized crime groups

Crime groups dealing with human trafficking exist at several levels, from spontaneous to highly complex, international, organized networks. **Informal networks** usually can be recognized in the form of smaller groups of individuals within the family networks and ethnic communities that operate across borders. These networks often operate in the border areas between the countries of origin and countries of destination. **Large organized crime networks** control all aspects of human trafficking, from recruitment and local transport to management of brothels and street prostitution. Trade operates as a business: "the recruitment agency", "Office for obtaining documents", "The Transport Agency" and "Control office". In this regard, traders are doing their job seriously and professionally. **Criminal distributive networks** are networks of criminal groups that recruit and transport victims from one country to another. They could be called 'wholesalers' or 'distributors' who sell victims to 'retailers'.⁶

In practice, there are several models of the way of functioning or 'trading' of organized crime groups when it comes to human trafficking:

1) Russian (Post-Soviet) or 'the business model' – human trafficking looks is similar to selling 'products' (or 'natural resource'). This model is based exclusively on trafficking in women. It does not operate and it does not reflect integrated business model, but instead it is focussed on short-term profits. Business is based on the recruitment of women and their intermediaries who supply the markets where they, 'serve customers'. Most often women are sold to neighbouring partners, *i.e.* nearby crime groups. This model does not maximize profits, so the money is spent for different purposes.

2) Chinese or "investment model" – this model of human trafficking involves investing in "goods" in order to turn a profit. This model is most applicable for the smuggling of men, but it is also common for the trafficking of women who represent about 10% of human trafficking. Chinese and Thai criminal groups operate as "businesses" that are integrated from start to finish. These organized crime groups control the trafficking of human beings at all stages – from recruitment to exploitation. This business model looks like other Chinese business models, in a way that it is integrated across continents.

3) The Balkan or 'violent model' ('violent entrepreneur') – is characterized by the presence of very serious forms of violence at all stages of human trafficking. This model is almost exclusively dealing with trafficking in women. It includes a large number of women, which have been sold to Balkan 'retailers' by organized crime groups from the

⁵ Lesko, V., Entela, A.: *The girls and the trafficking*, Vlora, 2003, p. 15.

⁶ UNDP, Law enforcement manual for fighting against trafficking of human beings, 2001, p. 46.

former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Balkan crime groups⁷ run integrated business and they are intermediaries between criminal groups from Eastern Europe. Profits from this trade is used to finance other illegal activities and for investments in the real estate business.

There are plenty of documented and reported cases that show threat of violence, rape and even murders. Use of violence is characteristic especially for the Balkan crime groups, which have their own methods transferred to Western Europe, using it during the prostitution control. The last few years there has been a growing trend, and it is – women being forced into addiction on hard drugs, in that way victim grows a specific way connection to the trafficker. This method is especially popular among traffickers involved in the smuggling of narcotics. For example in Finland, foreign prostitutes are very mobile and they are regularly used for smuggling drugs as couriers or dealers.

4) Nigerian or 'slave model'. Nigerian organized crime groups that traffic in people are multifaceted criminal groups, trade in women is only a part of their criminal activities. Their members manipulate with voodoo tradition and they are able to force the victims into obedience through psychological and physical pressure. By using modern transportation connections in Nigeria, traffickers become effective because they 'combine sophisticated forms of modern technology with tribal customs'. By exploiting vulnerabilities of uneducated women, they make this trade resemble the traditional slavery, which is modernized by the process of globalization.

5) Mexican or "supermarket model" – is based on the distribution of large quantities of "goods" (a mixture of smuggling and trafficking). This model applies to the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings. Trade is based on maximizing profits by moving the largest numbers of people with relatively low cost for each individual moved. Statistical data show that in 2000, 1.8 million people who tried to cross the border between Mexico and America were caught. This model is characterized by a connection of organized crime groups with the border control police. In this sense, there is a high rate of corruption of police officers. The money earned from the trafficking and smuggling of migrants is invested in legal activities in the country.⁸

The link between human trafficking and organized crime in itself does not give a complete picture of this phenomenon, because individuals who are not members of organized criminal groups are also involved in it. It is known that in Thailand families, relatives and friends provide, i.e. help human trafficking.⁹ Although it may seem that this is done mainly for economic reasons, it is considered that the sale of off spring is a part of their culture. Also, persons with criminal backgrounds are not only ones dealing with human trafficking. Some organizations such as private corporations (e.g. construction, textile, and garment production), employment agencies, matrimonial agencies etc. in one way or another have become part of the chain in the process of human trafficking¹⁰.

⁷ Taking into consideration final court judgments against criminal group of Mladen Dalmacija and 'Novi Sad criminal group' it was unambiguously confirmed that human trafficking as a form of organized crime exists in the territory of the Republic of Serbia. Based on available information, this organized criminal groups in its activities in great deal used force, i.e. coercion and serious threats to the victims of human trafficking, which confirms the existence of the Balkan or 'violent model'.

⁸ ICMD (International Centre for Migration Policy Development), *Law Enforcement Manual to Combat Trafficking In South-Eastern Europe*, Belgrade, 2003, p. 27.

⁹ Obokata, T.: *Trafficking of Human Beings from a Human Rights Perspective*, Lieden-Boston, 2006, p. 34.

¹⁰ Ruggiero, V.: Trafficking in Human Beings: Slaves in Contemporary Europe, 25 *International Journal of Sociology of Law* 231, 1997, p. 236.

It has also been found that the members of the national armed forces or international peacekeeping forces are also involved in human trafficking. This criminal activity where individuals or organizations are engaged can be as equally sophisticated as in the case when organized crime groups are engaged.

3. Current situation of human trafficking in Serbia

Studying human trafficking in Serbia in the period from the end of the nineties of the twentieth century until today, we can see that this is the manifestation of this form of crime has undergone through some transformation when it comes to the nationality of the victims, the number of criminal offenses, the perpetrators' organization, changes in legal norms, recruitment methods as well as the increasing extent of the problem as an internal phenomenon.

In this part of the paper we will take a closer look at the individual cases of human trafficking that took place in Serbia and intrigued and engaged the attention of broader public, and also we will deal with statistical overview of human trafficking in 2014.

Two cases are particularly attracted the attention of the public in the Republic of Serbia and its neighbouring countries. The first case took place seventeen years ago in Kosovo and Metohija and it refers to the trafficking of human organs. Before the War Crimes Chamber of the Belgrade District Court, on 26th March in 2008, pre-trial proceedings were initiated concerning the allegations of the sale of organs of Kosovo Serbs during and after the bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Office of the War Crimes Prosecutor announced before that that it had formed a case that relates to the sale of organs of Kosovo Serbs. The Prosecution ordered to check informal knowledge and findings obtained during the course of research about the crimes against Serbian civilians committed by members of the 'Kosovo Liberation Army' 'and that the two trucks with captured Serbs from Kosovo in 1999 were transferred to Albania. Also, the former Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte in her book 'The Hunt: Me and the War Criminals' said that the prosecution, during the investigation of 'KLA' crimes against non-Albanians, was informed that the persons missing from the conflicts in Kosovo were victims in operation of trafficking in human organs. She said that tribunal investigators and UNMIK officials received information that in the summer of 1999, Kosovo Albanians used trucks to transfer across the border more than 300 kidnapped persons whose bodies were later used for sale into northern Albania. A former spokesperson for the Prosecutor of the Tribunal, Florence Hartmann, in an interview for Frankfurter 'Vesti' also accused individuals of UNMIK that they did not want to cooperate in the particular case of trafficking in human organs of kidnapped Serbs from Kosovo.

The second case saw the light of the day on 20th July, 2005, when the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, formed an Inquiry Committee in order to gain insight, find out and determine facts and the truth about the missing new-born babies. Serbia became known for unexplained cases of trafficking in new-borns¹¹ that had

¹¹ The case of *Mirjana Čumić* is considered to be the one with most facts, proves and arguments in the entire trafficking in new-borns affair. This woman had been collecting documents by herself and finally she found her. However, when she brought criminal charges, and when she gave insight and presented the entire documentation which indicated that one of the two girls, born on 12th December, 1978 really could be her daughter, the Republic Public Prosecutor Office issued an instruction which prohibited the court to order a DNA analysis, which would have determined motherhood.

occurred in the period from 1970 to 1990. It is believed that there are 3,000 families tracing their children in Serbia and according to some estimates, there are up to 30,000 parents who suspect that their babies were abducted after their birth. Out of the total number only 110 families have managed to find their stolen children and that has happened because of their personal commitment. In almost all cases it was about the alleged death of children in maternity or paediatric wards directly after births or in institutions for pre-mature born babies, mainly in large cities. Most of these cases occurred in Belgrade, Niš, Kragujevac, Prokuplje, Kruševac, Čačak, Vranje etc. Also, the committee came to the conclusion that the competent authorities were unable to investigate due to the statute of limitations. Committee has devoted special attention to the problem of DNA analysis, because parents have high hopes for this method of identification in order to determine the final truth, in a way where they would compare DNA profiles of parents with DNA profile of tissue taken at autopsy of a new-born.¹²

One of the key prerequisites for creating appropriate policies for combating human trafficking and to find the optimal response to it is to search and find out everything about the scope, structure and characteristics of this form of organized crime in a given area in a given time period. In this regard, it seems important to build a structured system of monitoring human trafficking, both at national and at regional and international level, and ensuring the systematic collection of quantitative and qualitative data on this phenomenon.¹³

Information on human trafficking are often difficult to access, heterogeneous, mutually unconnected and outdated. Awareness of these shortcomings joins more and more often government institutions and scientists in efforts to eliminate inconsistencies with the more or less explicit, aim of determining the real quantitative dimensions of this phenomenon¹⁴. As long as the data on human trafficking are scarce, unreliable and not comparable, it will be very difficult to develop efficient and effective countermeasures and strategies, not only at national but also at regional and international level¹⁵. In what scope the human trafficking phenomenon is a product of organized crime groups action was partly answered by conclusions that were reached during the workshop "Analysis of cases of human trafficking in the Republic of Serbia in 2012", held in Vrnjačka Banja from 28th to 30th October 2012, when police officials presented all the cases where criminal charges

Milanka Milic from Belgrade gave birth to male twins in October 1978, at the Obstetrics and Gynaecology Clinic Narodni Front in Visegradska Street. One of the boys was said to have been born dead, although in the discharge papers was written that both babies received BCG vaccines. Three years later, when the son was taken to a hospital in Tiršova because of the problems he had on the left ear, the doctor told them "And why have you brought the child again, you were with him here last week". And then in 2003, Milić family, experienced another shock. Many relatives and friends told to Mrs. Milanka that on September 23rd, on the cover page of "Vecernje Novosti" was published a photo of a café in ObilićevVenac in Belgrade, and on the photo was their son. However, Milanka found out that her son had not been to any of the cafes.

¹² Ristović, M.: New- born babies trafficking-Born to Vanish, Niš, 2006, p. 147-149.

¹³ S. Čopić, V. Nikolić-Ristanović.: *Mechanism for monitoring the trafficking in human beings in Serbia*, Collection of works "Monitoring human trafficking-Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia ", IOM, Belgrade, 2006. p. 67.

¹⁴ Savone, U.E., Stefanizzi, S.: *Measuring Human Trafficking, Complexities and Pitfalls*, Spriger, USA, 2007, p. 34.

¹⁵ Radović, N., Lalić, V.: Insight of the collecting of data on trafficking in human beings, Bezbednost, Ministry of interior of Republic of Serbia, 3/2009, p. 142.

were filed under the Article 388 of the Criminal Code of the Republic on the territory of Serbia, except AP of Kosovo and Metohija. Participants conducted a detailed qualitative analysis of 30 cases in 2012, where it was also observed that not a single case had been reported as the case of human trafficking committed by the organized crime group.¹⁶

Table 1: Overview of criminal charges, solved crimes and injured parties – victims by organizational units – number of person who filed criminal charges in 2014

Organizational units-which filed criminal charges	Number of filed criminal charges	Number of detected crimes	Number of offenders	Number of victims
Police Department Novi Sad	4	4	4	4
Police Department forth city of Belgrade - UZS	3	5	6	3
Criminal Police Directorate Belgrade - Service for Combating Organized Crime	1	1	5	1
Police Department Novi Pazar	1	1	1	1
Police Department Čačak	1	1	1	34
Police Department Pančevo	1	1	1	1
Police Department Kragujevac	1	1	1	2
Police Department Požarevac	1	1	1	1
Police Department Sremska Mitrovica	1	1	2	1
Police Department Sombor	1	1	1	1
Police Department Kruševac	1	1	1	1
Police Department Šabac	1	1	1	2
Total	17	19	25	52

Based on the data in Table 1, it can be noted that in 2014 the number of filed criminal charges was 17, and that 25 persons participated in the commission of 19 crimes while the number of victims was 54. In the table above it can also be seen that the Service for Combating Organized Crime filed one criminal charge as opposed to the five persons they filed charges on reasonable doubt that they operated as a crime group committed the crime of human trafficking.

¹⁶ Dostić, S., Gosić, S.: (2013) Trafficking in human beings as a crime phenomenon, *Bezbednost, Belgrade*, vol. 55, br. 3/2013, p. 182.

Table 2: Overview of reported offenders disaggregated by nationality and gender for 2014

Offenders			
Nationality	male	female	total
Serbian	16	8	24
Greek	1	-	1
Total	17	8	25

Table 3: Overview of human trafficking victims classified by nationality for 2014

Victims – injured parties			
Nationality	male	female	total
Serbian	39	13	52
Total	39	13	52

Table 4: Overview of victims listed by type of exploitation, sex and age structure for 2014

01-2011

Types of exploitation	Age structure - number of victims						Total
	Male-minors		Male-adults	Female-minors		Female-adults	
	Up to 14	14-18		Up to 14	14-18		
Labour			35				35
Sexual					4	4	8
Organized beggary	1			2			3
For the purpose of committing crimes		2					2
multiple -beggary and labour-			1				1
Multiple -sexual and for the purpose of committing crimes-						1	1
multiple -sexual, beggary and labour-					1		1
No exploitation/ forced marriage					1		1
Total	1	2	36	2	6	5	52
	3			8			

Taking a closer look at Table 4 it can be seen that 35 people were victims of labour exploitation, 8 persons were victims of sexual exploitation, 3 persons were victims of organized beggary, 2 persons were victims of exploitation for the purpose of committing criminal acts, one person was the victim of multiple exploitation of organized beggary and labour exploitation, one person was a victim of multiple sexual exploitation and exploitation for committing criminal acts, and one person was a victim of forced marriage. Collectively, during 2014 in Serbia there were 52 victims of human trafficking and most of them were victims of labour and sexual exploitation.

In recent years, in the Republic of Serbia trafficking at local and national level in human beings has been dominant, and the victims have been mostly of Serbian nationality and they have been exploited by Serbian nationals – traffickers. Internal trafficking is confirmed by the fact that the criminal acts of trafficking offenders who were discovered were in more than 95% Serbian citizens, with the same percentage of nationals among the identified victims. However, Serbia is still a country of origin of victims of trafficking who are also exploited outside the country, and it is also a country of transit and destination for victims of trafficking from other countries, but to a lesser extent. There have been some changes in the types of exploitation. By 2013 most victims were victims of sexual exploitation (around 41% of the total number of victims), while in 2014 most victims were of labour exploitation (78.4%). This is contrary to the trend that is present in the European Union, where 70% of victims are victims of sexual exploitation, and 19% of victims are victims of labour exploitation.¹⁷

Centre for Human Trafficking Victims in the Republic of Serbia in 2013 and 2014 identified a total number of 217 victims of trafficking. Of the total number of these victims, 64 were minors (30%), with dominant number of females (85%). When it comes to victims of human trafficking, it can be said that the majority of victims were Serbian citizens, which is in line with the prevailing internal trafficking but identified victims were also from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Romania, Afghanistan, Austria, Moldova, Albania, Ukraine, Slovenia, and Turkey and so on. When the age of the victims is considered, the most common forms of exploitation of minors are beggary and forced marriage. Labour exploitation is common among adults, while sexual exploitation is equally common in both age categories.¹⁸

Structure of victims varies by gender, which confirms that human trafficking has a strong gender aspect. Considering this fact, the victims of labour exploitation are mainly men (over 98% of identified victims) while victims of sexual exploitation are mostly women. In cases of exploitation for the purpose of committing criminal acts victims are mostly males, and in cases of forced marriage and illegal adoptions are usually female.¹⁹

4. Conclusion

Human trafficking, as a deviant social phenomenon²⁰ is a very complex criminal activity and there are several reasons for that. In those cases when trafficking is transnational in nature it is very difficult to detect and prove it. In most cases the victims

¹⁷ Assessment of serious organized crime threats, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, 2015, p. 52. <http://www.mup.gov.rs/>.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Bjelajac, Ž., Marković M., Pavlović Z., *Particulars of Modern Slavery as a Deviant Social Phenomenon, The Review of International Affairs*, Belgrade, Vol. LXIII, no. 1146, April – June 2012, p. 33-34.

do not want to cooperate with the authorities and have a legitimate and reasonable fear of traffickers and their revenge. In modern practice it has been shown that organized crime groups dealing with this phenomenon skilfully adapt to the current situation and they do more and more those criminal activities which bring them more income and less risk. In the world, there are numerous types of exploitation of human trafficking whereby the labour and sexual exploitation are most common. Combating human trafficking in Serbia in the last decade gave satisfactory results which are indicated by reduced number of crimes and the willingness of public authorities to minimize this phenomenon. The bare fact that at the beginning of the twentieth century in Serbia there was a large number of foreign nationals (of Ukrainian, Russian, Moldovan, Romanian women) who were often victims of transnational human trafficking and that today there are almost no such cases clearly shows that crime simply adjusts to the given social and economic conditions in the particular country or moves to less dangerous criminal markets. Current situation in Serbia is such that there are about fifty to sixty offenses annually, where the victims are Serbian citizens, and the most common type of exploitation is sexual and labour. In this regard, the victims of labour exploitation are mainly men (over 98% of identified victims) while the victims of sexual exploitation are mainly women. Serbia still represents the country of origin, transit and destination of human trafficking victims but to a far lesser extent than before. If we want to give an opinion taking into consideration the current situation we can conclude that this type of crime in Serbia is not alarming, but within acceptable limits compared to the trend almost two decades ago. Republic of Serbia, *i.e.* state authorities as well as many non-governmental organizations are making great efforts in order provide to the victims of human trafficking adequate treatment and to make things easier and help them overcome the consequences arising from this crime.

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