



# The Evolution of Trafficking in Human beings

2002-2009



S T U D Y

Financed by



## THE EVOLUTION OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS, 2002-2009

Study

This study was undertaken in the framework of the ODIHR/OSCE project "Enhancing assistance and protection for victims of trafficking" developed and implemented by "Vatra" Psycho-social Centre in collaboration with the OSCE presence in Albania (OSCE PiA), from 30 April 2007 until 30 April 2008

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# I. Introduction

Human trafficking constitutes one of the most serious phenomena that Albania is facing.

This phenomenon prospered after the 1990s, the years that marked the introduction of our country to the occidental world, and has gone through various developments with the passing of years.

Before 1999 no data were available concerning the conduction of any study, which identifies the exact number of girls and women involved in this phenomenon, neither from the relevant state institutions and structures nor from the NPOs working in this field.

“Vatra” psycho-social centre is a nongovernmental organization that has been conducting its activity in the fight against human trafficking since 1999. For years, it has provided support through rehabilitation and reintegration services to hundreds of girls and women involved in the female trafficking for the purpose of exploitation for prostitution.

The mission, goal and activity of the centre are carried out in complete conformity with the Albanian laws and the strategy of the Albanian Government in the fight against trafficking.

It has become an essential part of this fight by promoting the freedom and rights of girls and women against the most cruel slavery known by the civilised world.

Trying to provide an overview of this phenomenon through the years, “Vatra” centre has conducted this study, which includes a detailed analysis of the evolution of this phenomenon and its elements.

This study has been conducted in the frame of the ODHIR/OSCE project “Strengthening the assistance and protection of victims of human trafficking” developed and implemented by “Vatra” centre in collaboration with representatives of OSCE in Albania (OSCE PiA). This project is part of a joint project of OSCE/OCEEA/ODHIR on “the fight against human trafficking through the economic empowerment and protective measures” funded by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH (German Technical Cooperation Agency)

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## 1.1 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aims at outlining a general frame of the difficult situation of the trafficking victims by providing complete information regarding this phenomenon, the identification process, assistance, their training during their return and exercising of their rights.

More specifically the study aims to:

- Present the evolution of human trafficking since 2002, the year in which “Vatra” centre started providing direct support to the victims of trafficking in women for sexual exploitation until 2009.
- Present the psychological and social situation which has accompanied the girls and women involved in this phenomenon, situation characterized by serious violations of human rights.
- Introduce to the interested reader the phenomenon of human trafficking and the dark mazes through which it has passed and still passes.
- Introduce to the reader the work and efforts of “Vatra” centre in the fight against this phenomenon and its efforts for the rehabilitation and reintegration of the trafficked girls and women.
- Identify the best options to overcome the difficulties encountered during the work with this target group.
- Present recommendations for the further progress of the serviced delivered to the victims of trafficking.

## 1.2 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The methodology used in the conduction of this study is based in the analysis of the annual reports and studies conducted by “Vatra” centre from 2002 to 2009. This comparative analysis has raised the key issues encountered in the phenomenon of trafficking and in Vatra’s work.

Moreover the work relies also in the analysis of the documents on the beneficiaries who have benefited the services during 2002-2009, including questionnaires and interviews conducted with these beneficiaries.

100 cases of trafficked women and girls treated by “Vatra” centre during 2002-2009 have been selected for the conduction of the study, and questionnaires have been conducted with them. From the total of 100 cases 30 cases involved in trafficking from 2002 until 2009, have been selected for the conduction of more detailed interviews. The selection of cases aimed the representation of different age-groups, different educational level, the descent from different areas and cities of Albania, different ways of recruitment and different forms of violence and exploitation.

These women were trafficked both in different countries of the European Union, and within the country and they have gone through different ways of rehabilitation and reintegration.

During the interviews’ analysis we relied on their personal life, childhood, family, trafficking history, violence and maltreatment, their thoughts about the past and future, ways of intervention through services etc

6 of these cases have been analysed accurately in this study, through the case-studies which show an analysis of their history of trafficking and psychological and social elements experienced by the trafficking victims<sup>1</sup>

The study is divided into two parts. *The first part* includes the conduction of a comparative approach of the phenomenon of trafficking from 1999 to 2009. It presents the main elements of the phenomenon including their dynamics in continuous change compared to the time and space. This analysis relies on the studies and reports that “Vatra” centre has published each year as well as on the questionnaires conducted. This part represents an open window to the readers, allowing them to know and understand better the causes and consequences of the phenomenon.

*The second part* contains rich vital elements the girls and women involved in trafficking have gone through.

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<sup>1</sup> For confidentiality reasons, fake names have been used during the study as well as non confidential information showing the story and analysis of the phenomenon



The interviews and different stories with high emotional content can be used to better understand and conduct the psychological and social analysis of the victims, and to have a view of the great work needed for their rehabilitation and integration into society.

The last part shows the conclusions of the study including the difficulties encountered in the work with this category as well as the efforts needed to mitigate this harsh and inhuman phenomenon, in order to enter the path toward its reduction.

## II. Evolution of human trafficking during the period 2002-2009<sup>1</sup>

### 2.1 HUMAN TRAFFICKING BEFORE 2002

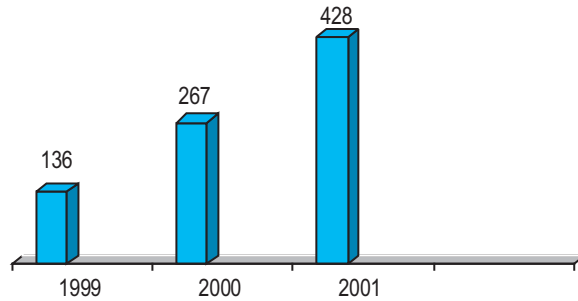
Due to Albania's position as a linking path of the East with the West and vice versa this country has been used by elements with certain tendencies or criminal precedents, who provided opportunities of developing illegal trafficking such as: humans transport for the purpose of emigration, trafficking in women for prostituting and trafficking and exploitation of children for criminal purposes. Likewise, the country was exploited by foreign criminal networks, who passed different citizens of various nationalities through Albania to European Union countries.

From 1990 to 1998, there was very little information about the victims of human trafficking and the destinies of tens of minor girls and boys who fell prey of the cruellest exploitation known in the history of this country.

Referring to the studies conducted by "Vatra" during 1999-2000 and 2001, the number of trafficked Albanian girls who passed through Vlora towards Italy and other countries of the European Union is **831**.

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<sup>1</sup> Data on the evolution of human trafficking are referred to the cases indentified and supported by "Vatra" centre



**Picture 1:** The number of trafficked females who have crossed the border through Vlora during 1999-2001

All these girls are interviewed and identified by “Vatra” centre in the countries of the clandestine gathering or in the Police Directorate of Vlora.

Recalling that Vlora has been only one of the Albanian border crossings we have to admit that the number of Albanian females trafficked for prostituting has been much higher during these years.

## 2.2 HUMAN TRAFFICKING AFTER 2002

In December 2001 “Vatra” centre opened the first shelter for the reception of Albanian girls trafficked in the Western Europe countries, who were caught and repatriated from the police of these countries.

During 2002-2003, the girls were mainly returned by the Italian police, because this was the main country where the trafficking victims were trafficked.

During the analysis done to the trafficking phenomenon we have found many elements that constitute its scheme. The studies conducted by our centre during these years have served for the identification of the main causes of trafficking, with the most important ones being:

- *Economical factors*, which were accompanied by a general economic decline in the country. The increase of unemployment rates raised the emigration levels and the prosperity of criminal forms such as human trafficking.
- *Social-cultural factors*, closely connected to the lack of perspective for the future, family crises, institutional crises, free movement of people from the rural areas to the urban areas and the change of the lifestyle.
- *Political factors*, connected with the lack of political stability, the relation of politics with organized crime, political crises which laid the foundation for the activation of criminal elements. These were accompanied by a legal vacuum, lack of legislation regarding this issue.

Our studies highlighted also the profiles of the people involved in the trafficking, trafficking victims and traffickers' networks. Different traffickers' networks were identified, such as: the international network of traffickers, the national network of traffickers and the independent traffickers and exploiters<sup>1</sup>.

The traffickers and trafficking victims' profiles were drafted, so that these data and information could serve to raise awareness in the communities of different areas of Albania, mainly the areas affected more by this phenomenon and raise awareness in the Albanian state and state structures that fought crime

These data and information served as an important source for the international factor, international organizations working in Albania, whose focus of work was the fight against human trafficking

The number of females involved in human trafficking in 2002 is lower compared to the previous years. This is due to several factors:

- Intensification of the fight of the Albanian state against human trafficking. The main structure fighting human trafficking was established in the

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<sup>1</sup> Girls and trafficking study – “Vatra” centre 2002

General Police Directorate, and regional offices for the fight against illegal trafficking were established in all the police directorates of the districts.

- The legal framework concerning the fight against traffickers and exploiters was drafted and approved. In 2001 the Albanian Assembly approved Lawno

8733 date 24/01/2001 which for the first time foresaw in the Criminal Code the criminal act of trafficking and defined sanctions for the criminal acts regarding human trafficking. We mainly recall Articles 110/a, 114, 114/a 114/b, 115 and article 128/b which would complete the legal framework in order to bring before justice the victims' traffickers. Amendments to the domestic legislation went on even in the following years.

Important improvements were made especially during 2004, due to the efforts for its approximation with the international conventions and especially the Palermo Protocol ratified in 2002. During this period the Albanian Government has ratified very important international conventions in the fight against human trafficking.

- The impact of the international factor through giving priority to the fight against trafficking, and the international non governmental organizations and NPOs, supported by donors in funding the anti-trafficking projects.
- In April 2006, the Albanian Government approved the Moratorium on the ban of motor vessels, which affected significantly the prevention of the phenomenon and its impediment along the entire Albanian coastline which was used as a bridge for linking human trafficking with EU countries.

## 2.3 THE ANALYSES OF SOME OF THE HUMAN TRAFFICKING FEATURES THROUGH YEARS 2002-2009

### 2.3.1 The number of trafficking victims

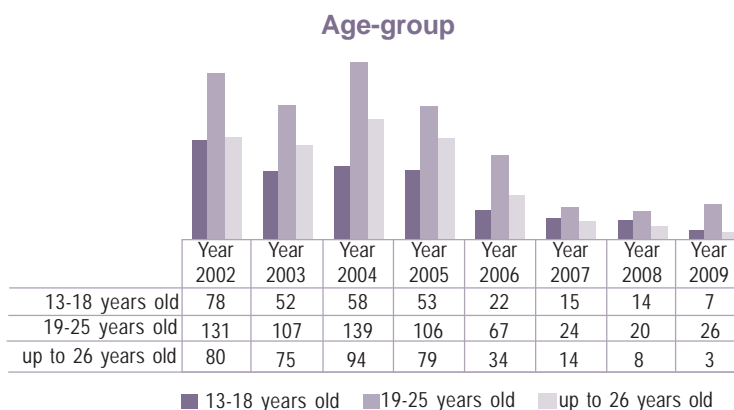
During 2002-2009 a movement and consequently a change of the trafficking phenomenon was noticed. According to the graphic below from 2002 to 2003 there is a decrease of the number of girls and women accommodated in the shelter. In 2004 there is an increase in the number of women involved in trafficking, due to the high number of cases returned and referred mainly by the police. In this year the attention of the state and of the international factor focused on the trafficking phenomenon and due to this reason the measures mentioned in the sections above were taken.



**Picture 2:** The number of victims of trafficking during 2002-2009

As you can notice in the graphic below, from 2004 to 2009 the number of trafficked girls and women has decreased. This shows that human trafficking is a decreasing phenomenon.

### 2.3.2 The age-groups of the victims of trafficking



**Picture 3:** Age-groups of the victims of trafficking during 2002-2009

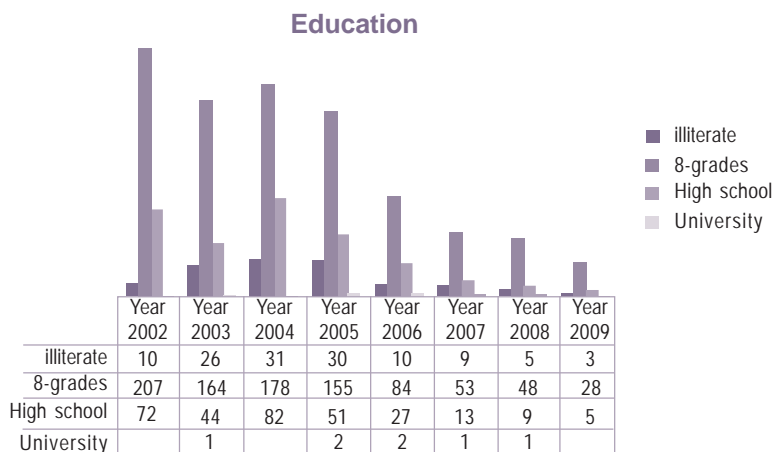
In the graphic we can notice that the age-group most recruited in human trafficking is the age-group between 19 and 25 years old and the one with the smallest rate involved in trafficking is the minor age-group (13-18 years old).

During the interviews the majority of the females accommodated in the shelter, although adults, have confirmed that they were recruited in trafficking when they were still minors, starting from 13-14 years old.

It should also be highlighted that the high number of minor girls from 2002 to 2005 shows that the phenomenon is still present. After 2005 we notice a small number of recruited minor girls, but compared with the general number of the victims of trafficking, it is significant and shows that this phenomenon still goes on though it has decreased in size.

### 2.3.3 Educational level of the victims of trafficking

The major part of the girls and women involved in the trafficking have a low educational level. They have interrupted their education before being trafficked or they have interrupted it due to their involvement in the trafficking. The low educational level is one of the key factors of the involvement of girls and women in prostitution.



**Picture 4:** The educational level of the victims of trafficking during 2002-2009

The girls with secondary education constitute the highest number of trafficked girls. These are the girls who without the possibility of education are more likely to become part of these negative phenomena.

While the involvement of the girls who have completed high school comes as a result of the lack of employment and promises by the traffickers for a better job and life. Although there is a decrease of these groups, this does not mean that these girls and women have a higher level of education. The decrease of the number is directly related with the decrease of the general number of girls and women accommodated in the shelter, thus also with the decrease of the phenomenon.

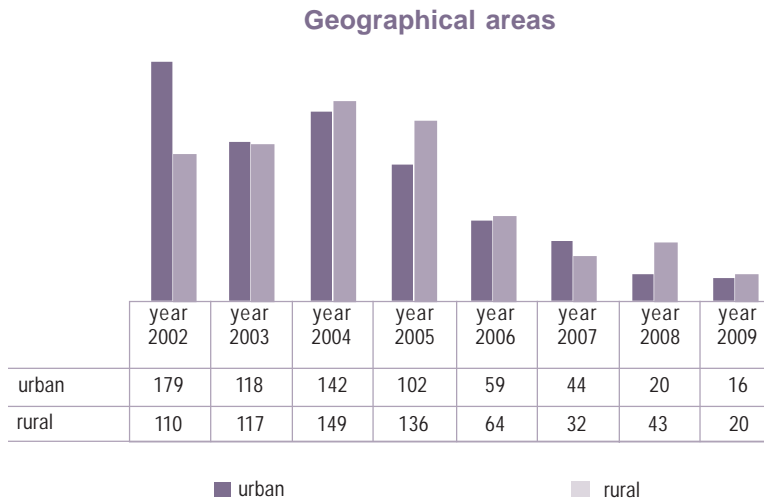
The number of illiterate girls involved in trafficking is considerable, but it has reduced with the passing of years. Illiteracy is another problem of this group of girls, who have never gone to school and are much more likely to get involved into trafficking. It should be highlighted that the Roma community is the most affected by this phenomenon.

### 2.3.4 Geographic origin of the trafficking victims

In the graphic below it can be noticed that the major part of girls and women victims of trafficking come from rural areas.



2002 having the major number of girls and women coming from urban areas makes an exception. After 2003 the rural area predominates over the urban. The difference noticed between these areas is not very huge.



**Picture 5:** Geographic origin of the trafficking victims during 2002-2009

Based on the analysis of the documentation the major part of girls and women victims of trafficking who live in the city were born in rural areas. In general the total number of women and girls for both urban and rural area has been decreasing over the years.

The rural origin of the major part of trafficking victims is explained with the fact that the social-economic situation in these areas is more difficult and is becoming even more difficult with the passing of years. Having a high level of internal migration, the remaining part who live in the rural areas experience a more difficult and isolated life.

Likewise we can explain the fact that despite the endeavours of various factors in raising awareness of the population regarding the phenomenon of trafficking, its impact in rural areas is still in low levels.

### 2.3.5 Methods for the recruitment of trafficking victims

Based on the analysis of the questionnaires the main forms used by traffickers in recruiting victims have been: at will, false marriages, false engagements, job promises, kidnapping, study offers but also being sold by the families of the victims.

**Methods for the recruitment**

Year	Willingness	False engagement/ marriage	Study/job promise	Sold by family	Kidnapped
2002	102	102	72	10	3
2003	70	105	52	5	2
2004	81	181	28		1
2005	57	172	8		1
2006	63	46	12	1	1
2007	29	37	6	1	3
2008	23	32	8		
2009	10	23	2		1

**Table 1:** Recruitment methods into trafficking during 2002-2009

From the data of the graphic above we can notice that the major part of the recruitment methods have not undergone to any significant changes during 2002-2009. There are ways like: kidnapping, being sold by their families, study offers, which are low in number or totally missing with the passing of time, but other ways of recruitment by false engagements, marriages and promises for jobs are still important.

Deception through marriages decreased from 2002 to 2008, because this form of recruitment was not the most appropriate for the traffickers. The major part

of marriages were false and with the awareness of the public, these deceptions were hard to be believed by the families. In 2009 there is an increase of the use of this form but the women involved in trafficking, now aware, agree with their husbands for their exploitation.

From 2003 and on, recruitment through false engagements is one of the most favourite forms for the traffickers (with the exception of 2006). This group includes also girls, mainly of minor age, who have been deceived by their boyfriends for trafficking purposes. These deceptions and engagements, formal or informal, are easier to be carried out, because the lack of social perspective forces the girls and their families to “think” for the “future” of their daughters by “setting up a family”.

On the other hand the method of promise for a job has decreased from 2002 to 2005, but a high increase is noticed after 2005.

The recruitment at will has decreased from 2002-2005. From 2006 and on this form is more stable. This fact is directly connected with the development of the internal trafficking as a new phenomenon.

Based on the documentation and direct interviews with the girls and women involved in trafficking, “the will” to be trafficked is an expression not referring to its literal meaning. Forms of threats to admit the truth of violence, crime, economic difficulties and domestic violence are hidden behind this “will”.

## 2.4 INTERNAL TRAFFICKING

This phenomenon has not been tackled and combated strongly by the state institutions and especially by the police. The interviewed beneficiaries have confirmed the existence of true networks which exploit females for prostitution within the country. It has been 5 years that “Vatra” centre has highlighted its concerns and has continuously asked the state institutions to take their responsibilities in taking measures in the fight against this phenomenon.

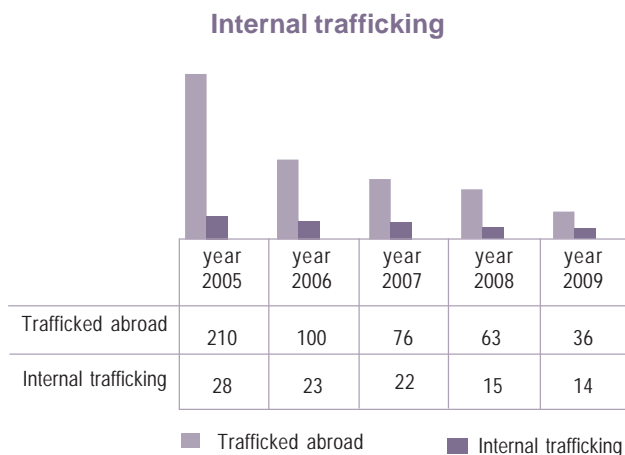
Compared to the number of girls trafficked in the countries of the European

Union, the number of those trafficked within the country is small, but during their interviews, women and girls have stated that this number is growing, and there are many females who while waiting to leave the country practice prostitution in Albanian hotels and motels, mainly in large and tourist cities.

They confirm that they exercise prostitution at will and share their profits with their pimps. The largest number of females involved in this phenomenon are over 20 years old.

The phenomenon of internal trafficking has occurred even before, but it became more obvious after 2005. Thus during 2005-2009 102 girls and women were accommodated and were assisted with services in the shelter.

These girls were caught by the police when they were being sexually exploited in hotels in Tirana, Vlora, Fier, Gjirokastra, Durrës.



**Picture 6: Internal trafficking 2005-2009**

If we conduct an analysis of the trafficking phenomenon by comparing the figures of the trafficked girls who return from the foreign countries with the ones exploited within the country, it can be noticed that the second category is

increasing ever more year-by-year. Only for 2009, out of 36 trafficked girls and women, 14 have been trafficked within the country and 21 are victims exploited abroad, mainly in Italy and Greece.

Internal trafficking is being developed with great dimension due to the severe economic conditions. This was highlighted not only by the figures we report but also by the information and data provided by the girls accommodated in the shelter.

Another serious problem that this kind of trafficking generates is the fact that uncontrolled prostitution constitutes a high risk for the spread of sexually transmitted illnesses among the population.

## 2.6 OTHER SOCIAL ELEMENTS ANALYSED

An estimated of 46% of the victims come from large families, 29% come from small nuclear families.

12% are with divorced parents and the same percentage were raised by only one parent.

Moreover **20% of the victims have children**, who have been abandoned or left in the custody of their parents. Based on the interviews conducted with the victims, most of them have confirmed that their exploiters forced them to abortion, by thus endangering their lives and the lives of their children.

**More than 85% of the victims have not worked before**, they do not have a qualification or perspective to get employed. Almost all the time they have stayed home and have not gone to school. Only 12% of the victims have confirmed that they before being trafficked they did jobs such as: tailoring etc.

### III. Psychological and social analysis of the situation of the victims of trafficking accommodated in “Vatra” shelter during 2002-2009

The psycho-social analysis of the trafficking victims is focused in analysing the 30 cases of trafficking victims, selected from the cases treated by “Vatra” centre. For the conduction of this analysis interviews with the selected group have been used, focused mainly in the:

- Case background
- Analysis and general assessments of the situation the victim has gone through before and during the period of return in the homeland
- Detailed psychological and social analysis of the situation of the victim
- Assessment of the risk they face when denouncing their problem
- The health assessment of the treated victims
- Assessment of the victim’s progress during the accommodation and the phase of reintegration

### 3.1. TRAFFICKING HISTORY

#### 3.1.1 The geographic origin of the trafficking victims analysed in the study

30 beneficiaries analysed in this study come from various districts of our country:

District	No of victims	District	No of victims
Vlora	5	Lezha	1
Lushnja	4	Shkodra	1
Fieri	4	Dibra	1
Tirana	3	Mirëdita	1
Elbasani	2	Bulqiza	1
Saranda	2	Librazhdi	1
Gramsh	2	Përmeti	1
Korça	1		

**Table 2** Geographic distribution of victims involved in the study

15 are from rural areas and other 15 from urban areas. So, we notice an equal percentage of areas the victims come from, a fact we have noticed even in the general distribution of victims accommodated in the shelter. For years, the rural areas have constituted the main areas of the origin of the trafficked victims. Economic poverty, heavy agricultural works, lack of education and future perspective have forced these girls to fall prey of the traffickers.

But based on the analysis of this element we noticed that more than 60% of the girls, who confirmed that they came from the cities, were in fact born and grown in rural areas. Their families have moved in the cities only in the recent years, forced by the severe social-economic conditions in the village. These girls have a low educational and cultural level, the inherited patriarchal mentality, customs

and other elements, typical of the areas where they come from, which have influenced their weak and unstable character.

### 3.1.2 Age-groups

10 of the girls analysed belong to the age-group between 13-18 years old. 12 belong to the age-group of 19-25 and 8 belong to the age-group of 26-30 years old. As it can be noticed from the data, the majority of victims fall into the age-group between 19-25, but we can also notice a considerable number of minor girls involved into traffic.

During the interviewing, 80% of them have said they were recruited at minor age. We can mention the instances of the two victims, kidnapped by their traffickers involved into trafficking at 12 years old.

The beneficiaries have also mentioned the fact of being trafficked for a long time starting at a very young age. So 10 of them have been trafficked for more than 5 years.

8 of them have been involved in trafficking at major age. We can mention two reasons which accompany the inclusion of adults into trafficking.

*First of all*, these victims declare that inclusion into human trafficking is due to their social-economic condition. The lack of employment triggers them to find ways of leaving the country, by turning into victims of the lures of the traffickers and trafficking networks, for the promised jobs. Given that they work more in the streets they are caught more often by the police of the countries where they work. All these girls are recycled in trafficking.

*Secondly*, being regarded as “old” they are not preferred any longer by their pimps and in such conditions this age group is replaced by the minor one. On the other hand this shows the increase of the tendency that the minor age-groups have to get involved in the trafficking network.



### 3.1.3. Recruitment

From 1992 to 1999, recruitment methods for both Albanian and foreign girls have been mainly kidnapping and threatening, promises for work, promises for marriage, studies etc.

These forms exist even after so many years, but other forms have been also identified such as: willing involvement of girls into trafficking, false engagements and marriages, sold by their families etc. The changes of the forms of recruitment are due to the change of the situation of trafficking and its evolution. Traffickers have used a variety of forms and methods to recruit the victims based on the circumstances of the latter.

The girls included said they were recruited through these forms:



**Picture 8.** Recruitment methods of the analysed cases

The recruitment of girls and women for trafficking purposes has been studied extensively by the traffickers, who by many observations have managed to find out the real motives that push these girls into trafficking. We can mention the case of one of the victims, whose brother raped her regularly, a fact that has forced her to leave her family with a person who promised her marriage.

3 victims have fallen prey of the traffickers from their husbands, who improvised kidnappings so that they were not incriminated by law.

2 victims were recruited through false marriages, which have been planned by the traffickers, by deceiving the girls' families, who in the conditions of extreme poverty have not thought about the future of their children. In this way, the victims or traffickers "wives" having reached the destination countries have found themselves into the streets, victims of the most severe violence and threats to their lives and lives of their families.

6 girls were kidnapped by the traffickers at a minor age (13-15 years old), forms which predominated more in the years before transition, mainly until 1999. This extreme form faded in the following years because the adversary situation in the country has been stabilized and this form would endanger the recruiters and traffickers and their operation networks.

If we would analyse the recruitment forms and methods we would notice that a number of girls, both of minor and major age, have said they were recruited into trafficking "at will" but at the same time they have asserted that they were deceived, raped and threatened by the traffickers. This shows that behind their declarations hides the fear from the threats and violence experienced so often by them. It should also be highlighted that they feel unprotected from the state structures and it is hard to protect their lives if they would denounce the traffickers.

One of the extreme forms of recruitment noticed is the sale of females from their families to the traffickers. 4 of the girls involved in the study affirmed they were sold by their parents (like the case of a girl) or by relatives. The extreme poverty is the main cause that has forced them to sell their children. Large families, families with divorced parents or with only one parent are the leading source where traffickers can recruit girls.

### 3.1.4 Border crossing

None of the interviewed girls have crossed the border with legal documents and allowed means. The main border crossing points for the 18 girls interviewed

have been from Vlora with boats towards Italy. 7 of them have admitted of having crossed the border with Greece on foot, from Kakavija to Saranda, 4 of them have stayed in Greece for a long period of time meanwhile 2 of them have travelled by plane from Greece to Italy and then to Germany. One of the girls has passed through Macedonia to Greece and then to Paris.

4 of the girls have not crossed the border and have been trafficked within the country.

They have stated that the traffickers preferred not to provide them documents and identification with their real names and age so that they could not have the possibility to choose a better, legal and normal life.

Moreover, the minor girls were identified as older, in order not to have legal obligations in the countries where they were being trafficked and not become part of the special social programs for this category.

### 3.1.5 The situation during the exploitation period

The interviewed girls have admitted of being trafficked in these countries of EU:

Country of destination	No of victims	Country of destination	No of victims
Italy	21	Switzerland	1
Greece	4	Holland	1
France	4	Norway	1
Belgium	3	Germany	1
England	2		

**Table 3** Destination countries where the trafficking victims have been exploited

8 of the girls mentioned above have been trafficked in more than one of the EU countries such as: Italy, Greece, France, Switzerland, and Holland.

5 girls have been trafficked within the country, and one of them has been trafficked abroad and later recycled within the internal trafficking.

They have told different stories of trafficking, including the use of various forms of psychological, physical and sexual violence. These forms have been displayed before in their family environments and have continued further even in crueller ways during the trafficking period.

Based on their testimonies, the girls have admitted the severe and hard situation they have found themselves in from the countries of origin to those of destination. They have admitted to having been victims of physical, sexual and psychological violence not only by their pimps but also by the clients.

15 of them admit to having been forced to prostitute in the streets of Europe being violated physically and under the threat of weapons. They have not been allowed to move freely, but have been continuously followed by their traffickers. They were forced to deliver their work “incomes” to traffickers. Two of the girls have also been drug dealers in their areas where they exercised prostitution or in specific groups of traffickers.

80% of the girls have admitted to being victims of forced abortions from the traffickers, in order not to hinder their “work”. Even if they have had children they have been forced to abandon them in orphanages.

During the trafficking period, most of them have not had any contacts with their families. In the cases of the girls recruited by false marriages or engagements and those seduced with work, the contacts with the family have been under the traffickers supervision, who did not allow them to tell the truth. The kidnapped girls and those sold by their families have almost had no contact at all with their families for a long period of time.

### 3.2. GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION OF THE VICTIMS BEFORE AND DURING THE REPATRIATION PERIOD

The violence used on the trafficked girls did not end with the trafficking period in the environments of their exploitation but has gone on even when they were caught by the police of the respective countries.

When they were caught they waited in custody for their repatriation, a period which has varied from 3 days to 1 month.

Without food, in difficult hygienic conditions and under physical, psychological and sometimes even sexual abuse from the police, they have waited for their return in their homeland. The girls who have been in jail and or in reception camps have told that this period depended on the time taken for their gathering. So E.B., one of the trafficked victims says: *“After the police of X country caught me, they destroyed my documents and gave no explanations at all. I was isolated in jail for nearly 1 month. Nobody asked for me during this period. The police forced me to clean the other prison cells and if I refused they would beat me...*

*...After I was caught by the police I changed 5 prisons in X and the last prison I was in lacked clothes and food, which we had to provide ourselves. The police made fun of us and insulted us ~~with~~..”*

Repatriation has not been easy at all. From the first moment they faced the long waiting hours in the border regions of the Albanian police, lack of appropriate reception facilities for the conduction of interviews.

Until the contact with the professionals of the reception services, these girls have admitted to not having had the right information about the existence of the supporting services.

10 of them had difficulties to establish the first contact with “Vatra” staff by showing resistance in collaborating and asking for help due to lack of trust. Having got the right information they have accepted by their free will to benefit accommodating and rehabilitating services.

From the first moment all the 30 cases taken into consideration have benefitted the primary services, food, clothes, medical services and later social, psychological and legal advice.

An important step is the establishment of the first contacts with the families of all the girls, that in some cases are considered as the main supporters in their reintegration.

Due to the harsh conditions and lack of security, 11 of the girls did not return to their families within the first 6 months of their accommodation in “Vatra” shelter. They needed a longer period to reintegrate in the community they lived.

### **Referral and identification of the trafficking victims involved into the study**

28 of the 30 cases included in the study were referred by the police, as the major referential of the victims of trafficking since the opening of the shelter. One of the victims was referred from IOM centre and another by the counselling centre in Durrës.

Their identification has been conducted by Vatra staff through structured questionnaires consisting of alternated questions that include topics such as: personal identification, thoroughfares, residence, recruitment methods, work data, type of exploitation, psychological, health and social state, family etc. These questionnaires are standardized- with the criteria of the National Referral Mechanism.

There have also been conducted half structured interviews with questions about their personal story, family, childhood, questions about the necessary assistance etc.

22 have been previously identified by the police and the information has been taken at the moment of referral. 2 of the victims were identified previously by the above referral centres; meanwhile 6 of them were identified previously by the shelter staff as victims of trafficking.

Their identification from the first day of the accommodation is difficult. This is due to the fact that the victims themselves based on the negative actual mentality about this phenomenon in Albania, the treatment toward the victims in the reception places at the first moment, lack of desire to be identified, fear from the pimps etc. often provide a false identity. The exact identification is done only after a few days of stay, which are enough for the victim to feel comfortable and earn the trust.

The identification of victims is completed by information provided by the police, identification documents, (if available) and other third parties such as: members of the family, the girls accommodated in the shelter with whom they have social relationships, other centres of the same type etc.

### 3.3 PSYCHO-SOCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION OF TRAFFICKED VICTIMS

#### 3.3.1 Psychological state

All the girls included in the study come from poor families and with a low economic and educational status. These families can not provide a calm life and without problems, but a life full of cases of violence and abuse. This situation forces these girls to choose a different way, hoping for a better life. But instead of a new life they find only the repetition of maltreatment and violation, but in a crueller form. The psychological state of these girls is another consequence of the previous situation with their family and the trafficking situation. Due to the life conducted before and after the trafficking they suffer from psychological problems such as: dependent personality disorder, humour disorders, emotional disorders, anxiety disorders etc.

Due to the work in the streets and the psychological and physical violence exercised on them, all the trafficked girls have had symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, food, sleep, nightmares, fear disorders and lack of trust in the assistance personnel.

They have also displayed continuous feelings of self-blame, impulsive behaviour and disability in the way of thinking.

One of the victims, who was the first born child of the family, blamed herself for the death of her mother and has taken care a lot about her younger brothers and sisters by playing her mothers role. From a very young age she has had to face the difficulties of life. She felt responsible and blamed herself continuously for what had happened to her, cried often, was irritated and displayed an irritated method of communication. She often passed out.

Most of the girls did not trust the others, due to the experiences during the trafficking period. They often suffered from the delirium of prosecution by disguising it in their stories, by thinking continuously that their life was in danger

An estimated of 60% of the girls have had a problematic family model such as: parents' abandonment, parents' divorce, domestic violence and psychological maltreatment, difficult economic situation, isolation and lack of information, low educational level etc.

Later their life has gone through continuous violence and maltreatment, marriages against will, deception for marriage or for work, recruitment and exploitation for the purpose of prostitution constitute a heavy psycho-emotional burden.

These girls have continuously displayed symptoms of depression and pessimism for life and lack of trust in having a normal life. Their communication showed signs of hatred against their pimps or members of family, who did not accept them.

Their daily state was sad followed sometimes by a vague memory. Their emotional state was characterized by negative emotions such as: hatred, self-blame, solitude. In most of the cases they have suffered insomnia and disorders in eating regularly or excessively or lack of appetite.

At the moment of their arrival in the shelter, most of them were very worried due to the continuous traumas they have gone through. In certain moments they have acted aggressively toward others, verbally and physically.



11 of the interviewed women had children, but only two of them had their children with them. The other 9 women who did not have their children with them were continuously worried and had a low self esteem, they thought they were people without social values, without support, excluded from society. Over 3 of the victims have suffered extreme physical violence such as: violent hits behind the head, knife stabs and gun injuries or burns in the genital organs.

So, summarising all the psychological problems of the victims included in the study, we can say that they have displayed sleep disorders, (nightmares, scare), emotional disorders (from one state to the other), cognitive disorders (not concentrated thought, confusion), motivation problems (lack of initiative to complete their actions, pessimistic states), behavioural and functional disorders (low performance in fulfilling the respective tasks) etc.

### 3.3.2 Social origin and education

Most of the girls included in the study come from families with a large number of members varying from 5 to 12 persons. They have lived in hard economic conditions which have forced them to take care of their family at a very young age by making use of all the ways of providing incomes.

5 of them were employed in private confection enterprises before the trafficking period.

11 of them have children, whom they have abandoned or left under the custody of their families due to the lack of means to support their living.

10 of the girls come from families with divorced parents or with only one parent.

5 of the girls are from the Roma and Egyptian communities where the possibilities to conduct a normal life have been very limited.

Another social element is education as an important component that affects

trafficking. The educational level provides evidence for the victims' profile. The low educational and cultural level of the girls victims of this phenomenon remains always a key factor of the involvement of the victims into trafficking. The high number of girls with low educational level is related to the fact that a part of the girls involved in trafficking are from the Roma and Egyptian communities whose cultural tradition does not pay much importance to education.

The major part of the girls have obtained the secondary education only. Thus 19 girls have been identified with secondary education, 2 girls with high school education, 4 with only the elementary education, 4 with only 6 grades and one with no education at all.

The 3 girls coming from the Roma community and the 2 coming from the Egyptian community where the mentality and way of living have led to a lack of attendance of schools, have also the lowest educational level. 4 of them have elementary education and one is illiterate.

The rest of the girls have interrupted their education in various grades of the elementary or high school. These girls are mainly from rural areas, where for economic reasons the parents have forced them to abandon the studies.

### 3.4 RISK ASSESSMENT AND DENOUNCIATION

18 of the girls involved in the study have denounced their exploiters and traffickers within the country or abroad. Comparing this to the number of the victims identified as the trafficked (30 victims) we notice that the number of those who denounce is lower. Though the victims have denounced the cases of violence and trafficking, they have not accepted to collaborate with bodies of justice for the punishment of the traffickers. They have been continuously under the pressure and verbal and physical threats of the traffickers in the countries where they have been trafficked and it is not easy for them to face the cruelty of the traffickers,

At the moment of the denunciation they have been again under the pressure of the pimps, who have threatened them not only with their lives but also with the lives of their dearest persons. The small number of successful cases have led the girls and women involved into trafficking to lack trust in justice and bodies of justice.

The delay of the judiciary proceedings is one of the factors that has affected the unsuccessful outcome of some of them. We can also mention the exposure of the victims in the courts to the criminals, without having the possibility of confidentiality or privacy of information. They and the staff who have accompanied them have faced directly the traffickers by putting themselves into danger and without the right protection.

Another negative factor is the lack of defence lawyers for the victims considering them as simple witnesses and not as victims of this proceeding.

6 of these proceedings have had a successful outcome and the traffickers have been given various punishments varying from 2 to 18 years of imprisonment. We can mention 3 cases when the victims due to the high scale of risk, after denouncing a large number of traffickers, have been taken under the state custody for the protection of their lives. These victims and the child of one of them are relocated in the witness protection program by providing them a new identity and new opportunities to live.

“Vatra” staff has supported with the appropriate information and legal advice all the victims who have denounced. Gjithashtu ato janë shoqëruar në seancat pyetësore dhe gjyqësore në polici, prokurori dhe gjykatat e rretheve nga ana e stafit dhe avokatit të qendrës. Moreover, the staff and the lawyer of the centre have accompanied them in hearings and judicial proceedings at the police, prosecutor’s office and district courts.

3 of the initiated judicial proceedings have failed by not giving the verdict against the traffickers. All the three victims, found under their threat and without the support of the families have dropped the charges against the traffickers.

## 3.5 HEALTH AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

From the moment of their arrival in the shelter, the girls involved in trafficking have shown various medical problems. In all the cases we have noticed a general weakness accompanied with head ache and body ache. All the cases have been assisted by the doctor and nurse of the shelter and have been treated from the beginning.

From 30 of the beneficiaries analysed in this study, 15 were in severe health conditions. They have displayed different anxiety states and post-traumatic stress disorder and have been treated by the doctor with sedatives.

During their first day of residence they have displayed eating disorders, sleep disorders, nightmares and states of anxiety and fear. 6 of them have also displayed convulsive states with body shakes, muscles contraction and absence of consciousness.

These conditions repeat continuously even during their long-term stay. So 4 of the victims have experienced continuous convulsive states at certain moments. When these victims recalled memories of their trafficking period, mainly after the counselling or when confronting their families as well as during the meetings, they have had discussion accompanied with aggressiveness.

During their stay in the shelter, all the girls included in the study undergone had medical examinations: general tests, gynaecological tests, neurological tests and pregnancy tests. 10 had sexually transmitted diseases, but without risk for life 5 of them have had the HIV test and have resulted negative.

3 of the beneficiaries, at the moment of their arrival in the shelter, were pregnant and measures have been taken to provide them comfort. They have been continuously under medical supervision and have had periodical tests and ultrasounds according to the doctor's advice. Their pregnancy is accompanied with depressive and anxiety states. Despite this, they have been addicted to smoking, but this addiction has been reduced significantly due to the information provided

from the social team, information that was delivered in the form of counselling or written materials.

Their high addiction to smoking have affected the health problems of the beneficiaries. From the 30 analysed cases, 28 of them were addicted to it in huge amounts. After individual consultations and the ones in groups by the doctor and the entire staff of social servants their addiction was reduced significantly. Smoking only a packet per day at the beginning increased the nervousness level and irritation, but later they managed to control their behaviours.

90% of the girls analysed in this study had taken various amounts of drugs. In particular, 4 of the victims had taken huge dosage of drugs which increased more their level of anxiety. In various moments they have displayed body shaking, neurological problems, aggressive behaviours toward the staff and toward the other accommodated beneficiaries. In such cases, the doctor and the nurse having consulted the doctors have taken the necessary measures for the ease of their condition.

3 of the victims were addicted to alcohol during the trafficking period. They used to drink in order not to be conscious during their “work”. They have been submitted to counselling in order to avoid their desire to drink alcohol.

We can mention the case of one of the victims who came to the shelter in a serious state after having been burned in the inflatable boat in the lower extremities. She was hospitalized by taking the necessary medication and later was treated in the shelter by the doctor, the nurse and the whole social team.

All the beneficiaries analysed in this study have revealed great interest in solving their health-related problems.

### 3.6 REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION

All the victims included in this study have been supported with rehabilitation and reintegration programmes in “Vatra” centre.

They have been provided with psychological counselling, individually and in

groups, from the psychologist and the centre's social workers. The counselling have been conducted in different sessions where their personality disorders, behavioural modifications, emotional state treatment, ease of traumas and enhancement of self esteem have been tackled.

An important part of the rehabilitation and integration has been also the involvement in the professional qualification. Out of 30 studied cases, 9 have attended professional tailoring course, 5 have attended the hairdresser course, 2 have attended the computer course. At the termination of these qualifications they have been provided with certificates and the necessary equipment to put into practice a profession.

We should also mention the computer, English and Italian courses, cooking and gardening activities, which have been attended by the majority of victims in the shelter premises as occupational activities.

Employment, as one of the important terms for reintegration has been provided for only 5 of the girls involved in the study. This employment has been provided in the confections private enterprises and projects of "Vatra" centre.

An important role in the integration of these victims has been played by the contact and the relationship established with their families of origin. These relationships have been established through continuous visits to their families from the shelter staff, phone call and appointments in the centre. These meetings and visits have been repeated until the decision about the safe return of the beneficiaries in their families has been taken.

19, out of 30 cases, have returned to their families of origin. 8 of them have been referred to other homologous organizations such as IOM, CEFA and D&E for their further integration based on their needs.

As we mentioned above, 3 of them have been relocated in the witness protection programs.

### 3.7 CASE STUDY

Psychological and social analyses of six cases treated by “Vatra” centre

#### V.L.'s CASE STUDY

##### The story

V.L. met and fell in love with Z by the end of the secondary school. He brought her to his home to show her that everything was formal. V's parents did not accept this relationship after they discovered several secrets he hid. So they decided to take V away from Z with the help of other relatives. V left Z but he insisted to turn back together by promising to V eternal love. V was convinced and this time they left without the family's permission.

Her family said they would not support her if she turned back with Z again. After they stayed a few months in Albania they left illegally with false documents and having reached their country of destination he forced her to street prostitution. V worked in the “Vip” rooms for a few months. Then she went to another country where she worked for several years. Meanwhile Z violated her physically, sexually and psychologically by threatening her with the murder of family members and other times smoothed the situation by telling her she would work only for some time more, enough to assure the material goods and then they would live happily ever after.

She worked several years in D country in a brothel, but it was Z who took the incomes. During this time Z was caught by the police and sent to Albania. V felt free and denounced Z in the country of destination and turned back to Albania. As soon as Z became familiar with this fact, he took her back to his home for the purpose of withdrawing the denunciation. Meanwhile his family did not treat V well and so she understood he did not want her as his wife. Then she left him by denouncing him to the police and due to family related and security problems she was accommodated in our shelter.

##### Referral and identification

V.L. was repatriated from the country of destination 6 months before being

referred to our centre. She was caught by the police of the country she was trafficked because she had no documents. She did not stay there but was repatriated within two days. During the interviews she stated of not having had problems during the period of returning in the mother country.

V.L. was referred in the shelter by the Albanian police after the denunciation in the police where she was identified as a victim of trafficking. She has come to the shelter by her free will, because she had security problems in her family, identified as such by the police and her family. She was interviewed by the social workers and after the accommodation she has received the delivered services.

### Case evaluation before and after the trafficking

Based on the data provided from the personal file of the case, V has told about a normal childhood and that her family used to be economically well off. She has had the parental attention enough to be considered as “spoiled”. During the period V has known Z, she was in the first years of her adolescence, an age that has been in favour of Z to put into practice his deceptions. The desire to do the grown-up stuffs, typical curiosity of this age and the efforts to shape their own identity through direct experiences justifies rationally V’s situation.

The departure with Z without the knowledge of her parents implies two main moments:

- First of all, V was a teenager, her communication with the parents could have been vague due to the perceptions the youth have at this age, so now they consider themselves as grown ups and can make their own decisions.
- Secondly, moratorium period has provided her the “power” to make decisions about which she lacked experience. Her family used to decide in her life.

There is another possible explanation: this situation could result as a feeling-based decision without knowing that the what came would have been like that.

During the trafficking period, V, like most of the trafficked girls, suffered from physical, sexual and psychological abuses. Apart from those, V has been under



the pressure of threats for her life and her family. Though V has worked in the “Vip” rooms which might look like an elite position, the cognitive damage and irrational beliefs V has managed to create to survive in the psychic aspect have shaped in her an illusory reality. When she is asked about her opinion regarding the future and objectives she wants to achieve, V states that there are some. What impresses you in the formulation of the objectives is the fact that they are pretty ambitious.

During the various observations it can be noticed that V has problems concerning motivation. She displays lack of initiative to terminate a task and the pessimistic states which she goes through often. She also has a low performance in the fulfilment of a certain task.

After continuous counselling, her presence in the centre has affected her life positively. Not only thanks to the accommodation aspect but also to the emotional, psychological support found in particular from the social workers.

If we would analyse her psychological aspects, the main damage would be noticed in the cognitive (thinking), emotional, behavioural patterns etc.

In the cognitive aspect V does not have concentrated thoughts and displays moments of confusion.

Concerning the emotional aspect she displays hypomanical episodes with immediate humour disorders, histrionic personality disorder such as excessive emotionality, making use of the physical aspect to attract attention and seductive behaviours. She also displays patterns of narcissistic personality disorder such as: belief of having privileges thanks to her appearance (since she appreciates this in herself).

### Case evaluation during the reintegration in the shelter

During the stay in the shelter we can notice a greater awareness regarding the traumas V.L. has gone through. This was highlighted and enhanced with the denouncement against her exploiter and the initiation of the criminal proceedings against the defendant. V was involved in the rehabilitation program by attending

a hairdresser course which provides the possibility to qualify and acquire a profession which will help her get a job and be more independent.

However the rehabilitation and reintegration period is represented with ups and downs. During her performance have been highlighted many weaknesses but also strengths that have helped her move forward.

V evaluates her beauty and has a superficial way of thinking toward the others by judging them based on their appearance. During the continuous conversations that she has with the social workers, individually and in groups, she finds herself unmotivated to take initiatives to make progress in the intellectual aspect where there are doubts about the incompatibility of mental age with the chronological one. She is often passive, without ambitions to provide herself a new direction, and make her own decisions. The fact that V has lived in a family where she has not experienced lack of parental and fraternal attention has allowed her to shape a superficial self-esteem because she could have what she wanted, every time she asked it without making efforts to become part of problem-solving situations in order to get the parental and social affection. V is not explicit about the direction she wants to give to her life. This is due to:

**First of all, a personality shaped in accordance with the parental model** (the conduct of an inappropriate lifestyle- (Adler Spoiling)

**Secondly, the damage to perception due to trafficking.** Based on the second cause we can state that V has a lifestyle although not decent for the society (according to the social norms that predominate in general), decent for her mental schemes which V has used to shape a physical and psychic existential survival under the pressure of the physical and psychological traumas her exploiter has forced her to go through.

Meanwhile V's tender age at the time made her easily "manipulated" by Z, since the social environment still served her to shape her gender and personal identity. V displays leadership patterns and is able to persuade a certain "mob". This could be due to:

- "Mob" personification with her family by shifting the perception that

even the others should reply with the same affection, based on the pressure she exercises in order to have the others attention.

- Possession of some of histrionic personality patterns, where V wants to provide to herself a possibility to show she can attract attention even in other ways, more accepted by the society.

With passing of time, V has been more active with the participation in various social-cultural activities held indoors and outdoors the shelter. She has also acquired knowledge of Italian and computer through the services delivered by the centre's projects. She has received continuous counselling and encouragement by the social workers for the increase of the level of attention and patience concerning the given tasks regarding both her life and profession.

The staff has conducted counselling with the family in order to ease the situation she is experiencing and her return to her family.

### Health condition evaluation

From the moment of V's introduction in the centre, she has had medical checkups. Based on the examinations conducted by the shelter's doctor, V turned out with these main problems: Cephalic, Colitis, Gastritis, Influenza, Tonsillitis about which she has been treated regularly. In general she has been calm and her health condition has been good.

The HIV/AIDS test resulted negative but positive regarding Hepatitis B. All the medical measures have been taken by undergoing to regular medications and a strict diet.

According to the medical data, the represented problems do not provide a direct connection with V's psychological problems so due to this reason they are considered as physical curable problems.

### Risk assessment as a result of denunciation

V has denounced her pimp in Albania and D country as well. The case is being followed by the centre's lawyer, who advises her about the steps undertaken already and the future steps and the process progress.

In the case of the denouncement of the victim involved in trafficking, she is

considered as a **injured witness** according to the criminal law. There are delays and problems in providing evidence:

- First of all, the defendant is not held in custody by the police due to the difficulties in arresting the trafficker. At the same time, the suing declarations should be verified, which requires time and provision of evidence.
- Secondly, the period of evidence provision has been lengthened.

During the sessions of evidence provision, V has been accompanied by the centre's lawyer and the police escort in the prosecutor office and court because her life is at risk from the threats of the relatives of the denounced trafficker.

After a long stay, V's case was identified by the Court of Serious Crimes as a case of high risk . Due to this reason, V has profited the witness protection with the support of important international bodies.

## Z.P's CASE STUDY

### The story

Z.P. has finished secondary school. Her father died when she 12 years old, . Her family was large and all her brothers and sisters lived together. Z was victim of a regular rape from one of her brothers. The latter maltreated her physically and threatened her continuously not to say anything. The other family members knew about this event with traumatic consequences for her life but they felt powerless to take measures against one of the family members due to the threats. Considering the situation in which she was, Z tried to find a solution. She established contacts with a woman who got her in touch with a person called N.L. Z left home without permission and went to Italy by motor boat. Then they went to E country where Z worked for several years in the street. At the beginning she did not know she was going to work in the street but even after N.L. obliged her, she did not resist because she had no where else to go.

Her relatives found her and forced her turn to back in Albania by shutting her at home without permission to go out. When N.L. turned back, the family obliged them to get married. After they were married, they went again in a European country where she still continued working in the streets. Meanwhile her brother influence predominated Z's life. This time he denounced N.L and Z turned back

in Albania. She stayed at her relatives. One of her family members tried to kill her, but she managed to escape by going to L. city during the night. She met an acquaintance of hers and went toward the neighbour country through Kosovo and Macedonia. She worked as a prostitute in houses for a few months. During this time she tried go to another European country but she was caught by the police while attempting this and was repatriated.

### Referral and identification

Z.P. was repatriated, caught by the police of the country of destination due to the lack of legal documents. She was returned in Albania and having been interviewed by the police was identified as an alleged trafficking victims. Z.P. has refused to denounce and after having been accommodated by her consent in the shelter has received the delivered services.

### Case evaluation before and after the trafficking period

Based on the personal file of the case, Z.P. has lived in a poor, rural family with many sisters and brothers. The lack of one parent in Z's life incites a collective trauma that includes the whole family and not only her body and physical aspect. Mismanagement of the situation by the other parent (the mother) who found herself powerless and without strength to put an end to the mental and physical violence that one of the males was exercising, affected the choice of Z's life path. The poor family environment where the right parental models where uncompromised fraternal affection lacked, the physical violence and psychological pressure that the family was going through due to having only one member, influenced the development of certain cognitive disorders, confusion, a corrupted value system and a deep psychic shock for Z.

The situation created at home and the lack of help from the other members of the family pushed Z to get involved in trafficking as a way of escaping from the abuse.

The decision taken to run away from her brother's persecution and the serious traumas he had caused to her self-perception and ego brought her in the path of victimization toward an even more violent process such as prostitution.

All these patterns are present even after the trafficking. She accepts her exploitation based on the idea of not having anything to lose anymore and due to the experiencing of a process called desensitisation of sexual pleasure. During the interview that the employees have conducted in the first moments with Z she does not want to return to her family because she feels threatened by them. She is shocked, worried, highly confused and feels threatened. She defines her opinion about the future in three sentences: “I want to live my life without threats, I want a regular life”. She also has expressed a special desire, that of attending a course and living at her home. Based on these assertions we can understand her unfulfilled need for love and physical well being, which she had not received even from the so-called safe family environment.

#### Case evaluation during the reintegration in the shelter

Z.P. has been in another centre before and included in a rehabilitation program. She was provided a job in one of the city hotels and later she rented a flat. But she left away with her boyfriend because she wanted to get married with him. After the ongoing trafficking problems, she asked the police to be accommodated in our centre, thanks to the information provided about “Vatra” by the police.

During her presence in the centre Z.P. is calm, suspicious and withdrawn. She wanted to give the idea of an open and sincere individual about her problems, but according to the employees she was reserved. During her stay in the shelter Z. has attended a tailoring course, embroidery course, computer and English course. She was not very active in the life in the shelter, although she has participated in social-cultural activities held indoors and outdoors.

Relationships with other beneficiaries were good. Z was ready to help and communicated with them tactfully and with refinement. She did not establish close relationships, she felt close with only one of the social workers to whom she talked more.

Z has been encouraged to take part in the conversations and social topics dealt with by the beneficiaries group.

She has exchanged opinions and experiences with the other girls and has also been provided with help to understand the difficult situation she has found herself during her life.

The staff has helped to provide her with identification documents and to get into touch with her family through phone calls and random appointments with her mother. The acknowledgement from the entire family was very hard and the level of prejudice was high.

Z.P. was referred to another centre of the same type, where the forms of reintegration in society suited better to her situation.

#### Health condition evaluation

Z.P. has stayed for a long time in the centre and from the first moment has displayed neurotic state which was later accompanied by cephalic neurosis and tonsillitis. The problems observed by the shelter's doctor have been treated with the respective medicaments.

Her neuroticism is based in the events experienced by the victims and the lack of an unconditional parental love. The need for physical security was denied at her home and she did not manage to find this security even when she "escaped". The threats and the numerous psychological pressures have shaped a new system of thinking, feeling and behaving in order to achieve a co-habitation for the existence of her being, despite her serious traumas which she managed to survive. She has had all the medical examinations such as: general tests, pregnancy test, Hepatitis B tests and tests for sexually transmitted diseases. From her first HIV test she resulted negative.

#### Risk assessment as a result of denunciation

Despite the efforts done by the staff to make Z.P. aware, she has not accepted to denounce the traffickers despite the traumas she has gone through during the trafficking period. She thought that denouncing would endanger her life and her family's life due to the lack of trust she had in justice.

## F.A's CASE STUDY

### The story

F.A. comes from a farmers' peasant family. She has finished the secondary school only. She was diagnosed by the doctor with epileptic symptoms during the school period. This disease repeats continuously and she is being cured continuously. The most important person for her is her mother, who has taken care about her when she was sick. F.A. admitted of not having good relationships with her family but they have deteriorated when she had a relationship with V.R. Her family did not accept him and she decided to leave home. F has missed also the company of her peers, nevertheless she had good relationships with the few ones she was friends with.

After her return in her family she told of having gone with V.R. in L country where she was trafficked for the purpose of prostitution and has been used as a drug dealer too. At the beginning they injected her drugs and later she became addicted to it. She has continuously been under the threat for her life by V.R. and her family's life as well. She has experienced severe physical and psychological violence, which have made impossible the detachment from trafficking.

She was caught by the police and after the arrival in Albanian she stayed at V.R.'s house. When she was going to one of her "husband's" relatives with a friend of his (M.A.), they stopped in a bar meanwhile his friend went away for a while.

When F.A. went to the toilet, V.R.'s friend kidnapped her. They brought her to a house where she was violated physically and one of M.A.'s friends raped her. During the night F.A. escaped from the window and entered in another house. She left from there and went to a policeman who was there by chance. F.A. was accompanied in the police station of K city and was later accommodated in our shelter.

F.A. has denounced her traffickers and asks for them to be punished for this act.

### Referral and identification

F.A. has been referred by the police after having denounced. First the police identified her as trafficked at the moment of the conduction of the interview in this institution, where she has denounced the exploiters. F.A. was repatriated a few days before making the denouncement. She was held by the police of the country of her exploitation and has stayed around 15 days in a camp where the



illicit emigrants gathered due to the lack of legal documents. She had no passport or identification documents. She did not denounce in her country of destination and was repatriated.

After the repatriation, F.A. returned to her family and has not told the truth to her relatives. After the rape in K city, she has denounced at the police and was referred in the shelter.

F.A. was interviewed here and identified as a victim of trafficking by the shelter's social workers. She has accepted by her free will to profit from the shelter's services.

### Case evaluation before and after the trafficking

Based on F.A.'s personal file, the person she has a special connection with is her mother. According to her, her mother has stayed close to her when she was sick and has taken care of her. Meanwhile F reveals another fact as well. At home, her father violated her mother. He used to tie her to the bed and tortured her and hit her with hard objects because he doubted of a relationship between his wife and his brother. She felt bad due to this violence and was often depressed. Her relationships with her father were not good, because of the violence he exerted. Medical checks at the specialist revealed that F.A. experienced long anxiety states which were often followed by epileptic attacks. She was provided with counselling and treated in the psychiatric hospital for this disease using medication for a certain period of time. The psychiatrist defined her epileptic attacks as functional crises (hysterical neurosis) as a consequence of the addiction and impossibility to find drug.

Her grave family environment, health problems of F and her tender age affected in her involvement in trafficking. The relationship with V.R. has been considered by F as a way of escaping from the psychological violence she was experiencing in her home. The failed family model did not give her the possibility to have a manageable adolescence, and concentrate in the worries of her age and find of solutions for age-related problems. Use of drugs, first injected by her pimps ( and later as regular user) has affected the deterioration of her health problems

and a personality transformation. The drugs effects have stimulated a deterioration of the epileptic attacks, when the latter have been more frequent and more serious during the stay in the shelter. F.A. was a drug dealer by holding the little bags within her clothes and travelling using the underground in order not to be caught by the police. She was involved in trafficking through false engagement.

### Case evaluation during the reintegration in the shelter

During the stay in the shelter she has received psychological counselling, medical, legal and social assistance. The period of health-related crises has been hard and has occurred often. According to the doctor, F.A. needs relaxation, care, harmony, less painful events and family care.

Taking part in the conversations held in the centre she became aware of the problems and their solutions. She was advised to resume school because it might be the right way to reintegrate into society and family, so a few months later F.A. started the first year of high school without interruption from work.

F.A. attended the tailoring course and after qualifying started working in one of the private tailor workshops in the city. The income she earned were gathered to live in a rented flat. At the beginning this was made possible by “Vatra” centre where her 15 year old sister was accommodated with her too(at risk of being trafficked).

F.A. denounced her pimps and this resulted positive because the exploiters have all been sentenced. During her stay in the shelter F.A. has had conflicts with her father. This was a result of the pressure her father exerted over his daughter to withdraw the denouncement due to the threats he received by the traffickers. The latter lured him with money and at the same time threatened to take his other daughter too. F often did not want to have contacts with her father, because she had memories of the violence he used in the family. For this reason, Vatra’s staff have realized frequent meetings with the family and counselling in order to relief family tensions.

During the long stay in the shelter, F has been qualified in acquiring computer-

related and English language knowledge, has participated in the activities held outdoors such as visits in the antique cities, entertaining activities, summer vacations etc.

### Health condition evaluation

Some of the health problems revealed during the stay in the shelter have been: Asthenia, Cephalic, Agnate which have been cured with medication.

Depressive and epileptic displays have been treated too.

All the problematic elements related to health have had their influence in the majority of her behaviour, thinking aspect and emotional reactions. The corruption of her perception is due to the diseases F has gone through and non favourable family environment which caused the deterioration of her mental and physical state.

During the stay in the shelter she has had regular medical checks by the shelter's doctor and her health performance has been under continuous control.

### Risk assessment as a result of denunciation

F.A's case has experienced a positive achievement, in the frame of fulfilling one of the denunciations done during the period of her stay in the shelter. F.A. denounced the persons who exploited and raped her, who were caught by the police and prosecuted and sentenced according the court's verdicts.

During this period she has received legal advice from the centre's lawyer about the progress of the proceeding and has been accompanied in the hearings of evidence provision and judicial sessions.

The exploiter's denouncement was accompanied by continuous threats to F.A. and her family. According to the data the traffickers threatened her family. At the beginning, they lured her father with money to tell to her to withdraw the denouncement. But F never accepted the compromise. Meanwhile her father continued his pressure, but this time saying that the traffickers threatened him with the kidnapping of the other daughter. Despite the obstacles encountered, the prosecuting of the traffickers had a successful outcome. The four traffickers were prosecuted and sentenced with relatively severe punishments.

## A.S.'s CASE STUDY

### The story

**A.S.** tells her story to the shelter's interviewer. She is anxious. Her parents are jobless. She has other brothers and sisters. She tells that at the age of 12 she went to O country. Her family went illegally by boat to L and then to C, where they stayed for a few months. Later, they arrived in the destination country where they lived for a few years. During this time A.S. finished her secondary school. Her parents were jobless but they were receiving financial support by the state, while waiting to get the legal papers of stay. They couldn't get the papers and were forced to leave the country. The whole family moved to another country, but they got caught by police in V and they stayed in prison for several days. After the release from prison they were sent back to Albania. They decided to live at one of their daughters' house. One day, her father asked A.S. to go to M city and take some photos, because they would try again to go abroad. The girls doubted on this, because the photos could be taken even in the city they were living. Her father introduced her to a boy named Sh. D coming from the city of H. He was only 15. She knew this boy, because he was friends with her sister's husband. Her parents asked her if she liked him, because they had decided for them to get married. A.S. knew that Sh. D. was already married, but her parents deceived her and insisted that she should get married to him by asking her to think more of her family and siblings. She moved to her "fiancé" and stayed there. The next day she heard the parents talking and she understood that she was sold by them. She returned to her sister's home. A few days later, her father asked her to go back to M city, but she opposed him. He threatened her by saying that if she wouldn't go he was going to kill her and her sister. The whole family moved to M and they rented a flat that was paid by Sh. D. After some time, she went away from Sh. D. because she didn't want to be in a relationship with a married man. But her parents sold her again to another boy, called A.SH. She was sold for about 2 million ALL. When she moved to T, she was told that she would be working in the street. A.Sh. treated her badly and threatened her constantly. They moved from T to the R country, where she worked for about a

year. She gave to him all the money she earned and he watched her all the time. Nevertheless, she managed to escape with a friend and they decided to go to L. She worked there for a short time and got caught by police that sent her back to Albania by ferry. At police station in G, she denounced some of her family members and the traffickers that exploited her.

### Referral and identification

A.S. was caught by police in the country of destination, lacking the identification papers and she was repatriated in Albania. She didn't make any denouncement in the country of exploitation, but once she arrived in Albania she denounced the traffickers. This way, she has been identified by police as a trafficked victim. After the denouncement she was sent to our centre where she accepted to stay. A.S. has no relationships with her family and she has accepted the services offered by our shelter.

She was identified as a trafficking victim by the interviews taken in the shelter from the social workers and through police cooperation.

### Evaluation before and after trafficking

Based on the trafficking story, we can see that the girl was sold by her dearest people.

The shocking stories that she went through show her disappointment towards the family.

So, her parents' image has been smeared with the image of violators and moreover it is a bad model for her as future parent. Her father's intimate relationship with a relative affected the decisions he would take for A.S.

According to the interviewer, A.S. seems to be passive, frightened and anxious when she talks about her life. She doesn't want to go back home, because she feels unprotected and threatened by the traffickers. The way A.S. was treated by her parents, i.e. as a means of making money and not as a human being, tells clearly their view on raising the children. A.S. shows lack of trust and she is doubtful of others. The mental schemes that A built in her mind are as follows:

*"When the closest people harm you, what about the others?..... "*

The basic psychological needs seem to be deformed and undeveloped, due to of the concrete evidence that A.S. has received by so called parental care.

Obviously, the difficulties and problems that girls show have initiated in the family and in the cultural environment they have been brought up. For this reason, the first traumas they experience in this environment open the way to the problems they show during the rehabilitation period. That's why the periods before and after the trafficking are synchronised. The period after trafficking enables the appearance of symptoms and sufferings that have been repressed for a long time. Incapability to find the proper adaptive strategies and lack of the right protective mechanisms are affecting all the cases, by causing changes in their mood as well as post-traumatic stress disorders.

#### Case evaluation during the process of her reintegration in the shelter

The reintegration process does not seem to be that easy in practical terms. Living in the shelter means getting used to a new environment and a new life style. A.S was meant to live this way at her home. At the same time, sharing her sorrow with strangers and trusting them has been one of the hardest issues for A.S. The presence of other girls has helped her in telling the traumas she had gone through, but the information shows that she didn't like to talk too much about her life. During the time she stayed in the shelter, she attended courses of English, computer, aerobics and learnt daily expression etc.

She attended vocational training and got a certificate as a tailor. She participated in group discussions on different social issues that were organised by social workers. She got assistance in increasing trust in herself and others, in such a way that she could ask for help when necessary.

She is considered as a quite and closed person that had no problems with the other girls, but she didn't show trust in them. As for her family, she kept contacts just with one of her sisters.

### Health evaluation

According to the medical report, A.S. has shown just some seasonal problems as: Gastro-intestinal problems, colitis, gastritis, flu, tonsillitis etc.

During the time she stayed in the shelter, she had renal colic and got checked about it. The result was calculus renal Dexter. She received the right medicine about it.

But the medical check showed that A.S. suffered from hepatitis B and strong genital infections that were not considered as STDs. A.S. was helped by the doctor for these problems. The results showed that she wasn't infected with HIV virus.

### Case evaluation as a result of denunciation

A.S. denounced her father, one of her sisters, her father's relative and her son, and her exploiters A.Sh. B.D, Sh.D. Her father, A. Sh. and Sh. D. were arrested, while the others are wanted. Her life is in danger, because of the constant threats she receives from her family and other people involved in this issue. Because of this, the prosecution and the shelter's staff consider it as a highly sensitive case in terms of safety. She has always been accompanied by police and social workers, during judicial sessions. Through a request to the General Prosecution Office, she could receive special protection as trafficking victim.

A.S. became part of the Witness Protection Program, by getting a new identity, while state and international authorities gave her a legal permit to stay in a foreign country.

The attention and protection A.S. received by justice institutions makes it one of the successful cases in the fight against human trafficking.

## L.M.'s CASE STUDY

### *The story*

**L.M.** tells that she was kidnapped when she was 15. Later she was sold by her exploiters to other traffickers. She crossed the border with false documents and went to the European country of F, where she worked in a hotel for some time. She told that she was kept closed and isolated. L.M. told that she was constantly

violated by the trafficker because she didn't want to work in the hotel. She would always be very careful in her actions so that he would not understand her. One day she managed to inform some relatives that were in A who informed the police. In the trafficking place, L.M. had a girl watching her all the time and that girl would report to the trafficker. She was taken by police this time and was brought to the border. She didn't go home, because her life and her family would be in danger, so she took a taxi and escaped. But traffickers found her and kidnapped her again. They brought her to R where she experienced again suffering and this time even more brutally, because she was forced to go to the street. By chance, she met some of her relatives that lived in R and they helped her by informing police. L.M. went to a youth shelter and started the school there. Later she left the centre and lived with her friend. During that time, she was prostituting for living, but she got caught by the police that sent her back to Albania.

### Referral and identification

L.M. was caught by police in the destination country, because she lacked the legal documents. She was immediately repatriated in Albania and once she returned, she denounced her exploiter. She got in touch with her family, but she decided to live in our shelter till she would conclude some penal issues against the traffickers. In the shelter, she was interviewed and identified as a trafficking victim. This way, she accepted to get the services offered at our shelter.

### Evaluation before and after trafficking

L.M. feels still burdened by what has happened to her. This happens even because her mother cannot face the neighbours' prejudice. Her mother suffers from thyroiditis which often causes tension in their communication.

L.M. tells that it is difficult to have self-control, when the others insult her. She reacts by raising her voice, offending, using an aggressive language and even being violent at times. The violence used towards L has had its influence on her and the result is: *Someone in search of identity and self acceptance.*



Her courage needs appreciation, because after a few efforts to escape from something that was not her choice, she could get rid of the strong psychological pressure.

Her initiative of going to school when she was in Italy, shows her desire to go back to the normal life. The hardships she went through, have affected most of her personality.

The process of recognising the “bad” parts is hard for anyone, but it gets even harder for such individuals who have to accept their situation even when the life models aren’t that good and motivating. “I cannot”. That’s her reaction when she is not motivated to work and tells that she needs a rest. There are many factors affecting her behaviour that create a very strong, complex situation and difficult to deal with. The process of her social reintegration was positive. She got in touch with her family that supported her and asked her to go back there after a long rehabilitation period in the shelter. L.M. is not planning to live in Albania in the future, because she knows she will be prejudiced and she will never feel as free as she might do in a foreign country.

### Evaluation during her reintegration in the shelter

L.M. could integrate better in comparison to some other girls. This is because of her long stay in the shelter. She got psychological counselling for her past traumas and the improper behaviour she manifested in the beginning. Individual counselling and inclusion in discussions about social issues have helped L.M. in changing her model of life, by becoming more sensitive and controlling her emotions. During her stay in the shelter she learnt to cook and take care of her hygiene and the environment. She developed communication skills which can help her reintegrate in the family and society. She has established good relationships with her family, she often visits them and she is planning to go back there.

With the support and understanding of social workers, L was employed as a social operator at “Vatra” shelter. She was paid from the project so that she could collect some money for the time she would start living alone.

## Health evaluation

According to the shelter's doctor, after three years of stay, L.M.'s health is in better conditions. She suffered from: tonsillitis, colitis and gastritis. She got medical treatment for all of these conditions. Her emotional state was tranquillised. She made all medical checks and analyses. L.M. went through the tests of five STD's and the results showed that she was infected by hepatitis B. She was kept under medical care and was given the right medical treatment.

## Risk assessment as a result of denunciation

L.M. was involved in trafficking through kidnapping. She denounced the person that kidnapped her, who in turn sold her to other traffickers. According to the workers, she hasn't denounced all the responsible people, maybe because of the threats she has received from the traffickers. The person that kidnapped her was caught by police as well as imprisoned by a court decision, on the base of evidence. She has been provided legal counselling from the shelter's lawyers and she has been accompanied by social workers during the judicial sessions in court and prosecution office.

L.M. doesn't feel threatened any more because her physical appearance has changed and people cannot recognise her, while she has been fully disconnected from the physical and psychological dependence of the trafficking period. These might be some of the reasons that helped her get reintegrated in society.

## P.R.'s CASE STUDY

### The story

**P.R.** is a sixteen years old girl that comes from a big rural family, from the northern district of M. Her father died at the age of 47, being brutally killed, while her mother married again and abandoned all her children. Till the age of 10, she lived a peaceful life. When her father died, her life started to get complicated. When she was fifteen she was raped by her mother's boyfriend.

After that she got pregnant and her child was sent at the nursery home of northern cities. Her elder sister who is trafficked brings home a person that P can “get engaged” with. Without any explanation, P.R. has been sent to Greece, using physical violence by beating, burning her with cigarettes and cutting her flesh with a knife. She “has worked” a few months in Greece and then from V she has been sent by boat to Italy.

*<<...I remember my younger sister who was brought after me. I cannot forget the moments when we were tied and given drugs through injections. I was stronger, while she felt very bad. I don't know where she is now, they tell me that she has died... >>*

She has been trafficked for about six months in A country. M. has sold her to another trafficker for ten million lire. He asked her to make the money he bought her for, otherwise she couldn't go away from him. *<<...One day I tried to escape, but I didn't know he was watching me. He pulled me and brought me in a cave, where he beat me mercilessly and stabbed me with a knife. I passed out and I don't know how I ended up in hospital. Nevertheless, he took me back and I was sent again in the street...>>*

When she went back to the street, she tore the papers off and was handed over to police that returned her back in Albania.

P.R. feels lonely, she has no place to go to, she has no family, she cannot accept her mother at all. She feels good in the shelter and there she finds the warmth that she lacks. The psychological support she has received has helped her change. She decided to do something in her life. She asked for professional training that could help her face successfully her life, challenge the past and create a healthy environment where she could raise and educate her abandoned child.

### Referral and identification

P.R. was caught by the police of A. country and she has been repatriated. The repatriation process wasn't accompanied by problems and the Albanian police identified her as a trafficked woman. On her will, she got accommodated in our shelter. During the interview, she told the names of her traffickers and exploiter.

After being interviewed by the social workers, she was identified as a trafficking victim and has been provided with the necessary services in the shelter.

### Evaluation before and after trafficking

The person seems to be under shock. As in other cases the problematic elements arise from lack of stability in the family. Losing one of the parents, that means destroying the mirror effect (*Dolto, Françoise*), causes dramatic results in the person's life. The mother's image represents another loss of parental care that P.R. felt even more when she was raped by her mother's boyfriend who indirectly would represent her father's image. Traumas follow one another. So, the pregnancy shows another difficult moment for her, being it from the aspect of content and the age she got pregnant, or the person she got pregnant with. The role of being a mother for P was something she wasn't ready for and she lacked the right maternal support, something she was "doomed" to have against. The pressure of experiencing such an unknown phenomenon and post-partum stress result in further impairment of her personality.

Social workers define the violence used towards her as brutal. P.R. has been beaten brutally and she has been tortured by cold weapons as for example, knives. This violence has had a direct effect in her, in both aspects; physical and psychological. P.R. has been forced by her traffickers to take drugs. This fact has affected even more the problems she reveals in her personality.

As the case tells us, during her first attempt to escape the traffickers, they tortured her and send her back to the street. The second attempt resulted in success. From the case we learn that the most important institution of society is damaged, i.e. the family. This results in personality disorders, depression and anxiety elements. At the same time, it is understandable that improper environment can show the weaknesses of our inheritance and in certain cases can even enrich them.

This destructive model, without a system of values and parental care (that everyone has the right to benefit), that P.R. lacked from her parents and especially her

mother, foresees great psychological difficulties and high insecurity during the process of bringing up her child.

### Case evaluation during the process of her reintegration in the shelter

Based on the data of her personal file and information received by social workers at the shelter, P.R. had a difficult rehabilitation period. She showed problematic behaviour and it wasn't easy to communicate with her and she demonstrated personality problems. She made a few attempts to commit suicide by cutting the blood vessels and this was a difficult moment in the shelter. P.R. didn't have the right attitude towards the other girls.

She would be extremely moody and that was difficult to deal with. She tried to get involved in different activities, but she was unstable in her reactions. The staff tried to mainly teach her some communication skills that she needs in order to be integrated in society. On her will, she accepted to be trained as a tailor. After finishing the course and getting the certificate, she was sent to another centre that deals specifically with her problems.

She has contacted her sisters through constant phone calls and has visited her relatives twice. Her emotional state has been very difficult during the time she met her family members and it took a long time to get back to normality.

### Health evaluation

According to health examinations done by the specialist, P.R. has had problems such as: pharyngitis, tonsillitis and she received treatment for respiratory infection. In clinical terms, she has been generally healthy. There were signs showing the traffickers had tortured her. Some times she had convulsions with her body shaking and she lost her consciousness.

In such moments she would get aggressive and harm herself, by hitting her head and scratching her body. After the crisis she would calm down and start sobbing. Usually, P.R. showed lack of control when taking meals, she would get more food than needed and this would cause her stomach problems.

### Risk assessment as a result of denunciation

P.R. made her first denouncement about her mother and her boyfriend, accusing them for killing her father. This accusation was not taken into account, because there was found no evidence against them. She denounced her traffickers as well, including her sister. She continued the judicial proceeding at the next centre where she was transferred to. The denunciation process there was accompanied by a great delay, immaturity and lack of attention on the side of justice for protecting the victim and charging the exploiters.

Her life was in danger, because the criminal group she denounced was dangerous. In all the meetings at police and prosecutor's office, she was accompanied by Vatra's staff and police.

## IV. Conclusions

### DIFFICULTIES

There were many difficulties in the direct work with trafficked women and girls. They vary from one time period to the other and from one case to the other. Setting the first contacts with these victims has been generally difficult. They have shown lack of trust on the help our staff offered and it took a long time to establish it. This is because of the lack of trust they have towards people in general.

Their heavy psychological state accompanied with depression, moody states, aggressiveness, self-mutilation and convulsive state was another difficulty the shelter's staff faced with. In certain cases, we asked for help from other girls in order to avoid unnecessary consequences.

They had difficulties in learning daily rules, on their hygiene, the extent and right time for taking meals, sleeping time and their approach to others.

Apart from the difficulties that have to do with the direct work with trafficked victims, staff has been facing constant threats from the traffickers. These threats occur at the points where victims are contacted and received, and during the time they are sent to judicial sessions.

There were problems regarding the safety of the lives of those victims who made the denunciation and they're constantly in danger. After 2004, year in which the Law on witness protection was approved, no trafficked victim supported by

our centre's programs has been included in the state programs, even though they have denounced very dangerous individuals and criminal groups. No measures of protection were taken for them, according to the law.

The delay of judicial proceedings, initiated by the trafficked victims, brings forth another difficulty that we have to face with every day. This delay makes the victims lose hope in its success and increase the level of anxiety and fear for their survival and the survival of their families.

Another set of difficulties deal with the long process of their reintegration in Albanian society. After finishing the vocational trainings and getting the certificate, their economic empowerment is of importance and it is made possible only by including them in the labour market. At this point, our staff faced difficulties in offering job opportunities because of the employers' mentality or lack of working places.

After returning to their families, which is an important part of reintegration process for many young girls and women, our staff carries on long term monitoring processes. The process that is carried out in different ways like phone calls, family visits and continuous meetings faces with financial limitations of the project. This brought the reduction of the number of followed up cases and consequently the reduction of the support of reintegrated victims, in cases when their situation is not favourable.

Lack of stable funding (basically the funding came from international donors), lack of fund allocation on the side of central or local government in supporting these groups creates another difficulty that limits our work. If we were able to receive stable funding, then the time frame of supporting programs would be longer. This way, we would talk more about the successful cases and we would have more victims freed from the trafficking phenomenon.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Government should acknowledge the existence of internal trafficking and draft an anti-trafficking action plan containing concrete measures for the fight and prevention of the phenomenon.
- Collaboration among all actors involved in the field of anti-trafficking efforts should increase, aiming the implementation of the National Referral Mechanism Agreement.
- It is necessary to improve the expertise of police officers both in Police Stations and Border Crossing Points, through ongoing trainings that aim the accurate identification of victims of human trafficking and their referral for further assistance.
- Border crossing points should have social workers or psychologists who will help not only in the identification of trafficked victims but also in the identification of needs and problems, and provide possible alternatives for their solution.
- As for victims' protection, the Law on "Witness protection" should be applied and measures should be taken for keeping the confidentiality of victims during judicial proceedings.
- Collaboration among law enforcement bodies and Centres for the victims' support should increase, aiming their accompaniment and safety during the judicial proceedings.
- Victims who collaborate with law institutions and denounce the traffickers and pimps should have a defence lawyer. The victims of trafficking say that they should have their lawyer so that he/she can protect them and inform them continuously on the different stages of the criminal

proceeding and further for the attendance of civil proceedings and their compensation.

- Collaboration between state institutions and Regional Anti-trafficking Committees of each region should be stronger, aiming the draft and implementation of social programmes that will help in the rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of human trafficking.
- The Albanian Government should prioritize the financing of Organizations that assist victims of trafficking aiming their long term financial stability and consequently the stability of services.

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