

DIFFERENT ALPHABETS. SAME STORY?

Media Framing of Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation in British, Dutch and Serbian Media

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Different alphabets, same story?

Media Framing of Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation in British, Dutch and Serbian Media

Verschillende alfabetten, hetzelfde verhaal?

Media framing van mensenhandel gericht op seksuele uitbuiting in Britse, Nederlandse en Servische media

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift

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DECLARATION

I declare that the research embodied in this thesis is my own work and that the material contained herein has not been previously submitted at any other university.

I declare that I have not used commercial doctoral advisory services or any other sources of aid other than those listed in this thesis.

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ABSTRACT

The issue of trafficking in human beings is complex and there is a number of ongoing debates in the field that continue to divide scholars, policy makers and activists involved in anti-trafficking. Giving voice to advocates of different perspectives, the media has been seen as a facilitator of these debates. This essential function, however, gives the media great power to influence the debate and set the agenda by choosing what to report on and how. Further, media framing of human trafficking shapes public opinion, trafficking-related policy, and, consequently, the environment in which victims exercise their rights and recover. As scholars have neglected scrutinising media portrayal of human trafficking, this research aims to bridge that knowledge gap by analysing the way media frame trafficking for sexual exploitation in British, Dutch and Serbian media. Through a mixed-methods approach, the study explores three layers of the framing process: the media product, its producers and its effects.

Results have shown that trafficking is mainly framed as a criminal justice issue in all three countries. A significant portion of the mediated reports framed trafficking as a prostitution-related phenomenon, while migration, violence, and human rights aspects of the crime were less frequently emphasized. As a consequence, the focus of the public debate on human trafficking remained on prosecuting traffickers, suppressing crime, eradicating prostitution, and controlling migration. Issues pertaining to victims' rights and protection were consequently marginalised. The study concludes that making criminal justice and prostitution-related aspects of human trafficking more salient than others testifies of societal and state anxieties over borders, race and ethnicity, gender and morality. The motifs that representation of trafficking banks on are deeply embedded in the culture, which makes employed frames all the more convincing. It is precisely those frames that rely on the principal values and moralities within a society (e.g. freedom, nationalism, rule of law, and male dominance) that are particularly popular and influential in shaping the public perception of human trafficking through the media. In addition, the proportionality between the volume of coverage and the political will to tackle human trafficking was evident in all three countries. Finally, this study has shown the importance of considering specifics of the political, economic, and social conditions that the media operate in. Differences between the countries observed seem to suggest that changes leading towards a better quality of reporting could only be anticipated in circumstances that involve a high degree of media autonomy, safe and fair work conditions for journalists, and close collaboration with the anti-trafficking community that is ready to work with the media towards communicating human trafficking contents better.

Key words: Media framing, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, United Kingdom, Serbia, The Netherlands, online media.

SUMMARY (ENGLISH)

Trafficking in human beings is regarded as an international, organized criminal phenomenon that encompasses a variety of exploitative practices. These include, but are not limited to, exploitation through forced labour, sex work, begging, coercion to commit petty crime, forced marriage, illegal adoption, participation in armed conflicts, and removal of organs. Despite the fact the phenomenon has been widely scrutinised for decades, there are still a great number of widespread myths and misconceptions about the trafficking phenomenon.

Academic and public debates on human trafficking are principally focused on assessing the gravity of the issue and suppressing the crime of trafficking. As a consequence, a discursive shift from human rights to security and criminal justice has changed the way people think about trafficking in human beings. Even though the literature on human trafficking is growing exponentially, extensive empirical research on human trafficking remains rare, and many studies lack critical insights and considerations of specific cultural and social conditions that contribute to trafficking. Scholars have neglected studying representation of the trafficking phenomenon in the media and implications thereof, especially outside of the US context.

This thesis shows that the role of the media extends far beyond awareness raising and prevention of the crime. Reporting by the press can help mobilise public support, influence policy change, monitor institutions involved in tackling the issue, deconstruct stereotypes, and foster a supportive environment in which victims of trafficking exercise their rights and recover. By framing the issue in a particular way and providing space for opinion makers to promote their agendas, the media have played a significant role in shaping the content and influencing the impact of public debates on human trafficking. Therefore, this thesis explores how the issue of human trafficking is framed in online media in The United Kingdom, The Netherlands, and Serbia. As sexual exploitation remains the form of the crime that is the focus of the public debate and efforts to tackle the issue, this research is focused specifically on this form of human trafficking. Relying on the social constructionist approach to framing studies and the specific role of culture, this study explores three layers of the framing process – the media product, its producers, and their sources. It utilises quantitative and qualitative content analysis of media articles and the visual illustrations used within them, as well as in-depth interviews with media professionals and anti-trafficking experts. Through an applied triangulated mixed-method approach, this research offers a comprehensive insight into the mediated representation of human trafficking for sexual exploitation and addresses wider social and political implications of such portrayal.

Six dominant frames used in the portrayal of human trafficking for sexual exploitation are identified in the study. Criminal justice, prostitution, violence, human rights, and migration are

pertinent to understanding trafficking representation in all three countries. In the UK an additional frame labelled 'child sexual exploitation' is applied to trafficking of domestic minor citizens within the sex industry. In relation to each of the frames, this research identifies the most prominent problems conveyed by the media, investigates who is identified to have created them, who is allotted to solve the problems, which solutions are promoted, what visual symbols are used to communicate these problems, and what moral base supports the arguments presented.

Research shows a concerning lack of analytical, investigative articles on human trafficking, and the deeply problematic reiteration of gender stereotypes, racial and ethnic biases, and victim blaming in all three countries. While patriarchy plays a pivotal role in shaping trafficking stories in Serbia, echoes of colonial discourses emerge in trafficking narratives of Dutch and British journalism. Analysis of the collected data suggests that mediated representation of trafficking for sexual exploitation is rooted in societal fears for security, hegemonic ideas about gender, hierarchy of labour mobility, erotic obsessions, and morality. Based on data from 2600 news articles, and 48 in-depth expert interviews, this thesis examines trafficking representation with the intention of producing a comprehensive critical analysis of media-constructed frames of human trafficking for sexual exploitation and proposing realistic and applicable solutions leading towards informed, accurate, and responsible reporting on trafficking in human beings.

SAMENVATTING (NEDERLANDS)

Mensenhandel wordt gezien als een crimineel fenomeen van internationale, georganiseerde aard dat diverse vormen van uitbuiting omvat, waaronder door middel van dwangarbeid, werk in de seksindustrie, bedelen, het dwingen tot kleine criminaliteit, gedwongen huwelijken, illegale adoptie, deelname aan gewapende conflicten en de uitname van organen. Ondanks dat dit fenomeen al tientallen jaren alom in detail is bestudeerd, bestaan er nog steeds talloze wijdverbreide mythen en misvattingen over.

Zowel het academische als het publieke debat over mensenhandel richt zich hoofdzakelijk op de beoordeling van de ernst van de zaak en op het onderdrukken van het misdrijf zelf. Dientengevolge heeft een verschuiving in de discussie over mensenhandel - te weten van mensenrechten naar veiligheid en het strafrecht - een verandering teweeggebracht in de manier waarop men over mensenhandel denkt. Hoewel de literatuur over mensenhandel exponentieel toeneemt, bestaat er nog steeds weinig uitgebreid empirisch onderzoek op dit gebied. Veel onderzoeken ontbreekt het aan kritische inzichten in en aandacht voor de specifieke culturele en sociale omstandigheden die aan mensenhandel ten grondslag liggen. Wetenschappers hebben het beeld dat van mensenhandel in de media wordt neergezet en de consequenties daarvan als onderwerp van studie links laten liggen, met name buiten de Amerikaanse context.

Dit proefschrift laat zien dat de rol van de media veel verder gaat dan het creëren van bewustzijn en het voorkomen van het misdrijf zelf. Nieuwsberichten over mensenhandel kunnen helpen bij het mobiliseren van publieke steun, het beïnvloeden van (de totstandkoming van) beleidswijzigingen, het volgen van instellingen die bij de aanpak van het probleem betrokken zijn, het afbreken van stereotypen en het bevorderen van een ondersteunende omgeving waarin slachtoffers van mensenhandel hun rechten kunnen uitoefenen en kunnen herstellen. Door de kwestie op een bepaalde manier naar voren te brengen (te 'framen') en opiniemakers de ruimte te geven om hun agenda onder de aandacht te brengen, hebben de media een belangrijke rol gespeeld bij het bepalen van de inhoud van het publieke debat en het beïnvloeden van het effect van dat debat op de mensenhandel. In dit proefschrift wordt dan ook geanalyseerd op welke wijze het onderwerp 'mensenhandel' in online media in het Verenigd Koninkrijk, Nederland en Servië wordt geframed. Gezien het feit dat het publieke debat en de inspanningen om het probleem aan te pakken doorgaans gericht zijn op seksuele uitbuiting als uitingsvorm van mensenhandel, houdt dit onderzoek zich specifiek met die vorm bezig.

Met toepassing van een sociaal-constructionistische benadering ten aanzien van framingonderzoeken en de specifieke rol van cultuur, worden in dit onderzoek drie lagen van het framingproces blootgelegd: het mediaproduct zelf, de makers van dat product en hun bronnen. Gebruik wordt gemaakt van een kwantitatieve en kwalitatieve inhoudsanalyse van in de media

verschenen artikelen en de daarbij gebruikte afbeeldingen, evenals van diepte-interviews met mediaprofessionals en deskundigen op het gebied van de bestrijding van mensenhandel. Door middel van een toegepaste getrianguleerde 'mixed method'-benadering wordt in dit onderzoek uitgebreid inzicht verschaft in het door de media overgebrachte beeld van mensenhandel met het oog op seksuele uitbuiting. Daarnaast wordt ingegaan op de bredere maatschappelijke en politieke consequenties van dergelijke beeldvorming.

In het onderzoek worden zes dominante 'frames' in kaart gebracht waarvan bij de beeldvorming van mensenhandel met het oog op seksuele uitbuiting gebruik wordt gemaakt. Het strafrecht, prostitutie, geweld, mensenrechten en migratie spelen een rol bij het verwerven van inzicht in de manier waarop in alle drie de bestudeerde landen over mensenhandel wordt gecommuniceerd. Daarnaast wordt in het VK specifiek op de handel in binnenlandse minderjarige burgers in de seksindustrie een extra frame toegepast, te weten 'seksuele uitbuiting van kinderen'. Per frame worden in dit onderzoek de prominentste door de media gepresenteerde problemen in kaart gebracht, en wordt onderzocht wie als veroorzaker daarvan wordt aangewezen, wie de problemen moet oplossen, welke oplossingen er worden aangedragen, van welke visuele symbolen gebruik wordt gemaakt om die problemen voor het voetlicht te brengen en welke morele basis steun biedt voor de geboden argumenten.

Uit onderzoek blijkt dat er in alle drie de landen sprake is van een zorgwekkend gebrek aan analytische onderzoeksjournalistiek met betrekking tot mensenhandel, alsmede van een uiterst problematische herhaling van stereotype man-/vrouwbeelden, en van rassendiscriminatie, etnische vooroordelen en het geven van de schuld aan het slachtoffer ('victim blaming'). Waar het patriërchaat een centrale rol speelt bij het vertellen van het mensenhandelverhaal in Servië, klinkt het koloniale verleden door in artikelen van de hand van Nederlandse en Britse journalisten over mensenhandel. Een analyse van de verzamelde gegevens suggereert dat het door de media overgebrachte beeld van mensenhandel met het oog op seksuele uitbuiting geworteld is in de vrees die binnen de samenleving ten aanzien van de eigen veiligheid leeft, alsmede in hegemonische ideeën over de seksen, hiërarchie in arbeidsmobiliteit, erotische obsessies en moraliteit. Op basis van gegevens uit 2.600 nieuwsberichten en 48 diepte-interviews met deskundigen wordt in dit proefschrift onderzocht hoe over mensenhandel wordt gecommuniceerd, met de bedoeling te komen tot een uitvoerige, kritische analyse van de door de media gecreëerde frames van mensenhandel met het oog op seksuele uitbuiting, alsmede tot een voorstel voor realistische en toepasbare oplossingen die tot weloverwogen, nauwkeurige en verantwoorde verslaggeving over mensenhandel zullen leiden.

Het proefschrift begint in hoofdstuk 1 met het stellen van de onderzoeksvragen en het uiteenzetten van onderzoeksfocus en -relevantie. In dit hoofdstuk worden de definities van 'mensenhandel', 'journalistiek' en 'media' geoperationaliseerd, en worden de verschillende zienswijzen ten aanzien van mensenhandel besproken.

In hoofdstuk 2 wordt eerst de theoretische conceptualisering van en een toelichting op relevante theoretische begrippen uit communicatie-, sociale wetenschap- en misdaadonderzoek gepresenteerd. Daarna maakt de lezer aan de hand van een uitgebreid literatuuronderzoek kennis met de tot op heden bestudeerde aspecten van de discussie over en beeldvorming rondom mensenhandel. In dit onderdeel worden de beperkingen van eerdere onderzoeksinspanningen aangegeven en kennishiaten in kaart gebracht waarvan in de empirische hoofdstukken wordt getracht deze te overbruggen.

In hoofdstuk 3 wordt de methodologische grondslag voor het onderzoeksproject uiteengezet. De epistemologische ruggengraat van het onderzoek wordt dan beschreven, alsmede de opzet van het onderzoek, en de toegepaste gegevensverzamelingsinstrumenten en onderzoeksprocedure. In dit onderdeel zijn tevens ethische kwesties, onderzoeksbeperkingen en overige relevante overwegingen opgenomen, zoals de persoonlijke betrokkenheid van de onderzoekster bij de bestrijding van mensenhandel voordat zij aan dit proefschrift begon.

De presentatie van de empirische bevindingen begint in hoofdstuk 4. In dit hoofdstuk wordt specifiek ingegaan op de kenmerken van de in dit onderzoek geanalyseerde artikelen. Deze kenmerken worden beschreven, de door de media in elk land toegepaste dominante frames worden in kaart gebracht, de gebruikte bronnen voor het produceren van de geanalyseerde stukken worden gesignaleerd en de gedekte regio's behandeld. Het hoofdstuk eindigt met een vergelijking tussen enerzijds de demografische gegevens afkomstig uit berichtgeving in de media betreffende de slachtoffers van mensenhandel en de daarbij betrokken daders, en anderzijds officiële statistische gegevens inzake mensenhandel in de geselecteerde landen. In hoofdstuk 5 wordt de mediaframing van mensenhandel met het oog op seksuele uitbuiting in Servische online media gepresenteerd. In hoofdstuk 6 worden de Britse gegevens besproken en in hoofdstuk 7 wordt het door de media overgebrachte beeld van mensenhandel in Nederland geanalyseerd.

In elk van die drie hoofdstukken maakt de lezer eerst kennis met de mensenhandelproblematiek in ieder afzonderlijk land, met inbegrip van het juridische kader en het aanwezige mechanisme ter bestrijding van mensenhandel. Na dit onderdeel van de analyse volgt een overzicht van het lokale medialandschap. Beide situatieschetsen, zowel die van (de bestrijding van) de mensenhandel als die van de media per land, dienen ter contextualisering van de nadere bevindingen van de analyse. Vervolgens worden per hoofdstuk de bevindingen gepresenteerd aangaande de door de media in de respectieve landen gebruikte frames. In dit onderdeel worden

de onderzoeksvragen beantwoord. Tevens wordt duidelijk gemaakt welke problemen per frame worden gesignaleerd, wie er de schuld voor krijgt, wie verantwoordelijk is voor de oplossing ervan, welke oplossingen dienen te worden geïmplementeerd en op welke morele basis. Daarnaast wordt aandacht besteed aan de kenmerken van de voor de afzonderlijke frames gebruikelijke afbeeldingen.

In hoofdstuk 8 (het slothoofdstuk) worden de empirische bevindingen samengevat, waarna wordt ingegaan op de conceptualisering van de beeldvorming in de media van het bestudeerde fenomeen. Het proefschrift eindigt met een aantal aanbevelingen die in een betere kwaliteit van de verslaggeving over mensenhandel in de bestudeerde landen en daarbuiten zouden kunnen resulteren.

SAZETAK (SRPSKI)

Trgovina ljudima smatra se oblikom međunarodnog i organizovanog kriminala koji obuhvata različite vrste iskorištavanja poput eksploatacije kroz prinudni rad, seksualne eksploatacije, prinudnog prosjačenja, prinude na izvršenje krivičnih dela, prinudnog braka, nelegalnog usvajanja, učestvovanja u oružanim sukobima i trgovine ljudskim organima. Iako je trgovina ljudima izučavana decenijama, veliki broj mitova i pogrešnih uverenja o ovom fenomenu još uvek je široko rasprostranjen.

Akadske i javne debate o trgovini ljudima pretežno su fokusirane na procenu ozbiljnosti problema i potencijalne načine suzbijanja ovog krivičnog dela. Zbog toga je došlo do promene u diskursu, te se, većinom, problem trgovine ljudima više ne posmatra kroz prizmu ljudskih prava već iz ugla krivičnog pravosuđa. To je izmenilo način na koji ljudi percipiraju problem trgovine ljudima. Iako literatura o ovom fenomenu nastavlja eksponencijalno da raste, opširna empirijska istraživanja o trgovini ljudima i dalje su retka. Brojne studije koje su sprovedene često ne uzimaju u obzir specifične kulturološke i društvene uslove koji doprinose trgovini ljudima, a neretko ih karakteriše i manjak kritičkih uvida. Uz to, naučnici su posebno zapostavili izučavanje medijskog predstavljanja fenomena trgovine ljudima i posledica istog, pogotovo izvan konteksta Sjedinjenih Američkih Država.

Ova teza pokazala je da je uloga medija u borbi protiv trgovine ljudima daleko šira od pukog podizanja svesti i prevencije ovog krivičnog dela. Medijsko izveštavanje može dovesti do mobilizacije društvene podrške, te uticanja na promene zakona i politike u oblasti borbe protiv trgovine ljudima. Takođe, mediji mogu služiti kao sredstva za praćenje rada institucija koje su uključene u borbu protiv trgovine ljudima. Konačno, mediji igraju važnu ulogu u dekonstrukciji stereotipa i mogu uticati da okruženje u kojem žrtve treba da se oporave i ostvare svoja prava bude podržavajuće. Predstavljajući ovaj problem na određeni način i ostavljajući prostor različitim akterima u oblasti borbe protiv trgovine ljudima da promovišu svoj interes, mediji su odigrali značajnu ulogu u oblikovanju sadržaja i definisanju uticaja javnih debata o trgovini ljudima. U skladu sa tim, u ovoj tezi proučavan je način na koji mediji predstavljaju trgovinu ljudima u Srbiji, Velikoj Britaniji i Holandiji. Budući da je seksualna eksploatacija i dalje oblik trgovine ljudima koji je u fokusu javnih debata i napora usmerenih na suzbijanje problema trgovine ljudima, ovo istraživanje usredsređeno je upravo na ovaj vid eksploatacije. Oslanjajući se na socijalno-konstruktivistički pristup studijama frejminga¹ i posebnoj ulozi kulture, ova studija obuhvatila je tri sloja frejming procesa – medijski proizvod, njegove proizvođače i njihove izvore, te posledice do kojih medijski proizvod dovodi. U istraživanju su korišćene metode kvantitativne i kvalitativne

¹ Engl. framing

analize sadržaja medijskih članaka i vizuelnih ilustracija objavljenih u njima, kao i dubinski intervjui sa medijskim profesionalcima i stručnjacima iz oblasti borbe protiv trgovine ljudima. Primenom triangulacije i istraživanja kombinovanim pristupom², ovo istraživanje dovelo je do sveobuhvatnih uvida u medijsko predstavljanje trgovine ljudima u cilju seksualne eksploatacije, kao i širih društvenih i političkih posledica tog izveštavanja.

U istraživanju je otkriveno šest dominantnih okvira³ korišćenih u predstavljanju trgovine ljudima. Krivično-pravni okvir, okvir prostitucije, nasilja, ljudskih prava, i migracija od ključne su važnosti za razumevanje medijskog predstavljanja trgovine ljudima u sve tri zemlje. U Velikoj Britaniji dodatni okvir pod nazivom 'seksualna eksploatacija dece' primenjivan je u člancima koji su se odnosili na trgovinu maloletnim državljanima Britanije u cilju njihove seksualne eksploatacije. Istraživanje je otkrilo koji problemi su označeni kao značajni u svakom od šest identifikovanih okvira, ko je predstavljen kao odgovoran za njihovo stvaranje, a ko za rešavanje, koja rešenja su promovisana, kakve vizuelne ilustracije su korišćene, te na kojoj se moralnoj bazi temelje prezentovani argumenti.

Rezultati istraživanja u sve tri zemlje su pokazali zabrinjavajući nedostatak analitičkih, istraživačkih članaka o trgovini ljudima, izuzetno problematičnu reiteraciju rodnih stereotipa, rasnih i etničkih predrasuda, kao i svaljivanje krivice na žrtvu. Dok patrijarhat igra značajnu ulogu u oblikovanju tekstova o trgovini ljudima u Srbiji, prizvuci kolonijalnih diskursa prisutni su u narativima britanskog i holandskog novinarstva. Analiza prikupljenih podataka sugerise da je medijsko predstavljanje trgovine ljudima u cilju seksualne eksploatacije duboko povezano sa društvenim strahovima o sigurnosti, hegemonijskim predstavama o rodu, hijerarhijom radne mobilnosti, erotskim opsesijama i moralnošću. Na osnovu podataka iz 2600 novinskih članaka i 48 dubinskih intervjua sa stručnjacima, ova teza ispitala je predstavljanje trgovine ljudima sa ciljem da se izvrši sveobuhvatna kritička analiza različitih okvira i procesa frejminga trgovine ljudima u medijima, te da se definišu realistična i primenjiva rešenja koja vode ka informisanom, tačnom i odgovornom izveštavanju o trgovini ljudima.

U prvom poglavlju teze predstavljena su istraživačka pitanja, fokus i značaj sprovedene studije. Takođe, u ovom poglavlju čitalac je upoznat sa definicijom trgovine ljudima, različitim vidovima poimanja ovog fenomena, kao i sa pojmovima novinarstva i medija. Relevantni teorijski koncepti iz studija komunikacija, sociologije i kriminologije objašnjeni su na početku drugog poglavlja. Nakon toga, sveobuhvatan pregled literature čitaoca upoznaje sa do sada izučavanim aspektima diskursa i medijske reprezentacije trgovine ljudima u cilju seksualne eksploatacije. U ovom delu

² Engl. mixed methods approach

³ Engl. dominant frames

pocrtani su nedostaci prethodnih studija i identifikovane nedovoljno istražene oblasti koje su kasnije ispitane u empirijskim poglavljima. Treće poglavlje sadrži metodološku osnovu ovog istraživačkog projekta. U njemu je opisana epistemološka baza, dizajn istraživanja, alati prikupljanja podataka i procedura istraživanja. Uz to, ovde su ispitane i etičke dileme, ograničenja studije, te druga važna razmatranja poput ličnog angažmana istraživačice u sektoru za borbu protiv trgovine ljudima pre početka doktorskih studija i rada na ovom istraživanju.

Prezentacija empirijskih nalaza započeta je u četvrtom poglavlju, koje je fokusirano na svojstva analiziranih tekstova. Dominantni okviri predstavljanja korišćeni od strane medija u odabranim zemljama, izvori informacija i regioni pokriveni izveštavanjem neke su od ispitanih karakteristika. Demografske odlike žrtava i trgovaca ljudima o kojima su novinari pisali takođe su zabeležene i upoređene sa zvaničnim statističkim podacima u tri odabrane države. Poglavlje 5 sadrži podatke vezane za medijsko predstavljanje trgovine ljudima u srpskim onlajn medijima, poglavlje 6 tiče se britanskog uzorka, dok poglavlje 7 predstavlja analizu izveštavanja u Holandiji. Svako od ova tri poglavlja počinje sa pregledom situacije vezane za trgovinu ljudima u datoj zemlji, uključujući pravni okvir, uspostavljeni mehanizam za borbu protiv trgovine ljudima, probleme i izazove u suzbijanju ovog krivičnog dela i zaštiti žrtava. Nakon toga sledi pregled medijskih sistema i okolnosti u kojima mediji funkcionišu u datoj državi. Skicirana medijska situacija i ona vezana za borbu protiv trgovine ljudima služe da kontekstualizuju zaključke donete u daljoj analizi.

U trećem delu, empirijska poglavlja 5 – 7 fokusiraju se na analizu okvira koji su mediji koristili pri predstavljanju trgovine ljudima u dotičnim državama. Tu je dat odgovor na istraživačka pitanja: otkriveni su problemi na koje se mediji fokusiraju u svakom od okvira, institucije/pojedinci odgovorni za njihovo nastajanje i rešavanje, solucije koje bi trebalo primeniti i moralna osnova za stavove predstavljene u datom tekstu. Vizuelne ilustracije koje su karakteristične za pojedinačne okvire takođe su ispitane u ovim poglavljima. U poslednjem, osmom poglavlju, rezimirani su empirijski nalazi teze. Nakon toga, zaključno poglavlje se osvrće na konceptualizaciju medijskog frejminga trgovine ljudima, te preporuke nastale sa ciljem da ponude potencijalno rešenje koje bi vodilo ka kvalitetnijem izveštavanju o trgovini ljudima u tri izučavane zemlje i šire.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG (GERMAN)

Menschenhandel wird als ein internationales, organisiertes kriminelles Phänomen angesehen, das eine Vielzahl ausbeuterischer Praktiken umfasst. Dazu gehören unter anderem Ausbeutung durch Zwangsarbeit, Sexarbeit, Betteln, Nötigung zu Kleinkriminalität, Zwangsheirat, illegale Adoption, Teilnahme an bewaffneten Konflikten und Organhandel. Trotz der Tatsache, dass das Phänomen seit Jahrzehnten umfassend untersucht wird, gibt es immer eine große Anzahl Mythen und Missverständnisse über das Phänomen des Menschenhandels ist immer noch weit verbreitet.

Die akademischen und öffentlichen Debatten über Menschenhandel konzentrieren sich hauptsächlich auf die Bewertung des Schwierigkeitsgrades diesen Problems und die Unterdrückung des Verbrechens des Menschenhandels. Die Folge dessen ist eine diskursive Verschiebung von Menschenrechten zu Sicherheit und Strafjustiz, wodurch die Art und Weise, wie Menschen über Menschenhandel denken verändert wurde. Obwohl die Literatur über Menschenhandel exponentiell wächst, sind umfangreiche empirische Untersuchungen zum Menschenhandel nach wie vor selten, und vielen Studien fehlen kritische Einsichten und Überlegungen zu spezifischen kulturellen und sozialen Bedingungen, die zum Menschenhandel beitragen. Gelehrte haben es versäumt, die Darstellung des Menschenhandelsphänomens in den Medien und ihre Implikationen zu untersuchen, insbesondere außerhalb des US-amerikanischen Kontextes.

Die Rolle der Medien geht weit über die Sensibilisierung und Prävention der Straftat hinaus. Berichterstattung durch die Presse kann dazu beitragen, öffentliche Unterstützung zu mobilisieren, politischen Wandel zu beeinflussen, Institutionen zu überwachen, die mit dem Problem zu kämpfen haben, Stereotype abzubauen und ein unterstützendes Umfeld zu schaffen, in dem Opfer von Menschenhandel ihre Rechte wahrnehmen und sich regenerieren können. Indem sie das Thema auf eine bestimmte Art und Weise inszenierten und Meinungsbildnern Raum für deren Programme boten, haben die Medien eine bedeutende Rolle bei der Gestaltung des Inhalts und bei der Beeinflussung der Auswirkungen öffentlicher Debatten über Menschenhandel gespielt. In dieser Arbeit wird daher untersucht, wie das Thema Menschenhandel in Online-Medien in Großbritannien, den Niederlanden und Serbien dargestellt wird. Da die sexuelle Ausbeutung die Form der Straftat bleibt, die im Mittelpunkt der öffentlichen Debatten und der Bemühungen zur Lösung des Problems stehen, liegt der Fokus dieser Untersuchungsarbeit speziell bei dieser Form des Menschenhandels. Von dem sozialkonstruktivistischen Ansatz und der spezifischen Rolle von Kultur ausgehend, untersucht wurden drei Ebenen des Framing-Prozesses – das Medienprodukt, seine Produzenten und ihre

Quellen. In dieser Forschungsarbeit wurden sowohl die quantitative als auch qualitative Inhaltsanalyse von Medienartikeln und visuellen Illustrationen angewendet, die in den Medien verwendet werden, sowie Tiefeninterviews mit Medien- und Menschenhandelsexperten durchgeführt. Durch den angewandten triangulierten Mixed-Method-Ansatz bietet diese Forschung einen umfassenden Einblick in die vermittelte Repräsentation von Menschenhandel mit dem Ziel der sexuellen Ausbeutung und adressiert umfassendere soziale und politische Auswirkungen einer solchen Darstellung.

In der Studie werden sechs dominante Frames identifiziert, die bei der Darstellung von Menschenhandel zur sexuellen Ausbeutung verwendet werden. Strafjustiz, Prostitution, Gewalt, Menschenrechte und Migration sind für das Verständnis des Menschenhandels in allen drei Ländern relevant. Im Vereinigten Königreich wird ein zusätzlicher Rahmen mit der Bezeichnung „sexuelle Ausbeutung von Kindern“ für den Handel mit minderjährigen Bürger/innen in der Sexindustrie verwendet. Bezüglich jeden der genannten Rahmen identifiziert diese Forschungsarbeit die herausragendsten Probleme, die von den Medien vermittelt werden, es wird untersucht, wer als deren Stifter identifiziert wurde, wem die Problemlösung zugeschrieben wurde, welche Lösungen wurden vorgeschlagen, und welche visuellen Symbole verwendet wurden, um diese Probleme zu kommunizieren, und schließlich welche auf welcher moralischen Basis wurden die vorgelegten Argumente aufgebaut.

Die Forschungsarbeit zeigt in allen drei Ländern einen Mangel an analytischen, investigativen Artikeln über Menschenhandel auf, sowie die zutiefst problematische ständige Wiederholung von Geschlechterstereotypen, rassistischen und ethnischen Vorurteilen und die Beschuldigung der Opfer. Während das Patriarchat eine zentrale Rolle beim medialen Framing des Menschenhandels in Serbien spielt, tauchen in den Narrativen des niederländischen und britischen Journalismus Echos kolonialer Diskurse auf. Die Analyse der gesammelten Daten lässt darauf schließen, dass die vermittelte Darstellung von Menschenhandel zur sexuellen Ausbeutung in den Sicherheitsängsten der Gesellschaft, den hegemonialen Vorstellungen über das Geschlecht, der Hierarchie der Arbeitsmobilität, den erotischen Obsessionen und der Moral verwurzelt ist. Basierend auf Daten von 2600 Nachrichtenartikeln und 48 ausführlichen Experteninterviews untersucht diese Dissertation die Darstellung des Menschenhandels mit der Absicht, eine umfassende kritische Analyse von medienkonstruierten Frames des Menschenhandels zur sexuellen Ausbeutung zu erstellen und realistische und anwendbare Lösungen vorzuschlagen, die zu informativen, korrekten und verantwortungsvollen Berichterstattung über Menschenhandel führen.

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

There is no way this could go wrong, I thought. I was sitting in the studio of Radio Television of Serbia, the public broadcaster of my home country. It was too early in the morning for me to focus on what I am going to say and, as I always disliked PR officers who piously recite their well-rehearsed sermons, I let my mind stray away whilst we were waiting for the broadcast to start. The bright light pointed at my face was emitting such an intense heat, and I thanked myself for getting up early enough to afford the time to have my makeup done by professionals in the dressing room. At least my face won't melt on camera. I firmly rested my forearms on a cold glass table in front of me and enjoyed the cooling down sensation it gave me. Some five years ago, I used to sneak out from the newsroom on the first floor and stroll down to the same studio, clumsily skipping the many cables on the floor, and navigating my way around prompters and cameras in the narrow space behind the set. In the rare moments of peace between the two daily shows I used to work on as a young reporter, I would stand there hoping that my career path will take me straight into the presenter's chair.

The chairs in the studio are different now, and so is my position. As a guest, I am seated opposite the presenter. She smiled at me and we exchanged a couple of polite sentences. I remembered her, she did not remember me. We never worked together: I was just a journalism student working crazy hours between the lectures and trying to grasp the wild news desk dynamics. She, on the other hand, was a well-known presenter who had her own prime-time show at the time. Now she was doing the morning program, and I was invited to speak about human trafficking that day (I was working for a local anti-trafficking NGO ever since I left the career in journalism). She tells me how much time we have and asks to keep my answers concise. I smile and tell her I know the drill, confident our talk will go well. She is good at her job and I am good at mine. I know most of the team members working on the show – these are the people I learned from, serious journalists who do decent research and care about the quality of their work. On top of that, it is not 18th of October, 30th of July, 2nd of December, nor any other date celebrated as anti-trafficking day in Serbia. I was not invited for any of the annual alarm raising missions when I am kindly asked to share numbers that do not have much meaning and scientific proof behind, but sound serious and smell newsworthy. I was not casually asked to 'bring a victim' along, which was an invigorating relief. Only a year into my work in anti-trafficking, I have already completely exhausted my enthusiasm for explaining why we do not facilitate contact between our clients and the media, and why it is not a good idea for the media to pursue their hunt for the traumatised human being that will make their ratings peak.

I am the only guest which makes me happy - I will not have to confront political sycophants who boldly proclaim Serbia's response to human trafficking is flawless and victims receive all the attention they need; I will not have to deal with another famous-wannabe human trafficking pundit spreading the fear about notorious organised crime groups involved in trafficking that kidnap young virgins of the Balkans only to increase chances of attracting donations for their bogus organisations. Finally a chance to have a serious talk on human trafficking and related risks, I think as the title sequence begins to roll and I adjust the lapel mic clipped to my blouse.

Cameras start rolling, and we begin with covering the usual – human trafficking does happen to citizens of Serbia, both men and women, they are trafficked abroad but also locally... And then it starts – she wants to know what happens to victims in the exploitation phase, how brutal are the conditions, how many rapes per day do trafficked women have to endure, how much physical violence is involved. Avoiding showing my frustration, I explain mechanisms of control employed by traffickers are often more subtle and can involve little or no physical violence. That is an important thing for us to be aware of, I stress, because we need to adequately respond to the exploitation of people who do not fit the stereotype of a bruised girl locked up in a filthy brothel. She frowns as I change the subject and start talking about what can be done to improve fight against trafficking and secure protection of rights of trafficked people. 'But what can be done', she asks as if she has not been listening to what I have been saying, 'to help them when they are so highly traumatised?'. She does not stop to let me answer and gives her version of a trafficking scenario that could easily serve as an inspiration for another sequence of the film 'Taken'⁴. 'How can a girl who has been raped over and over on daily bases continue with her life normally, as if nothing happened?'. 'There is not much time left', she announces, 'so can we conclude that these people are lost souls?'. There it was. Trafficked people were called 'lost souls' on live TV, in the morning program that almost half of the TV viewers in the country wake up next to⁵ and I have only a minute to say this is not the case, we must not give up on people who suffered at the hands of human traffickers, people who can recover and resume control over their lives and leave their traumas behind.

In the years that followed I had equally many conflicts with journalists who were unhappy with my answers that did not fit their idea of what trafficking is and my colleagues in the NGO sector who were not pleased when I told them what they want to push in the media does not translate into a

⁴ Taken is one of the most widely known films on human trafficking that is based on a fictional story in which a teenage daughter of a CIA agent (Liam Neeson) gets abducted by Albanian sex traffickers whilst on a vacation in Paris. Two sequels followed in 2012 and 2015. P Morel (dir.), Taken, 93 min., Europacorp/M6 Films, 2008.

⁵ AGB Nielsen Media Research shows the morning program of the national broadcaster RTS was watched by 40 to 46% of TV audience that year.

newsworthy story. To deconstruct stereotypes of 'lost souls' and alike, and to help resolve the schizophrenic conflict between what the important messages on trafficking are and what messages attract the desired attention, I once again switched careers and enrolled in a PhD program in criminology. The thesis in front of you is a result of my research into media framing of human trafficking for sexual exploitation in Serbia, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands. It relies on online media analysis and interviews with media professionals and people who provide information on trafficking to the media in the researched countries. With the focus on deconstructing dominant frames according to which trafficking is represented in the media, this thesis aspires to fill-in the existing knowledge gaps and contribute to a more responsible reporting on trafficking in human beings.

1.1. Trafficking in Human Beings – Definition

Exploring definitional disagreements can appear an abstract, academic debate, but how trafficking is defined affects access to support, protection and redress and what actions are considered criminal acts. Kelly, 2003

The problem of trafficking was internationally recognised at the end of the 19th century, when the first conference on 'trafficking in women' took place in Paris (Wijers & Lap Chew, 1997). The meeting in Paris was followed by several other conferences held in European capitals and the resulting International Agreement for the Suppression of the White Slave Trade in 1904⁶. Several other international treaties problematizing trafficking in women came to light before the World War II⁷. After the war, all previous international conventions were integrated into the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others (1949) of the United Nations⁸. While reports and resolutions on human trafficking did follow this convention, human trafficking gained its political momentum and started being recognised as a

⁶ International Agreement for the Suppression of the "White Slave Traffic," 18 May 1904, 35 Stat. 1979, 1 L.N.T.S. 83, entered into force 18 July 1905.

⁷ For detailed overview of the history of the human trafficking legislation, see Wijers & Lap Chew, (1997).

⁸ The General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Convention in 1949. It came into effect on 25th of July 1951. UN General Assembly Resolution 317/IV, 2 December 1949. Text available at <http://www.un-documents.net/a4r317.htm>.

pertinent social problem only recently (Weitzer, 2005), after the fall of the Berlin wall. With the migration flow of Eastern European women to the Western countries of the old continent, fears and anxieties over exploitation of women in prostitution resurfaced and movements to recognise this problem and establish appropriate mechanisms to fight it and help trafficking survivors were established.

Trafficking in human beings is now regarded as an international, organized criminal phenomenon that encompasses a variety of exploitative practices. These include, but are not limited to, the exploitation through forced labour, sex work, begging, coercion to commit petty crime, forced marriage, illegal adoption, participation in armed conflicts, and removal of organs. Sexual exploitation remains the form of trafficking that is in the focus of the debate and efforts to tackle human trafficking, despite the fact that trafficking in other industries is slowly becoming more prominent and recognised in the anti-trafficking world. As a low-risk and high-profit criminal activity, trafficking in human beings affects both countries in political and economic transition and developed countries. The first are usually thought of as countries of victims' origin and transit zones, whereas the latter are mainly identified as transit and destination countries for trafficked people. Trafficking operations can involve multiple countries, but can also happen internally, within the borders of a single state. Many attempts to define human trafficking were made in the legislative sector and beyond. The most universally accepted definition of the criminal act is contained in the United Nation's Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children from 2000. This Protocol is supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and is also known as the Palermo Protocol. Definition of trafficking provided under Article 3 of the Protocol states:

(a) "Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

(b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used;

(c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;

(d) “Child” shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

According to this definition, the act of human trafficking comprises of three elements. The first is the action (recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of persons), the second are the means (use of force, threat, coercion, fraud, abduction, deception, abuse of power, etc.), and the third is the goal – i.e. the exploitation or the purpose of exploitation (through prostitution of others and other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, removal of organs, etc.). One form of each of the three elements must be present for an act to be considered trafficking in human beings. Even though widely accepted and translated into many national legal frameworks of UN countries, this definition is not without its problems. These problems are relevant for this research as their manifestations were identified in the subsequent media analysis. Therefore, the text now turns to explore problems of the Palermo Protocol definition of trafficking and the limitations of the treaty. To ensure the reader understands what is meant by trafficking in this study, it then continues to address differences between human trafficking and other terms the phenomenon is frequently confused with, such as human smuggling and slavery.

As Gallagher (2001: 987) pointed out, the definition of human trafficking provided in the Palermo Protocol contains many terms, such as slavery, forced labour, practices similar to slavery, and servitude that are not defined in the treaty. It also relies on vague concepts of consent, force, and exploitation that not only can be interpreted in a number of different ways, but also are hard to prove in judicial practice. Schauer & Wheaton (2006:150) emphasized the importance of having a precise legal definition of force, as an over-inclusive interpretations can result in paternalistic actions against all foreign women involved in prostitution, whereas under-inclusive ones could limit access to recovery services for survivors of trafficking who were recruited and exploited by traffickers using more subtle means of control.

A considerable deficiency of the Protocol lies in the fact that it is focused on international trafficking cases that are operated by organised crime groups. Firstly, practices that involve all three elements of the UN trafficking definition – the action, the means, and the goal (exploitation) – can happen within the borders of a single country. Secondly, these practices can, indeed, be carried out by organised crime group(s), but can also occur when a single individual recruits people and exploits their labour. The Protocol was also criticized for failing to provide guidance on the identification of victims, define obligations referring to protection, and securing political commitment of the signatory parties by establishing a monitoring mechanism (e.g. see Gallagher,

2001, Hyland, 2001). In her critique of the Protocol, Lobasz (2012:12) points out that it failed to provide a unified and clear definition, and that therefore we must move past perceiving trafficking as a 'single, discrete problem or set of phenomena' and focus rather on the multitude of practices that are connected to it.

Though related to issues of human smuggling, slavery, and prostitution, human trafficking should not be equated with these phenomena. Despite that, the mediated picture of human trafficking does not always draw the necessary distinctions. Therefore, differences between the phenomena are highlighted in the text below. The first distinction is the one between human smuggling and trafficking in human beings. Unlike smuggling, human trafficking does not necessarily involve border crossing and it always includes exploitation or intent of exploitation of others. Furthermore, migrants who use services of human smugglers are willing to do so. They might be at greater risk of falling victims to abuse and human trafficking due to their illegal status and dependence on human smugglers, but if there is no (intent of) exploitation involved, these cases cannot be considered to be cases of trafficking. Like smuggled people, victims of human trafficking sometimes consent to border crossing, but their obedience and exploitation are forced by physical violence, coercion, threats, fraud and similar means. Even those trafficked individuals who agreed to be smuggled across the border are unaware of the exploitation that follows their voyage. In the case of trafficking for sexual exploitation, some women are aware that they are migrating in order to work in the sex industry, but they are not aware of exploitative conditions that await at the end of their journey. It is important to distinguish between human trafficking and human smuggling phenomena, especially in the wake of the current migration flows. Confusion between the two terms in the media and moral panics about high rates of trafficking of irregular migrants are widely spread out and highly consequential⁹.

Another distinction that needs to be drawn is that between human trafficking and slavery. Some scholars tend to equate human trafficking with modern day slavery, arguing that defining elements of slavery – loss of freedom, appropriation of labour power, and violence and threats of violence are characteristic of trafficking too (Bales and Robbins, 2001:32). Such views, however, are problematic and fail to account for the complexity of structural conditions and lived experiences of people who suffered various forms labour rights violations, abuse, and human trafficking. Furthermore, the level of agency exercised by people falling victim to human trafficking can differ greatly from the one victims of chattel slavery once had. Misconceptions related to this question can cause a cornucopia of problems. On the one hand, victim blaming

⁹ See analysis of the migration frame in relation to human trafficking in this thesis (sections 5.3.4., 6.3.5. and 7.3.5.) and Berry, Garcia-Blanco & Moore, 2016 and ICMPD, 2017 for the analysis of media coverage of the 'migration crisis' in Europe.

and inadequate assistance can occur as a consequence of not recognising the subtle methods of control some traffickers exercise over their victims. On the other, there may be false assumptions that all migrants selling sex or working in conditions that are not deemed appropriate in Western cultures are victims of trafficking. That can further result in paternalistic and moralistic crusades organised in order to 'save' people who do not want such interventions (for example, see Weitzer, 2015b and Aronowitz, 2017).

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that trafficking for sexual exploitation is not the only form of the criminal act, nor is all prostitution equal to human trafficking in the sex industry. Sex workers who engage in prostitution voluntarily have the possibility to control conditions in which they sell their services as well as those related to their earnings. Even though they are more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, not all sex workers endure the same exploitative torments as trafficked individuals. Victims of human trafficking are, as a rule, exploited by others. Although some of them can consent to working in the sex industry, they do not agree to exploitative conditions that their traffickers impose. Unlike trafficked people, who are not in the position to leave the situation of exploitation, sex workers can more easily abandon work in prostitution should they wish to do so. However, a clear-cut distinction between prostitution and trafficking is hard to make. Critics have pointed out that these definitions are reductive and render understanding of the specific conditions surrounding migration and sex work impossible (Doezema, 1999, Agustín, 2006). There are many intricate overlaps between the wish to migrate, willingness to expose oneself to various risks, readiness to take on debts, and even endure abuse in order to improve one's own prospects or provide for families back home. Acknowledging the multidimensionality of women's migratory projects, Anderson and O'Connell Davidson (2003) argued that trafficking and migration should not be observed as separate phenomena, but rather as an intersecting continuum.

Although criticized, the Palermo Protocol on human trafficking provided the first widely accepted definition of the criminal act. It is also a document that was signed by all three countries studied for this project¹⁰. Therefore, the definition contained within it is relevant when considering public representation of human trafficking, and so are the problems identified in the above text. Their manifestations are visible in media reporting on human trafficking as well. The mediated image of human trafficking frequently confuses the phenomenon with human smuggling, prostitution, exploitation of labour, and slavery. Furthermore, the issue of consent, exploitation, level of

¹⁰ Serbia ratified the protocol in 2001, followed by the Netherlands in 2005 and the United Kingdom in 2006. The full list of the treaty signatories and ratification status details is available here https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XVIII-12-a&chapter=18&clang=en.

violence, etc. contribute to victim blaming and further stereotyping in the media, as the analysis in this thesis demonstrates.

1.2. Perspectives on Human Trafficking

As the overview of the attempts to define trafficking in human beings might have shown, the issue of trafficking is rather complex. For that reason, it is not surprising that many scholars and practitioners have attempted to explain it from various different stand points. Whether divided on the law enforcement/human rights axes, or the one focused on the liberal/abolitionist approach to regulating prostitution, the phenomenon of human trafficking continues to attract controversy. In fact, there is not much agreement within the existing scholarship on how to divide perspectives on trafficking. For instance, Aronowitz (2009) provides a classification in which she identifies eight different perspectives that perceive human trafficking predominantly as (1) a migration issue, (2) a development issue, (3) an economic issue, (4) a supply and demand issue, (5) a globalisation issue, (6) a criminal justice issue, (7) a human rights issue, and (8) a slavery issue. Unlike her, Kempadoo (2012) focuses on three perspectives that she deems remained relevant in the 21st century – abolitionism, criminal justice and transnational feminism. Lobasz (2012), on the other hand, provides yet another categorisation in her doctoral thesis. She breaks human trafficking perspectives into those who see it as a threat to security, violation of human rights, problem of irregular migration, a prostitution related issue, and exploitative labour. With more or less overlaps, many other categorisations of the issue of human trafficking are revealed in the existing literature on human trafficking. Some are perceived as competing: the human rights perspective with the security threat perspective, or abolitionist and liberal feminist views on how prostitution legislation affects the human trafficking situation. Others are complementary – there are many links between globalisation, securitisation, and migration related views on human trafficking. Without a desire to present one classification as more accurate than another, this introductory chapter takes a brief look into the differing perspectives in order to provide context for the subsequent analysis.

1.2.1. Prostitution-centred Perspectives

In the 1980s the feminist movement had split into two opposing groups based on their views on sexuality. These two groups are commonly being referred to as radical and liberal (libertarian) feminists. Their opposing views on prostitution, efforts to push for differing regulatory solutions, and parallels drawn between prostitution and human trafficking for sexual exploitation brought their debate to the centre of trafficking disputes in many European countries. Radical feminists'

and liberal feminists' views on sexuality have been contrasted and criticized by Ann Ferguson (1984). She (ibid: 108) identified the following views on sexuality to be central to the radical feminist way of thinking:

1. Heterosexual relationships are based on the ideology of sexual objectification of the female, and therefore encourage male sexual violence against women.
2. Feminists should renounce all sexual practices that in any way support male sexual violence.
3. Feminists should regain control over female sexuality through focusing on female sexual priorities, such as the intimacy.
4. Appropriate sexual relationship implies that there is compliance between two equal partners who are emotionally involved with one another.

In contrast to that, Ferguson (ibid: 109) writes that liberal feminists' thinking is based on the following convictions:

1. The patriarchy caused repression of sexuality, sexual practices, and pleasure in an endeavour to keep the majority 'pure'. This further resulted in the stigmatisation of sexual minorities;
2. Feminists should reject all the theories, legal provisions and moral judgements that stigmatise sexual minorities and restrict sexual freedom in general.
3. Feminists should demand the right to practice whatever gives us pleasure and satisfaction and thereby win back the control over female sexuality.
4. Appropriate sexual relationship is any that is happening between fully consenting, equal partners who strive to maximize one another's sexual pleasure by any means of their choice.

These differing starting points shaped the views these two groups have on prostitution and, consequently, human trafficking in the sex industry. The debate had an impact on the policy level too, and it continues to do so. For instance, revisiting the prostitution debate was central to the negotiations on the text of the Palermo Protocol (Gallagher, 2001). In connection to this study, the relevance of the feminist debate on prostitution is central to the way trafficking issue is represented and dealt with in the Netherlands in particular. This is because the prostitution legislation in the country was being revised at the moment this research was being conducted and this thesis written. As the legislative proposal is focused on tackling abuses in the sex industry, the question of whether legalization of prostitution contributes to human trafficking and should therefore be revoked became central in the public policy debate in the country.

Abolitionists perceive all prostitution as inherently exploitative as it involves sexual objectification and subordination of women. In their view, selling sex involves submitting oneself to the sexual dominance of the man, and being treated in a degrading manner, as a commodity (Kesler, 2002, Hughes and Roche, 1999, Barry, 1979, 1995). Advocates of this perspective typically see sex workers who claim to be working in prostitution voluntarily as deceived victims of male power. Abolition of prostitution, and other patriarchal institutions, is seen as a condition sine qua non of the female liberation. A strong influence of abolitionist feminism is manifested in the public and legal discourse on human trafficking and the way the issue is being addressed. For instance, on legislative level, US law on human trafficking distinguishes between sex trafficking and other forms of the criminal act, the former being seen as a 'severe form of trafficking in persons'. Also, even though the Palermo Protocol breaks the tradition of international treaties on trafficking that take consent of adults to be irrelevant, it still focuses on 'women and children', i.e. groups who are more vulnerable to exploitation in the sex industry. Furthermore, the influence of the movement is particularly visible in the US, where funding of anti-trafficking activities depend on their attitudes towards regulation of prostitution. Namely, the Federal government requires adoption of an anti-prostitution organisational policy from all the foreign and national non-governmental organisations that receive funding from the US¹¹.

Even though influential, the abolitionist perspective has been highly criticized for being moralistic, affecting rights of sex workers and migrants, and supporting greater policing, and increased border and movement control. Kempadoo (2016: xvi) suggests that this movement:

'...maps almost seamlessly onto the intensely nationalistic, anti-prostitution, child protection governance models that have been erected to regulate, police, and discipline feminine sexuality'.

Liberal feminists, on the other hand, see the decision to enter prostitution as a personal choice of women, men and transgender persons who work in the industry. While fighting for eradication of human trafficking and abuse in the sex work industry, advocates of this perspective are arguing that anti-trafficking policies and practices need not affect the rights of sex workers, migrants, and other vulnerable groups. In addition, liberal feminists stress that, even though exploitation exists in the sex industry, it is not different to nor should it be treated differently to exploitation in other industries where exploitation of labour is known to occur. For them, it is the gender inequality and related structural discrimination that make women vulnerable to exploitation and human

¹¹ This provision is known as the 'anti-prostitution pledge' and was introduced during the Bush administration. It was applied to foreign based NGOs from 2003 and expanded to American organisations two years later.

trafficking. Therefore, what should be accentuated and addressed is not one of the industries where trafficking occurs, but the conditions that make it possible for trafficking to take place. This school of thought contributed to a greater recognition of other forms of human trafficking, including trafficking in agriculture, domestic servitude, hospitality, manufacturing, and other low-skilled work spheres known to be attractive for human traffickers. In addition, liberal feminists drew attention to racialization and feminisation of labour and migration processes that were sparked world-wide by the globalisation of capitalism, and proposed a critique of abolitionism and policing-based approaches that accuses them of protecting interests of the political and economic elites and not that of the working-class and poor people (Kempadoo, 2016: xix-xx). This perspective has been criticized for failing to recognise the links between legalised prostitution and the abuse in the sector. Also, radical feminist scholars believe that as patriarchal societies rest upon gender inequality and oppression, women are not free to choose prostitution, but rather conditionally coerced to enter the profession (Beran, 2012). At the same time, however, the liberal feminist position has also been praised for recognising complex cultural and individual subjectivities, and not pushing for the Western liberal discourse on the universality of human rights that has long be criticized in the feminist literature (in relation to human trafficking, see for instance Godec, 2010, Cheng, 2008, or Agustín, 2005).

The scope of this research does not allow for drawing conclusions on the links between prostitution regulation and trafficking for sexual exploitation, or advocating for either of the two approaches represented here. It is, however, essential to understand the two positions, especially in the light of current competition between the policies that have been inspired by the radical school of thought and the ones stemming from a more liberal way of thinking and pushing for legalisation. The so-called 'Swedish model'¹² of prostitution legislation has gained increased popularity in Europe in recent years and in particular, in the time period analysed in this research. Both in the Netherlands and in the United Kingdom policies that criminalise purchase of sexual services were drafted and promoted in the observed period, and they have had a substantial impact on the trafficking debate. In Northern Ireland criminalisation of the purchase of sexual services occurred with the adoption of The Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Further Provisions and Support for Victims) Bill in 2015¹³. Similar policies were discussed and eventually rejected in

¹² Swedish model (also known as the Nordic model) is an approach to regulating prostitution that decriminalizes sex workers and makes purchase of sex a criminal offence, thus punishing clients instead of prostitutes.

¹³ The original version of the bill (as enacted) is available here <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/niu/2015/2/contents/enacted>.

the Scottish Parliament in the period between 2010 and 2013¹⁴, whereas a new bill supporting decriminalisation of sex work similar to the model in place in New Zealand was proposed more recently, in 2015.¹⁵ Finally, the public debate on human trafficking in the Netherlands, and as the analysis in this thesis shows, a great deal of media reporting on the issue, was focused on the links between prostitution regulation and sexual exploitation in the sector. During the observed period, the legislation on prostitution became stricter: sex workers need to register with authorities, the minimum age was raised to 21 and clients are held accountable now and have to check whether the sex worker they are contacting is registered or an undocumented sex worker (Outshoorn, 2012:233). Attempts were also made to criminalise sex buying in the Netherlands.¹⁶ On a wider European level, the European Commission recognized the impact of criminalisation of the purchase of sexual services as a tool in fighting human trafficking (COM, 2016, 719 final). Therefore, in relation to this research, it was important to pay close attention to how these issues were being represented in the public discourse, and whether or not such representation could have had harmful effects on victims of trafficking, sex workers, labour migrants, and others.

1.2.2. Migration, Security and Criminal Justice Perspectives

Regarding trafficking as a migration-related issue is a very prominent perspective in anti-trafficking. It sees migration as the main cause of trafficking and seeks to introduce stricter migration controls in order to counteract trafficking operations. Both regular and irregular migrants face the risk of being trafficked. Due to their illegal status in the receiving country, irregular migrants are forced to seek job opportunities in the black market, which increases their chances of being abused and exploited. Even the people who legally enter the country face the risk of trafficking for a number of different reasons. These include, but are not limited to, having the right to visit but not having the right to work in the destination country; dependence on the employer who sponsors the work visa; involvement in illegal activities (e.g. prostitution and petty crime) that could result in deportation and other legal repercussions, etc. The response to human trafficking that advocates of this perspective promote is focused on stopping illegal migration and imposing stricter controls on migratory processes. However, these strategies proved to be ineffective against human trafficking. Visa liberalisation within the European Union and the

¹⁴ The proposal of the bill is available here

[http://www.parliament.scot/S4_MembersBills/Criminalisation_of_the_Purchase_of_Sex_\(2\)_Consultation.pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/S4_MembersBills/Criminalisation_of_the_Purchase_of_Sex_(2)_Consultation.pdf)

¹⁵ The proposal of the bill is available here http://www.parliament.scot/S4_MembersBills/2015-09-3_Prostitution_Law_Reform_Bill_consultation_-_final.pdf.

¹⁶ See section 7.1.

accession of poorer Eastern European countries such as Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary provided ample opportunities for human traffickers who suddenly did not have to worry about smuggling their victims across European Borders. Furthermore, measures such as strict border controls, increased policing and surveillance, deportation of irregular migrants, etc. did not have the desired effect on suppression of human trafficking. Rather than discouraging illegal migration, it made people who wanted to migrate more dependent on smugglers and traffickers (Berman, 2003, Sassen, 2000, Kempadoo and Doezema, 1998). Another negative consequence linked to this is that victim-blaming became more likely as consent to migration, and in some cases also consent to work in the sex industry, did not fit the stereotypical perception of trafficking victims as naïve and innocent. In the public discourse, trafficked people became increasingly represented as undesired aliens and not victims, which served as a justification for further restrictive migration policies.

The migration-centred perspectives are closely linked to theorising on human trafficking that focuses on the security and criminal justice aspects of the phenomenon. In her analysis of anti-trafficking discourse Jacqueline Berman (2003) describes this shift from a migration to a securitisation perspective and concludes that states use anti-trafficking discourses to re-establish sovereignty over their territories and borders. They do so by positioning organized crime as a problem instead of women on the move. Victims are, according to Berman, transformed from 'popular strangers' we empathize with, into 'unpopular' foreigners, i.e. illegal immigrants whose deportation becomes part of the price paid for protection of national interests and state sovereignty. The re-emergence of the problem of human trafficking in the 20th century international political agenda and the migration control approach have been linked by critics to modern anxieties centred on the survival of the nation, preservation of the current world order and wealth distribution, globalisation related phenomena (e.g. regional integration, high rates of immigration, and new forms of capital circulation), and identifying the ethnic 'Other' as a threat to security of the First World (e.g. see Kapur, 2016, Kempadoo, 2015, Berman, 2003). Kapur (2016:32) points out that this approach was deeply rooted in the negotiations on the UN Palermo protocol on trafficking. She implies that fixing the treaty in the context of the fight against international organised crime is indicative of the States' interests in maintaining border integrity, which resulted in the enhanced criminal justice and security approach to human trafficking at the expense of the human rights perspective. Namely, rights of victims ceased to be a priority in an atmosphere that fostered criminalisation, prosecution of traffickers, dismantling of criminal groups, migration control, and eradication of trafficking.

1.2.3. Human Rights Perspective

Viewing human trafficking within the framework of human rights is deeply integrated in the anti-trafficking movement. In fact, of all the perspectives mentioned here, human rights has the longest history, which is manifested in the international treaties on human trafficking that have been historically centred on human rights (Aronowitz, 2009:28). Trafficking in human beings involves numerous human rights violations that are defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948), including the right to life and liberty, the right to be free from all forms of slavery, the right not to be tortured or submitted to cruel or degrading treatment, the right to personal autonomy, the right to safe and healthy working conditions, the right to equal pay for equal work, the right to enjoy psychological, physical and sexual health, the right to freedom of choosing residence and moving within one's own country, etc. (Pearson, 2000: 42-3). On top of these, minor victims of human trafficking are being denied rights to grow up safe, and free of abuse and exploitation. Rights denial based on gender and racial discrimination significantly contributes to human trafficking too. Proponents of the human rights perspective also stress the pivotal importance of protecting victims of human trafficking from secondary victimisation and violations of rights. This often occurs in situations where primary focus is on the criminal justice approach. For instance, judicial practice in Serbia shows that despite the fact that proving human trafficking usually depends on the testimony of victims, their participation in the criminal proceedings is often re-traumatising and harmful. Study on the status and treatment of victims in court proceedings in human trafficking cases showed that victims' identity, privacy, and security are inadequately protected by the court, they are mistreated during the hearings, and they gain very little satisfaction from having participated in the proceedings – sentences against the traffickers are lenient, compensation to victims is not awarded, and legal counselling and support during the process are seldom provided (ASTRA, 2015).

This perspective is important not only because it shifts the attention from crime suppression to victims' rights and protection thereof, but also because it highlights the accountability of governments to secure protection of rights and adequately sanction all human rights violations. Human rights is often the common thread shared between the different perspectives on human trafficking. For instance, both abolitionist and liberal feminist prioritise on the rights of human trafficking survivors, but disagree on who should be considered one and who not. However, as has been shown in the text on criminal justice and securitisation above, it is not easy to reconcile these two perspectives with the human rights one in practice. It is also important to note that the human rights perspective is a contested one as well, with most of the critical thoughts addressing its inefficiency, ambiguity, and universality from a cultural-relativist, and especially non-Western perspective (e.g. see Donnelly, 2007, 1982, Brown, 1997).

1.2.4. Modern Slavery Perspective

As the literature review will show in Chapter 2 of this thesis, human trafficking has been linked with slavery practices, with the act of trafficking for sexual exploitation being labelled as 'white slavery' from 19th century. This historical aspect of the links between human trafficking and slavery will be addressed later. Here, the focus is on the recent and ever-more popular perspective that considers human trafficking to be a form of modern-day slavery. The idea that is promoted by the advocates of this perspective is that the abolition of slavery in the 19th century was not successful and that human trafficking represents one of the modern-day manifestation of classical slavery. Pursuant to this view, human trafficking, forced labour, debt bondage, descent-based slavery, child slavery, and forced marriage are all different forms of slavery that occurs in the contemporary world. In the European context, the popularity of the modern slavery discourse is particularly great in the United Kingdom where the criminal act of human trafficking is regulated by the Modern Slavery Act (2015).

While not refuting that the above mentioned practices occur in the 21st century world, critical scholars have been pointing out that understanding human trafficking as slavery is problematic (Kempadoo, 2015, Weitzer, 2014). It has been mentioned earlier in this work that experiences of African people enslaved and exploited throughout the West in the past and those of people trafficked for exploitation today could differ greatly. Even Kevin Bales, one of the most influential scholars who insist on the modern slavery terminology, recognises the difference between trafficked people and people who were enslaved in the past, stressing that modern day slaves are much more disposable (Bales, 1999). However, discourses surrounding the two phenomena show remarkable similarities, adhering to binaries of freedom/slavery, victim/perpetrator, persons/things, national/foreigner, good/evil, etc. (Krsmanović, 2015). Parallels between trafficking and chattel slavery enable anti-trafficking campaigners to tap into the moral capital of the historical movement for the abolition of slavery. As American anthropologist, Denise Brennan (2014) has shown in her book on labour trafficking in the US, people respond emotionally to the term 'slavery', which typically results in the shift on the moral side of the debate, and any response to trafficking that is not calling for suppression of human trafficking at any cost is deemed immoral and wrong. Critiques of the modern slavery perspective point out that the approach to trafficking they advocate is rather based on morality than on hard evidence (Kempadoo, 2015). As I have pointed out in my previous work (Krsmanović, 2015), one of the most common motifs modern-slavery discourse relies on, the alarmingly high numbers of people believed to be in slavery today, seems to be a good indicator of that. In a four-year period, the estimated number of modern-day slaves worldwide almost doubled – the Global Slavery Index

report suggested there were 29.8 million slaves in the world in 2013, and 45.8 million in 2016¹⁷. The methodology behind these estimates was disputed because it relies on unstandardized sources, extrapolations from one country to another based on the subjective notion of their similarity, and secondary sources of information, such as media reports and unstandardized statistics of local NGOs (Weitzer, 2014, Guth et al, 2014). Furthermore, representing human trafficking as a slavery issue easily extends to rescue missions that are extensively criticized in the literature on human trafficking. For instance, Kempadoo (2015:15) writes that even though scholars are ready to admit that the 19th century anti-slavery movement rested upon the imperialism of the West, few of them recognise this practice continues to this date:

‘Rather, racism is banished to the past, even while the argument is made that there is no sharp divide, but rather many continuities, between old and new practices of slavery.’

(see also Doezema, 1999, Aradau, 2004, Agustín, 2007, Wietzer, 2007, Dottridge, 2017).

Speaking of trafficking in terms of (modern) slavery has another side effect prompting us to consider this new way of framing human trafficking in the light of Western imperialism. Namely, the term slavery also implies that certain countries are allowing something terrible to happen (Dottridge, 2017). Those countries are not the developed Western democracies that are pioneers in combating modern slavery, but African and Asian countries that were impoverished by imperialistic and colonialist practices. Thereby, modern slavery discourse functions as a vessel in which the West gets absolved from its complicity in establishing and sustaining conditions for modern-day exploitation, and the responsibility gets reassigned to developing countries. Yet, the fact that numerous people are exploited in Asian sweatshops, for example, is not only the responsibility of individual Asian governments but also the responsibility of large Western companies and corporations that are benefiting from low-cost country sourcing and Western governments whose economies are flourishing under such conditions. On the structural level, that means that the blame for human trafficking and slavery gets shifted from institutions and capitalistic enterprises to individual criminals and criminal groups (Kempadoo, 2015) whose prosecution, consequently, will have no impact on demand for exploitative labour and will not solve the problem of trafficking in human beings (THB) and exploitation.

¹⁷ GSI report for 2013 is available for download here http://www.ungift.org/doc/knowledgehub/resource-centre/2013/GlobalSlaveryIndex_2013_Download_WEB1.pdf, and the latest report on 2016 here <https://www.globalslaveryindex.org/download/>. Retrieved on 29.05.2017.

1.2.5. Conclusion

The perspectives reviewed in this chapter are reflected in media reporting on human trafficking. The criminal justice perspective is pertinent for all three countries, as stopping criminal organisations involved in trafficking and adequately punishing trafficking is emphasized more than helping their victims. However, the subsequent analysis will show that some perspectives offer a more fitting explanation of trafficking perception and representation in individual countries. For instance, modern slavery and migration perspectives better explain hegemonic views on human trafficking in the UK, whereas the prostitution perspective is more relevant in the Netherlands.

These perspectives also inform understanding of the issue by journalists who produce content on the topic and people who are experts in anti-trafficking and publicly speak about the phenomenon. Dominant frames in media reporting that were analysed in this thesis could also be linked to different perspectives on trafficking in human beings, with some variations and emphasis on the most newsworthy aspects related to the phenomenon. This thesis briefly turns to perspectives on journalism. It then proceeds to define the research questions that guided this research project and analysis. After that, it elaborates on the importance of studying discourses that are fostered and promoted by the opposing schools of thought on human trafficking, and the relevance of this particular study that is focused on media framing of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The chapter concludes with the overview of the thesis content.

1.3. Operationalising journalism and media

Scholars have come up with various theoretical approaches to conceptualize journalism (Zelizer, 2017, 2004, Deuze, 2011, Hanitzsch, 2011). It has been conceptualised as a profession, ideology, institution, social system, literature genre, trade, calling, craft, etc. To further complicate concerned theorising, journalism is changing very rapidly and profoundly. It is affected by commercialisation, shaped by the internet and new technologies, and increasingly merged with the realms of PR and advertising. Consequent to globalisation and aforementioned processes, different journalistic practices and orientations are converging. As journalism keeps adapting to keep touch with modern society, so must our attempts to define and explain it. This thesis attempts to account for such dynamic nature of contemporary journalism by taking into account experiences of journalists working in studied countries and considering specific conditions and media spheres in which analysed texts have been produced. A brief presentation of

conceptualisations of journalism and journalistic culture is provided below, followed by an explanation of specific assumptions on journalism adopted in this study.

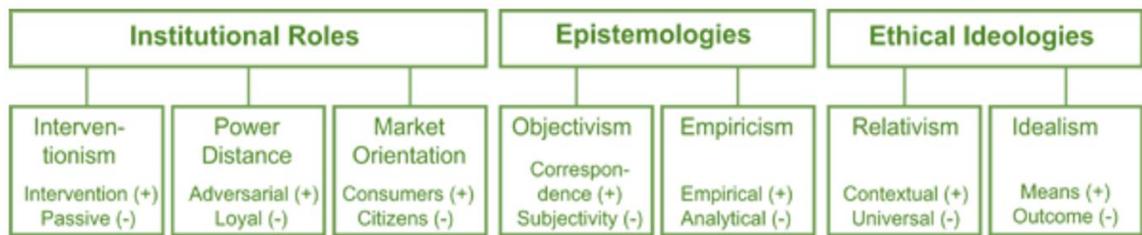
Different approaches in conceptualising journalism have specific foci on its societal functions, practices, and historical background. Together they map the entity of journalism as one of the core institutions in modern society. Mark Deuze (2011:19) proposes journalism is best understood as an occupational ideology, i.e. a system of beliefs helping journalists validate and give meaning to their work. In his literature review, he identifies five pertinent elements of journalism ideology as:

- (1) public service (finding and disseminating information of public concern),
- (2) objectivity (impartial, credible reporting),
- (3) autonomy (editorial freedom and independence),
- (4) immediacy (actuality and immediacy of news), and
- (5) ethics.

However, it is important to note that Deuze's conceptualisation best describes Western understandings of journalism. Thereby, it is relevant for this study that is focused on scrutinising media in European countries, but that does not mean that common occupational ideology is shared between journalists around the globe.

A more universal theory is proposed by Thomas Hanitzsch (2011), who proposed a three-level model that explains the culture of journalism.¹⁸ According to the model he proposes, journalists share set of ideas and practices through which they legitimate their role in society and assign meaning to their work (ibid.). Journalism culture consolidates these ideas. It is comprised of three essential elements – institutional roles (interventionism, power distance, and market orientation), epistemologies (objectivism and empiricism), and ethical ideologies (relativism and idealism). Different professional ideologies in journalism involve different extent to which journalists endorse these dimensions. For instance, investigative journalists highly value distance to power, objectivism, empiricism and relativism and score low on market orientation (i.e. they perceive public as citizens rather than consumers) and idealism. On the other hand, newer forms of journalism, such as opinion journalism, are characterised by low regard for objectivism and empiricism. Hanitzsch (ibid: 36) constructed the below diagram to visualise the constitutive elements and principal dimensions of journalism culture.

¹⁸ Journalism culture and its occupational ideology are two related, but distinct phenomena. According to Hanitzsch's (2011:35) interpretation of Deuze, 'shared occupational ideology serves as the cultural cement that holds journalists together' and 'forms the foundation of journalism's identity'.



This model was used to explore journalistic culture in 18 different countries¹⁹. Findings of this comparative study have shown that journalists globally find detachment, non-involvement, providing political information and monitoring the government to be the essential journalistic functions (Hanitzsch et al. 2010). Shared attitudes towards impartiality, reliability and factualness of information presented in journalistic products were also detected globally. Yet, the split points between Western and non-Western journalists were adherence to universal ethical principles (preferred in the West) and interventionism (to which non-Western journalist were more prone) (ibid:273).

This thesis assumes that the function of journalism is to select and construct topics of general concern to the society. This is not to say that all practices labelled as journalistic comply with this function. However, when it comes to reporting on serious issues, such as human trafficking, it is imperative that media report objectively and responsibly, and prioritise public interest over that of making a profit. It is only such journalism that can contribute to better protection of human trafficking survivors and those who are vulnerable to the crime and support fight against it (see section 1.5. for detailed analysis of the role media can play in anti-trafficking). As elaborated on in Chapter 2, media are seen as social institutions that interact and mutually transform other realms of the social world. However, it is important to note that term media is used later in the thesis (particularly in empirical chapters) mainly to refer to journalistic media, specifically the media analysed in this research. Term online media is also used to refer to the media selected for the analysis and label journalistic products published in digital versions of newspapers, news websites, web presentations of television and radio news, and independent news sources. In methodology chapter (Chapter 3) it is explained in detail what media and publications therein are included in and excluded from the sample.

¹⁹ Australia, Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Egypt, Germany, Indonesia, Israel, Mexico, Romania, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Uganda and the United States.

1.4. Research Questions and Focus

This research aims to bridge the gap in the knowledge on media reporting on trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation, and move past the descriptive and/or narrow attempts to scrutinise the subject that are characteristic of the existing literature.

The central research question of this study is:

How was the issue of human trafficking for sexual exploitation framed in the online media in Serbia, UK and NL in the period between 2011 and 2015?

To help answer this research question, the sub-questions listed below were devised. Entman's (1993:52) basic functions of frames discussed in Chapter 2 inspired the formulation of the following subquestions:

- (1) What problems are identified in reporting on THB for sexual exploitation within the given frame?
- (2) Who is represented as the one responsible for the creation of the problem in the analysed articles within the given frame?
- (3) Who is represented as the one responsible for solving the problem in the analysed articles within the given frame?
- (4) What are the moral bases/judgements associated with the given frame in the analysed articles?
- (5) What solutions are suggested for the identified problems within the given frame in the analysed articles?

Further, this study also aims to contribute to a better understanding of THB by bypassing the traditional neglect of visual elements that characterises both crime studies (Hayward & Presdee, 2010) and frame analysis (Matthes, 2009). Therefore, additional question on visual elements used in identified frames also guided this analysis:

- (6) What visual elements were used to illustrate news stories that belong to the given frame?

The focus of this study is on media reporting on human trafficking for sexual exploitation.²⁰ Decision to disregard other forms of exploitation that fit the definition of human trafficking (e.g.

²⁰ In this thesis I often use the general term human trafficking or just trafficking in phrases such as 'framing of human trafficking' or 'mediated representation of trafficking'. Even though it would be more accurate if I specified throughout the thesis that I mean media representation of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, I chose not to do so in order to avoid complicated long phrases and to make reading of the

human trafficking for labour exploitation, domestic servitude, exploitation through criminality, forced begging, or forced marriages) was made for twofold reasons. Firstly, existing scholarship on media reporting on human trafficking lacks in-depth analysis. For this research to bridge that knowledge gap and examine media frames in detail, I opted for limiting the interest to only one form of exploitation. Sexual exploitation was chosen as the most common form of human trafficking²¹, and certainly the one that media devote most attention to (Muraszkiewicz et al., 2014, Sobel, 2014, Pajnik, 2010). Secondly, sexual exploitation has certain characteristics that distinguish it from other forms of human trafficking, and therefore it would be wrong to consider all reports together. For example, sexual exploitation is closely connected with moral judgements and prejudices linked to sex work, resulting in victim blaming and other implications that are not that common when it comes to other exploitative practices that fit the legal definition of human trafficking. In addition, it is a highly gendered issue: women and girls are significantly more affected by it than men and boys.

The study considers media framing of trafficking for sexual exploitation in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Serbia. There were practical and theoretical reasons behind choosing these three countries. Whereas reporting on trafficking was mainly explored in the United States (Leechaianan & Roth, 2014, Johnston, et al., 2014, Sobel, 2014, Virkus, 2014, Curtis, 2012, Gulati, 2010, Farrell and Fahy 2009, Wilson & Dalton, 2007), much less is known about this in European context²². These three countries have specific characteristics that make them particularly relevant for scientific investigation and a good starting point in the pursuit for knowledge expansion in this area. On the one hand, all three countries have different approaches to regulating the sex industry and trade in sex, and different attitudes towards sex work in general; on the other, the media sphere in the selected countries differs significantly in terms of

thesis easier. This was not done to insinuate this form of human trafficking should be emphasized over others.

²¹ Many attempts were made by researchers, governments and international organisations to measure the scale of human trafficking and determine the frequency of different modes of exploitation. Although most still indicate human trafficking for sexual exploitation as the most common form of the criminal act (e.g. see UNODC's 'Global Report on Trafficking in Persons' from 2009, Eurostat reports on human trafficking from 2014 and 2015, as well as national statistical annual reports of the Centre for Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking in Serbia, and the Dutch National Rapporteur), recent reports indicate this is not the case (ILO, 2012, NRM statistics issued by National Crime Agency in the UK from 2013 onwards). It is important to note that findings from these reports are not comparable as some focus on statistics derived from known cases of trafficking, whereas others attempt to estimate the real scale of the problem. Furthermore, they employ different measuring strategies and apply diverse definitions of trafficking, exploitation, labour exploitation, etc. which makes all comparisons borderline preposterous. Also, attempts to quantify trafficking and its various forms were largely contested by academics, highlighting that we are far from having more reliable numbers than current 'guesstimates'.

²² This topic in the UK context was explored more (Hill, 2016, Muraszkiewicz et al., 2014, Gulati, 2010b, and Dugan, 2010 who explored reporting on trafficking for labour exploitation). However, reporting on trafficking remains understudied in continental Europe, particularly in Eastern European countries.

competitiveness, available resources, and freedom from economic and political influences. Due to the paucity of the existing literature, this study aims to gain understanding of media frames in three different cultural and political settings of European countries. The United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Serbia are all simultaneously countries of origin, destination and transit countries for victims of human trafficking. However, trends show that Western European citizens identified as victims are exploited locally (i.e. great majority of them are exploited in their own country), and the number of domestic victims in the West is still relatively small compared to numbers of foreigners exploited there (Eurostat 2015). Eastern European citizens, on the other hand, are involved as victims in both national and cross-border cases of human trafficking (ibid). For this reason it is important to explore how media frame the issue in countries that are on the opposite ends of victim sending-receiving spectrum, as well as perceiving victims as typically foreign or domestic nationals. Finally, practical reasons in selecting countries for the analysis were taken in consideration, mostly in terms of language familiarity and access. Since I am proficient in Serbian and English language, I opted for conducting analysis of British and Serbian media. In addition, the Netherlands was chosen for its specific prostitution regulation system. To overcome the language barrier, a research assistant was involved in data collection and coding of Dutch articles, and texts that were analysed qualitatively were translated into English (for details, see under 3.4. Research Procedure). Also, in these three countries I had good access to the media and anti-trafficking professionals interviewed for the study.

Finally, this research focuses on media reporting from 2011 to 2015. This period is relevant for consideration due to the recent and potential legislative changes in the observed countries. American scholars have shown how important it is to observe media reporting on trafficking in times of legislative changes (Curtis, 2012, Gulati, 2010). During the observed period, the UK Parliament adopted the Modern Slavery Act (2015) that extends to England and Wales. In the same year, the Scottish Parliament passed the Human Trafficking and Exploitation Bill, and Northern Ireland enacted the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act. All these legislative measures were promoted and criticised in the media, and the issue of human trafficking resurfaced in the British news as one of great political relevance. In the Netherlands, the Dutch House of Representatives adopted the Regulation of Prostitution and Tackling Abuses in the Sex Industry Bill in 2011, but the bill in its altered form is still being disputed in the Parliament. Among others, the goal of this legislative measure is to prevent abuse in the sex industry. The legislation was just another factor that added fuel to the fiery arguments on links between prostitution and human trafficking. Even though no significant legal changes

were made in Serbia with regards to trafficking regulation in the observed period²³, the Criminal Code of the Republic of Serbia that regulates the criminal act of human trafficking was amended in 2012. The proposed changes initially contained provisions on possibility of commutation of sentences that would also affect criminals convicted of human trafficking. It was only after joint action from the opposition and civil sector that this provision was omitted and the media played a significant role in this campaign²⁴. With regards to European legislation, the Directive on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Protecting its Victims of the European Parliament and of the Council was enacted in 2011 (Directive 2011/36/EU).

What is more, the chosen period allows us to observe potential shifts in the way trafficking is being framed in the wake of so called 'European migration/refugee crisis'. The surge of illegal border crossing in Europe started in 2011, consequent to the Arab Spring. It intensified in 2014 and 2015, when the additional influxes of refugees from Syria and other war-affected regions of the world resulted in framing of this humanitarian issue as a crisis and a threat (de Vries et al., 2016). Since then, a lot of confusion between human trafficking and human smuggling has been recorded, together with claims about exploitation of migrants and refugees during their journeys and after they have reached European territory. Given the traditional utilization of human trafficking discourse in anti-migration campaigns of 19th and 20th century, it is of paramount importance to explore intersections between these two issues in the news and stay wary of implications of misrepresentation of human trafficking for the lives of refugees, migrants and other vulnerable categories of people.

Finally, the focus of this research is on online publications of journalistic media. Easy access to news contents that are often free and frequently updated (Moore, 2014), paired with the integration of audio and visual elements with text, and their interactive quality make online media more and more popular. Already in 2013, the Office for National statistics in the UK revealed that most Britons prefer online media sources to traditional news media such as TV and newspapers (ONS, 2013). Further, reports from 2016 show increased use of mobile phones to access the news, as well as reliance on social media to access news content (IAB and PwC, 2016). Similar trends of increased consumption of new media news content is recorded in the Netherlands and Serbia as well. The Netherlands has the second highest proportion of households with internet

²³ The Criminal Code was amended two years before the observed period, introducing harsher sentences for aggravated forms of the criminal act.

²⁴ In 2012 I was working in the anti-trafficking sector in Serbia. I took part in this initiative as a public relations manager in a local anti-trafficking NGO. We used the media to draw attention to this issue and campaign for the omission of the problematic provision. The information was leaked to us just one day before the Parliament was to discuss the changes, so effective media strategy and collaboration were central to our success in preventing this.

access in the EU – 96% in 2015 (Eurostat, 2016). According to the European Journalism Centre, every second Dutch internet user reads news from newspaper websites, which testifies to the important role of the online media in the Dutch media landscape (Bakker & Vasterman, 2010). Even though television is still the most popular source of information in Serbia, the number of people using the internet to access the news is on the rise (Surčulija et al., 2011) and so is the percentage of people with access to the internet (Kovačević et al, 2015). Another reason to opt for inspection of online media lies in the easy access to published text on human trafficking for sexual exploitation in all three countries.

1.5. Relevance of the Study

Chapter 2 of this thesis provides an extensive review of the existing literature on human trafficking and its representation in the media. It will show that, even though many scholars have approached trafficking discourse, reporting on the phenomenon of trafficking has remained relatively understudied. European scholars have neglected this aspect of trafficking research in particular, which is a knowledge gap this study aims to bridge. The role of the media in anti-trafficking stretches far beyond the obvious function of awareness raising and consequent prevention of the criminal act. Based on empirical data collected in this study and the literature review conducted, I have identified additional five domains in which the media have an impact. In each domain responsible reporting can lead to an enhanced counter-trafficking response. However, if accountability is left out and substituted with sensationalism and profit-driven logic of the media, damage is likely to occur. The table below summarises both positive and negative effects that journalistic media could have. By demonstrating complexity and the impact of the role of the media, it also provides an argument as to why studying media reporting on human trafficking is of crucial importance for contemporary scholarship.

Table 1 - Domains of media influence and possible impacts

Domain of influence	Positive impact (product of responsible reporting)	Negative impact (product of irresponsible reporting)
Awareness raising	Public sufficiently informed on HT and able to recognize the related risks and take measures of precaution.	Public misinformed, real risks hard to recognize.

	<i>Examples: domestic citizens aware of risks of internal trafficking; men, women and children wary of both sexual and labour exploitation</i>	<i>Examples: inflated numbers causing moral panics to occur; vulnerable people not being aware of THB risks due to victim stereotyping</i>
Public support	Public support mobilized; political will to tackle HT raised.	No public support to AT efforts or support mobilized for harmful actions; Low political will to tackle HT.
	<i>Examples: Country improving AT mechanism and victim assistance; public involved and supporting AT efforts</i>	<i>Examples: Low profile of HT on the political agenda; public disinterested. Or government AT focus doing harm (e.g. anti-migration measures that violate rights of other vulnerable groups and are proven to be ineffective in stopping HT)</i>
Policy change	Media help improve AT policy.	Media promote inadequate policies.
	<i>Examples: Effective policies promoted, ineffective ones criticized and substituted</i>	<i>Examples: Policy responses that have no impact on suppressing HT and/or negatively affect vulnerable groups (e.g. migrants, sex workers) promoted in the media</i>
Monitoring	Media used as monitoring tool in suppressing THB	Monitoring tool potential of the media unutilized
	<i>Examples: Media involved in the effective and constructive supervision of the AT mechanism, law implementation, and protection of victims' rights</i>	<i>Examples: Non-critical and inert reporting that does not help with identifying problems and improving the AT system and victim support mechanism in place</i>
Deconstructing stereotypes	Genuine media representation of THB	Stereotypical representation of THB
	<i>Examples: Stereotypes deconstructed; improved awareness and reduced stigmatization</i>	<i>Examples: Stereotypical representations promoted; impaired awareness and increased stigmatization</i>
Shaping the environment in which trafficked people recover and exercise their rights	Supportive environment encouraged in the media	Discriminatory environment encouraged in the media
	<i>Examples: Media facilitating unhindered process of victims' recovery and reintegration and promoting adequate protection of victims' rights</i>	<i>Examples: Media focused on criminal justice and uninterested in victims' recovery and reintegration process and inadequate protection of victims' rights</i>

As demonstrated in Table 1, media have a major impact on public perception of human trafficking and play an important role in shaping the public response to the phenomenon. As a primary source of information on human trafficking for members of the public (Logan, 2007), media can drastically influence public perception of the criminal act, its victims and perpetrators. Riffe, Lacy and Fico (2008) demonstrated that mass media influence attitudes and provoke emotions, meaning that reporting on trafficking and other phenomena transcends its informative function and creates responses. This makes studying the way trafficking is reported on all the more important. Media play an important part in debates on what human trafficking is and how it should be handled. By giving voice to advocates of certain perspectives and silencing the others, the media can influence the debate and set the agenda by focusing their reporting on certain problems and trends related to human trafficking. The relevance of this study, therefore, lies in providing a better understanding of the regimes of knowledge that are promoted through media and play a part in determining public and professional perception of human trafficking.

More specifically, this study contributes to knowledge expansion in the criminological field by exploring neglected aspects of the human trafficking phenomenon and, in doing so, innovatively combining qualitative and quantitative research methods to explore the framing of the issue in the media. This holistic approach is better suited for exploring the intricate flow of meaning between the realms of crime and media in the contemporary world. By merging the ideas and approaches from studies of communication and culture with the knowledge and approaches of crime studies, this research succeeds in exploring collisions between the crime and culture, and exceeds the reach of mainstream criminology. Scholars interested in human trafficking have explored historical and contemporary narratives on human trafficking (Doezema, 1999, Berman, 2003, Hallgrimsdottir et al. 2006, Reinares Barberán, 2014, Hill, 2016) and challenged them with ethnographic findings (Oude Breuil et al. 2011, Snajdr 2013). However, little has been done to account for cultural specificities, and these narratives were mainly observed as universal. Political context was also largely ignored. This study breaks from that tradition and explores framing of trafficking in three different, culturally specific environments – post-socialist country in transition (Serbia) and two democratic countries that were major colonial powers but differ in policy on prostitution (the UK and the Netherlands).

Gaps identified in the literature review completed for this study reveal that most inquiries into media reporting on trafficking rely on quantitative methods, and frequently draw problematic conclusions on the nature of the criminal act based on the reports of the press. Systematic research that would assess the role of the media in the meaning-making processes about human trafficking is scarce (Pajnik, 2010:46), and few studies have been conducted outside of the US domain. In addition, the visual elements of trafficking representations are rarely studied. A

particular shortcoming of the existing research on trafficking representation is the utter neglect of the interplay between the visual and textual elements in news stories. This study was designed to bridge that gap by looking into visual illustrations of analysed articles and critically assessing their communicative potential and role in the text. This adds to the methodological relevance of this doctoral research, in addition to it combining quantitative and qualitative methods to achieve both greater scope and in-depth analysis and, as a consequence, better reliability and validity of data. Another factor that contributes to expanding the current knowledge is related to the fact that this research, unlike most other endeavours to scrutinise reporting on trafficking, is focused on online media and not the traditional press. This factor is all the more relevant in the 21st century, a time when news consumption is increasingly being relocated to online domains. Importantly, this study provides a gender-sensitive analysis of media frames, and thereby contributes to greater awareness of discriminatory and oppressive practices supported by certain media outlets and authors.

By focusing the analysis on observing how the issue of trafficking for sexual exploitation is being framed, this research encompassed all three stages relevant for scrutinising media – the production (framing by and framing through the media), the product (articles and news stories) and the effects of the product (responses of the public). This was done by combining the press analysis with interviews with media and anti-trafficking professionals, who were questioned not only about how the issue of trafficking is framed, but also about the consequences of such framing that they have recognised in their work. Such an approach allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of media framing of human trafficking problematics and the impact it had in the given context, and secured firmer grounds for theorising about it.

The social relevance of this study lies in the potential of using its findings to secure more responsible reporting on human trafficking. As laid out in the recommendations outlined in the final chapter of this thesis, that responsibility is shared between the media and the anti-trafficking community. If implemented, responsible reporting on trafficking in human beings will mean that the public is informed and able to recognise the risks of trafficking, political will to tackle human trafficking remains high, adequate policies and actions are in place, the functioning of anti-trafficking mechanism is supervised by the public, existing stereotypes and misconceptions on trafficking are dismissed, and victims of human trafficking are recovering in a safe, supportive and non-discriminatory environment. In addition to that, this research contributes to an adequate understanding of the inter-relationship between the writing of the media on the topic of human trafficking and anti-trafficking policies that get adopted or replaced. This information was proved to be valuable to the work of policy makers and law enforcement officials in previous studies (see Leechaianan & Roth, 2014:14).

1.6. Thesis Outline

Seeking to make a contribution towards a better understanding of the way media represent human trafficking for sexual exploitation and its consequence, the thesis examines coverage of the topic in Serbia, Britain and the Netherlands. In Chapter 2, this examination starts with theoretical conceptualisation and explanation of relevant theoretical concepts from communication, social, and crime studies. After that, an extensive literature review introduces the reader with aspects of trafficking discourses and mediation that have been studied to date. In this section, the chapter reveals limitations of previous research endeavours and identifies knowledge gaps that it will seek to bridge in the empirical chapters. Chapter 3 provides the methodological base of the research project. It describes the epistemological backbone of the research, its design, data collection tools, and research procedure. This section also delineates ethical issues, limitations of the study, and other relevant considerations, such as the researcher's personal involvement in the anti-trafficking sector prior to the PhD.

Presentation of empirical findings starts with Chapter 4 that specifically deals with features of the articles analysed in this research. It describes their features, identifies dominant frames employed by the media in each country, recognises what sources have been used to produce the analysed pieces, shows what regions were covered, and concludes with comparison of demographic data on trafficking victims and offenders derived from media reporting with official statistics on trafficking in the selected countries. Chapter 5 presents media framing of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Serbian online media, Chapter 6 deals with the British sample, and Chapter 7 analyses mediated representation of trafficking in the Netherlands. Each of the three chapters starts with introducing the reader to trafficking problematics in the individual country, including the legal framework and anti-trafficking mechanism in place. That section of the analysis is followed by an overview of the local mediascape. Both outlines of the situation in anti-trafficking and in the media serve to contextualise further findings of the analysis.

In the third part, Chapters 5 – 7 present findings pertaining to frames employed by the media in the respective countries. Here, the chapters answer research questions and reveal what problems are identified in each frame, who is blamed for causing them, who is responsible for solving them, what solutions are to be implemented, and based on what moral base. In addition to that, attention is paid to the characteristics of visual illustrations typical of individual frames. Chapter 8 is the concluding chapter that summarises the empirical findings,

and turns to discuss conceptualisation of media representation of the studied phenomenon. The thesis concludes with a set of recommendations that could lead towards a better quality reporting on human trafficking in the studied countries and beyond.

CHAPTER 2 - THEORY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The topic of this thesis needs to be analysed through the combined prism of communication studies and criminology. Hence, the literature review encompasses sources from both disciplines. For years now criminologists have joined communication scholars in their efforts to scrutinise the media and better understand their functioning, representation of different crime-related phenomena, and effects they have on the content-consuming population. Crime stories are and have always been featured in the media. Today, however, as these reports become more frequent, there is a clear disproportionality to official statistics in terms of seriousness of crimes, violence levels, the demographic profile of victims and offenders, the effectiveness of law enforcement, and risks related to various offences (Reiner, 2007).

The first part of this chapter looks at media and crime theorising, whereas the second offers an overview of convergent studies that have previously addressed the issue of representation of human trafficking for sexual exploitation in the public discourse and the media. It begins by outlining theoretical perspectives on media representation with the special emphasis on the framing theory that is the central theoretical concept of this research. It also offers an insight into the concept of mediatisation that helps better understand how institutions and other actors involved in creating the mediated picture of human trafficking respond to the ever-growing role of the media in contemporary society. After that, the literature review explores relevant sociological and criminological thinking on crime and the media. Finally, the chapter turns to the existing research on media representation of trafficking for sexual exploitation and other relevant empirical evidence, highlighting the contribution this study aims to make to this particular body of knowledge. It does so by looking into binary oppositions that became central to the way human trafficking is imagined and reinvented in the media: a conflict of good and evil, innocent and bad, domestic and foreign, enslaved and free.

2.1. Communication Studies

When it comes to media representation, two major approaches have been particularly popular with scholars interested in scrutinising the mass media. The first approach was developed in the 1970s and is known as agenda-setting (McCombs and Shaw, 1972). The basic assumption of this approach is that media dictate what topics are going to be considered important and what are those that are going to be ignored. The founder of this paradigm, Eugene Shaw (1979:96) writes:

People tend to include or exclude from their cognitions what the media include or exclude from their content.

Scholars who explore agenda-setting position the influence of media on public opinion and their effect on the agendas of political actors as the central object of their studies. In addition to that, some thinkers propose that non-media agents in power can set up the public agenda, as would be in the case of policy promotion by political actors through the agenda setting of mass media (McCombs and Shaw, 1993).

As this study aims to discover not only what human trafficking-related issues attract media attention, but also how these issues are portrayed, the backbone of this research is another communication studies paradigm called framing that the chapter turns to next.

2.1.1. Framing Theory

[W]hat is play for the golfer is work for the caddy. (Goffman, 1974:8)

Grounded in the prominent work of sociologist Erving Goffman (1974) and anthropologist Gregory Bateson (1972), framing theory has developed and became widely applied throughout the social sciences. This theory operates under the general assumption that both the perception and the representation of events, phenomena, objects, etc. depend on cognitive structures that guide our actions, behaviour and understandings. Depending on which of these structures (frames) are used to shape the content of a message, different knowledge sets are likely to be activated in the minds of message receivers that could, in consequence, influence their views and the activities they engage in (Price & Tewksbury, 1998:184). When it comes to studies of the media and communication, this approach has been increasingly dominant in research for more than two decades (Reese, 2001, Bryant & Miron, 2004, Riffe, 2004, Matthes, 2009, Van Gorp, 2007). Literature abounds as regards definitions of frames and the process of framing. These can be divided into two categories – general definitions that focus on describing what frames are and operational definitions that explain what frames do. As the use of an adequate frame definition is relevant to the validity of the frame and the question of whether the research measures what it is intended to measure (Matthes, 2009:350), I dedicate the section below to reviewing the literature and elucidating definitions of frames, their characteristics, way of functioning and constitutive elements.

Neuman, Just and Crigler (1992:60) define frames as conceptual tools used by the media and individuals in order to convey, interpret, and evaluate information. The process of framing, however, involves selection and highlighting of certain aspects of the communicated message:

'To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation.'

Entman, 1993

Reese (2001:11) provides a more specific definition of frames, labelling them as '*organising principles* that are socially *shared* and *persistent* over time, that work *symbolically* to meaningfully *structure* the social world' (emphasis in italic in the original text).

Scholars have more recently gone a step further in developing the framing theory, strongly advocating for framing definitions and application in research that recognise the influences of power (Carragee and Roefs, 2004, Entman, 2004, Reese, 2001) and culture (Van Gorp, 2007, Entman, 2010, Durham, 2001) in the communication process. The latter influences are more closely considered in this study that explores media framing of human trafficking for sexual exploitation in three different cultural environments. Therefore, this research builds on the constructionist approach to framing theory that was thoroughly elaborated by the Belgian communication scholar, Baldwin Van Gorp. Van Gorp adopts Gofmans' (1981) concept of a cultural stock of frames based on the idea that frames are cultural phenomena mainly situated externally of the individual. From there, Van Gorp (2007: 62-64) formulates six additional premises that guide his theorisation focused on the cultural aspect of frames:

1. *Frames applied in a given culture are not exhaustive.* Apart from those that are put to use, alternative frames are available for both professionals who frame through the media and receivers who rely on frames to understand the mediated information. To better grasp persistency of frames, one has to go beyond those that are being used, identify alternative ones and consider the socio-political context of frames used in a given period.
2. *Media text and the frame are independent of one another.* People assign meaning to the mediated text by using frames available in their culture during the reading process. However, as people typically share the culture with the producers of the media they consume, frames are very powerful in implicitly suggesting what meaning to attach to a given message.
3. *A frame is 'an invitation or an incentive' to read a media message in a particular way.* Due to the fact that frames are part of the culture, their use is so normal and natural that it obscures the process of social construction behind it. Their covert influence make frames all the more powerful (Tankard 2001, Van Gorp, 2007), yet their effectiveness depends also on the receiver (his/her attention, interests, views, experiences, etc).
4. *A cultural approach to framing emphasizes the impact of macrostructures in the framing process.* The way individuals interpret media content is not only internally motivated but also

influenced by culture (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). In that sense, Van Gorp suggests using different terminology to refer to individual mental frameworks (schemata) and more stable, culturally embedded frames that constitute broader interpretative definitions of social reality. However, this does not mean that the process of constructing social reality and assigning meanings to different aspects of it does not entail high degrees of interaction between the schemata and frames, the individual and the cultural.

5. *Frames are persistent, yet the framing process is dynamic.* Frames change very little and over the course of a long time (Goffman, 1981, Zald, 1996). However, whether or not a certain frame is applied in the packing or unpacking of a news story is subject to negotiation. Both journalist and the audience can contest the frames and select alternative ones in their interpretation of the social reality.
6. *Social interaction is at the core of the framing process* (Snow and Benford, 1988, Steinberg, 1998, Van Gorp, 2007). Media professionals interact with their sources, receivers of the mediated content, and other media consumers. Therefore, Van Gorp (2015:64) concludes that framing includes an intricate interplay that occurs 'between the textual level (frames applied in the media), the cognitive level (schemata among the audience and media makers), the extramedial level (the discourse of frame sponsors (discussed below)), and, finally, the stock of frames that is available in a given culture'.

Following this logic, this study was designed to account for the multi-layered interaction characteristic of the framing process. To find an answer on how the issue of trafficking for sexual exploitation is framed by online media in the selected countries, data had been collected through media analysis, interviews with media professionals and interviews with experts on the issue who frequently serve as sources to the media and are therefore in a position to sponsor a certain frame.

To approach the scrutinising of framing of any given issue, it is necessary to understand how the frames function. It has already been stated that frames are used both to convey and interpret a piece of information. When it comes to media messages, in the first part of the communication process journalists decide which frame to apply to reduce the complexity of an event to a story that is easily comprehensible and appealing to their audience. The concept of journalistic objectivity has been contested in communication studies, and it is now clear that journalists cannot perceive all aspects of an event even if they witnessed it personally. Framing theory assumes that selection of material to present and decision on which information to make more salient is a necessary part of the news reporting process. This decision can be made consciously or not, and is dependent on a number of factors, including pragmatic routines of the news production practice (cf. Reiner, 2007, Gitlin, 1980), the influence of frame sponsors, the interest

of the media owners, and personal beliefs and experience of the author of the news content. However, it is a very important one because frames provide the context within which a news message is most likely to be interpreted. Consequently, frames not only define problems, but also suggest what their causes are, promote certain moral judgments around the portrayed issues, suggest solutions and predict their possible outcomes (Entman, 1993:52). Not every sentence a journalist writes in a story will perform these functions, and some stories will use frames to perform only some of them. However, a news item will normally contain a number of framing devices, be it metaphors, arguments, lexical choices, visual illustrations, etc. These elements hold a prominent position in the structure of the report and are therefore frequently contained in the titles and leading paragraphs (Van Gorp, 2007, Van Dijk, 1988). Entman (1991) showed how news items can contain some information that is not congruent with the frame applied; however, the information that is highlighted in the report will always be the one that corresponds with the frame. Media consumers are, therefore, more likely to ignore the incongruent parts of the message and accept the salient information as factual. In his later work, Entman (2010) also showed how journalists typically do not have stable personal ideologies and are themselves very much susceptible to the influences of frames.

The second part of the communication process involves message interpretation by the audience. Typically, it entails the receivers adopting the same frames and sharing the views journalist have presented in their stories (Van Gorp, 2007, McQuail, 2005, Tuchman, 1978). This happens because journalists and their readers typically share the same culture and therefore have the cultural stock of frames in common. Therefore, when a journalist selects a frame from the cultural stock and shapes the news story accordingly, the cultural resonance and familiarity of that frame trigger corresponding cognitive structures in the reader's mind and thus encourage application of the very same frame in the process of the interpretation of the media message (Van Gorp, 2007). In fact, the application of framing theory in communication studies has shown a number of times that frames that dominate the news are also the ones most widely used by the audience (D'Angelo, 2002, Martin & Oshagen, 1997, Entman, 1991). I argue that frames that rely on the principal values (e.g. freedom, nationalism, rule of law, male dominance) and moralities of a given culture are more widely used and more likely to be effective.

This does not mean that all the people apply the same frame as journalists do and understand the message as intended. One of the advantages framing theory offers compared to other models used to explain how media affect the public is that it does not equate audience members with passive message receivers; rather, it acknowledges their active role in interpreting the news. Just like Stuart Hall (1980) proposed in his famous encoding/decoding model of communication, framing theorists argue that a person receiving information through mass media does not

necessarily understand it in accordance with the dominant frame used to convey that message. Even though hypothetically that is what most people do, others may use alternative frames in their interpretation and assign a different meaning to the portrayed information (cf. Brewer, 2002). The constructionist approach further highlights the dynamics of the framing process and takes into account that both journalists and their audiences can resist using certain frames, and construct or select others to apply. Van Gorp (2015:66) suggests that this particularly happens when the audience associates additional thoughts with the mediated message that are not in accordance with the frame used by the journalist. He also asserts that this disparity is more frequent with audience members who find the news story less captivating and, even though they don't give in to the frame, they are aware of it.

A third aspect to pay attention to in understanding the process of framing in relation to media contents is the influence of frame sponsors. A frame can be sponsored by a number of actors who are using the media to promote certain ideas that are in accordance with their political, financial or other interest (Van Gorp, 2007, Entman 2004, Brewer, 2002). Governmental bodies, civil society organisations, advertising agencies, politicians, interest groups and others often engage in various kind of PR activities to have their views and interests represented in the media and to gain public support. In fact, Entman (2010) finds that even though journalists think biased reporting is not common, slanted framing actually occurs frequently. In his study on coverage of the 2008 US presidential campaign, he asserts that these biases depend on frame sponsors' competence as the production of news 'cannot guarantee continuously equal treatment of competing frames' (ibid:392). Reese (2001:19) suggested that the very focus of academic inquiry should be on finding out what power relationships and institutional arrangements use frames to support certain routine and persistent ways of making sense of the social world. He stressed that once these sponsored frames become part of the media discourse, their influence grows and they become available to guide public life. In relation to human trafficking and the sex industry, the Europe-wide struggle between radical feminists pushing for abolition of prostitution and liberal feminist who are advocating for a human-rights based model can serve as a very illustrative example. The former tend to equate sex work with human trafficking and abuse, presenting it as inherently violent and exploitative. The latter oppose such views and are lobbying for an approach to fighting human trafficking that will not harm the rights of sex workers and migrants. In that sense, these two groups are sponsoring different frames on human trafficking – radical groups are framing the issue as prostitution related, whereas liberal scholars and activists promote the human rights frame.

As demonstrated, there are two levels of framing – framing by the media and framing through the media (Van Gorp, 2007). Framing through the media functions in the same way as framing by

the media, but in it frame sponsors take the role of message conveyers and journalists are the ones who interpret it. Again, when interpreting the message, journalists will not necessarily use the same frame as message senders. However, once a message has been contextualised by a frame sponsor, it will provide a strong incentive for the journalist to use the same frame when shaping that message into news. Framing theory proposes that not many media professionals frequently resist such incentives. To make sure this analysis takes both framing by the media and framing through the media into account, content analysis of media articles was combined with in-depth interviews with both media professionals specialized in the issue of human trafficking and their sources on this topic.

Framing theory provides an explanation of how media can favour certain views when framing an issue in a particular way and at the same time not show an obvious bias. Tankard (2001:96) identifies this to be an advantage of the concept of framing that provides an alternative to the Objectivity/Bias paradigm and a better explanation of the effects of mass communication. He proceeds to argue that framing better accounts for the more complex cognitive processes and emotional responses in the communication process, and recognises the ability of a mediated message to define situations, assign meaning to issues, and set terms of the debate (p. 96). Another strength of applying framing theory in research is that it enables joint exploration of production, content and the effect of news (Matthes, 2009), which are most frequently addressed in separate research enquires.

Media accounts are an important source of information about crime, especially so for organized, clandestine and grave acts like human trafficking because most people do not have personal experience of such phenomena. The way media frame an issue not only influences the way the public feels and thinks about it, but also contributes to certain types of responses and policies aimed at solving it. For scholars interested in the topic of media and crime, it is pivotal to keep in mind that the news-making process is subject to influences of power and culture, and more frequently guided by the desire for profit than any journalistic imperative to illuminate the social world and serve the public interest. By bringing together concepts from cognitive, critical and constructivist schools of thought, and by recognizing the role of culture in the construction of meaning, this study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the framing process, and fill in the knowledge gaps in the studies of representation of human trafficking in the media. These gaps are identified in the review of the existing literature on representation of human trafficking which is presented under section 2.3.

2.1.2. Mediatisation

The media have exceeded their basic purpose of informing the public a long time ago. Functions of the contemporary media include, but are not limited to, being used as means of communication and symbolic representation, serving as propaganda instruments, watchdog tools, moral regulators, and agenda-setting platforms. The media are not only an integral part of everyday social life, but also figurations that shape it and get shaped by it. In response to the growing role of media, communication specialists proposed mediatisation, another approach to media and communication research that has been developed since the early 2000s. The scholars who have contributed the most to the development of mediatisation are Nick Couldry, Andreas Hepp, and Stig Hjarvard. They assume media play a pivotal role in shaping perception of the socio-cultural reality and take an interest in the consequences of it being constructed through the media.

There are two factions in conceptualising mediatisation. The institutional approach is proposed by Hjarvard (2008). He argues that media are independent institutions with their own logic. Increasing influence of the media has forced other institutions, such as politics, work, religion, family, etc. to adapt to the logic and rules of the media and perform some of their institutional activities through mass media. The second approach corresponds with the tradition of social-constructivism. Here, the key idea is that the social world is constructed from interdependencies, which is why the focus of communication studies should be on exploring the mutual transformations of media and the social world. Mediatisation is best understood as the outcome of that mutual dependence (Couldry and Hepp, 2017).

A distinction needs to be made between mediation (general communication) and mediatisation (the role of particular media in emergent processes of sociocultural change) (Couldry and Hepp, 2013). When the role of communication becomes so central in the everyday life of contemporary humanity, however, everything is mediated. This brings the society into the state of so called 'deep mediatisation':

...when everything is mediated, mediatisation reaches a new point: a phase of *deep* mediatisation, when the nature and dynamics of interdependencies (and so of the social world) *themselves become dependent upon* media contents and media infrastructure, to a significant degree.

Couldry & Hepp, 2017:215, emphasis in the original

Deep mediatisation is a consequence of the digitalisation of content and expansion of internet use in relation to the mass media. It too leads to adaptation of individuals and organisational structures to the new mediated world and media infrastructure in the digital age. For Couldry and

Hepp (2017) this means new types of institutional power (search engines, cloud computing suppliers, data aggregators, etc) gain influence over individual and institutional social actors. Any aspect of the social world is understood to be dependent on the media in one way or the other.

Academia is one of the institution that has undergone the process of mediatisation. In the field of crime studies, Barak (2007) critically observes conscious efforts of his colleagues to influence mediated representation of crime and justice that he calls newsmaking criminology. Horsti (2012) recognises its role in her studies of discursive strategies of the European border control agency FRONTEX in representing migration issue in its own press releases, where it intentionally builds its reputation as a rescuing agent that saves lives of migrants in a major humanitarian crisis.

This research does not ignore the fact that individuals and social and political organisations are inter-dependant with the media. In the concluding chapter of this thesis, I also turn to considering if such mediatisation sparked adaptations within academia and other spheres of knowledge can contribute to more responsible reporting on human trafficking.

2.2. Social Studies

2.2.1. Critical Perspectives

After World War II, and particularly after 1960, Marxist ideas gained more and more popularity in communication studies and wider in the academic world. These theories are largely based on Marx's dual model of the structure of society. Simply put, Marx (1971) believed society is composed of the base (means and relations of production) and the superstructure (other aspects of society, including culture, art, social and political structures, norms, etc.). The superstructure reflects interests of the ruling elite and controls the base. Believing in the power of the media to control people, Marxist-inspired theories highlight the fact that most media are privately owned by large corporations and media moguls, who are supportive of the capitalist social system (Marsh and Melville, 2009: 33). According to this school of thought, media are likely to be used to control the masses, promote ideology, and quell popular discontent in order to maintain the capitalist organisation of society. Building on the legacy of critical perspectives, this research assumes that institutions of power are the most likely frame sponsors who get the desired media attention more easily than other actors.

Media and crime studies were largely influenced by Marxist-inspired theories, such as Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony (Gramsci, 1971). As Jewkes (2004:16) pointed out, this concept

was very important in theorizing about the media's portrayal of crime, deviance and law and order. Like other critical thinkers, Gramsci believed that society is dominated by the ruling class that is shaping people's views and values in order to have them accept the ruling class view of life as the cultural norm. Gramsci argued that the ruling class is not accomplishing this through oppressive measures. Rather, the public approval is won through social and cultural institutions that mould people into consenting supporters. Cultural hegemony is, therefore, best understood as a powerful and undetected domination, established through ideology and culture, and not force. Schools, churches, family, media, political parties, and art are, in line with this theory, more likely to shape people's views, expectations, and behaviour and have them accept the given social order than repressive forces such as the police, military, courts, etc. Media, therefore, are seen to function as platforms of perpetual political activities and indoctrination in a society, which perform the function of establishing capitalist ideological domination. As outlined below, this study does not accept the idea that media consumers passively accept all media contents as undeniable truths. Based on the constructionist approach to media framing, this research, however, does see hegemonic readings as more likely, which is why this concept was outlined here.

The rediscovery of Marxist theories of social structure inspired new directions in criminological research, as critical criminologists paid closer attention to structural inequalities and their influence on crime and criminalisation, and looked at 'the role of the media in orchestrating public panics about crime and deflecting concerns away from the social problems that emanate from capitalism' (Jewkes, 2015: 22). Scholars studying trafficking in human beings have also explored the role of capitalism and neoliberalism in creating and sustaining exploitative practices in sexual and other industries. In her article illustratively titled 'The Modern-Day White (Wo)Man's Burden: Trends in Anti-Trafficking and Anti-Slavery Campaigns', Kempadoo (2015) showed how the discourse used in anti-trafficking campaigns helps preserve the boundaries between the rich and the poor. This process is completed in accordance with the western neoliberal interests, and beyond the veil of good intentions of benevolent saviour missions. Mai (2013) also understands anti-trafficking endeavours as part of a hegemonic epistemology he labelled 'sexual humanitarianism', which emanates from system-produced inequalities.

Even though trafficking happens in capitalist economies, and this system is recognised to create trafficking generating issues such as poverty, the neoliberal logic does not recognise this as a problem to be addressed in anti-trafficking endeavours. Rather, the later are encouraged to deal with individuals such as traffickers, organised crime networks, clients, corrupt officials and businessmen (Bernstein, 2007, Kempadoo, 2015), certain ruthless corporations and bad governments that oppose Western hegemony (Kempadoo, 2015:16). What is more, in the

aforementioned paper, Kempadoo shows that some of the campaigns explicitly and controversially advertise capitalism as a solution leading towards eradication of human trafficking through the accumulation of capital that will drive social change and eliminate poverty.

Critical thinkers often overstate the intent of the media to deceive the public on the one hand, and underestimate the ability of media consumers to resist such influences on the other. The idea that media function as capitalist institutions promoting interests of the elite was opposed in the late 1980s and 1990s by the advocates of a pluralist perspective, who believed media are no longer controlled by the state and capitalist moguls. Instead, they proposed that the processes of deregulation and privatization lead to a freer environment and open competition between media institutions. Thus, they argue that modern media cause a decline rather than a rise of elitist values (McNair, 1998). Online media and its forms (e.g. blogs and social media), citizen journalism, the accessibility of higher education, and transition to democratic regimes in developing countries that brought back freedom to the media, back up this theory to an extent. There are also studies that show greater diversity within news organisations than the hegemony models imply (Reiner, 2007). Yet, as the case of Serbia will illustrate to the extreme, the control of the media is not fully eliminated from contemporary societies known as democratic. Also, the contribution critical studies gave to understanding the role of the media as more than pure and unbiased information-carrying channels facilitated the development of later postulated models that form the theoretical framework of this study that are neither disregarding the role of media consumers in the communication process, nor are as idealistic as pluralist perspective has been criticized for being.

2.2.2. Cultural Criminology

The influence of postmodern theorists has reached the field of criminology. A major break from previous theoretical and methodological stances was proposed in the field of crime studies when Ferrell and Sanders (1995) advocated for a different approach that brings culture into the centre of criminological inquiries. Most frequently affiliated with the work of aforementioned American scholar, Jeff Ferrell, cultural criminology drew upon the British/Birmingham school of cultural studies and the British 'new' criminology (Ferrell, 1999: 396) and developed into an approach that integrates postmodern thought with postulates of symbolic interactionism, constructionism, and critical sociology. As Ferrell (ibid.) puts it, cultural criminology is not a definitive paradigm looking to synthesize different perspectives, but rather 'an emergent array of perspectives linked by sensitivities to image, meaning, and representation in the study of crime and control'. These perspectives, however, have a common focus on the construction of meaning (Ferrell, 2013, Bevier, 2015), which is also one of the most relevant questions in this study. Therefore, in the

section below, a brief overview of the application of postmodern and constructivist ideas to the studies of crime is offered, an approach that this study adopts from cultural criminology. Subsequently, the discussion turns to the adequacy of cultural criminology's approach to exploring the role of mass-media in defining crime.

Pursuant to the postmodern school of thought, cultural criminology emphasizes the importance of image, style, and representation. It rejects the legitimacy of large-scale theories claiming to provide the right and only path to universal knowledge and uncontested truth. It also dismisses positivistic methods and the rigid, fixed categories and explanations of human behaviour that such methods provide (Young, 2004). Replacing universality with diversity, substituting continuity with discontinuity, and shifting the focus of criminological inquiry to situations, subcultures, and mediated representations, this paradigm allowed for new questions to be asked and insights gained in otherwise sidelined and neglected areas where culture and crime intersect. For cultural criminologists, the meaning of crime also resides in its representation (Ferrell, 1999, Ferrell et al., 2004).

This research is based on the proposition that media representation of human trafficking for sexual exploitation serves not only as a vehicle for awareness raising and information sharing but also as a realm in which the meaning of trafficking is constructed and re-constructed in a given cultural and political setting. The language and images of human trafficking circulating the mass media are taken to be as real and as consequential as the crime they represent: in shaping public attitudes, spreading fear and anxieties about dangers of trafficking, influencing policies, providing entertainment, affecting lives of those involved or affected by the crime, and provoking certain actions as a response to human trafficking. As Ferrell (1999) and Hayward and Young (2007) proposed, crime is understood as a creatively constructed cultural product. This study applies this premise in order to provide a more layered and critical notion of human trafficking that, depending on culture and given political momentum, gets framed as a criminal justice issue, a prostitution-related phenomenon, a problem emerging from unwanted migration flows, a form of violence against powerless and othered women, or a gross human rights violation.

Understanding the notion of culture embraced by the scholarship in cultural criminology, therefore, is an important foothold of the theoretical conceptualisation of this research. Ferrell et al. (2008:2) define culture as the symbolic environment that is occupied by individuals and groups; as such, culture is neither a direct product of social structure and class nor can it be seen as completely independent from them. Further, cultural criminologists propose that culture is in a constant state of flux: it is a dynamic site of struggle in which different meaning constructs fight for preeminence. This is where the hegemonic meanings of crime and crime control are

promoted, but also resisted and replaced by new forms of understanding. In his explanation of the concept of culture within cultural criminology, Bavier (2015: 37-38) writes that this process of construction operates on an everlasting tension between moral entrepreneurship focused on cultural maintenance, transgression that creates cultural disorder, and moral innovation that happens in order to achieve the regeneration of culture. For all three levels and their mutual interaction, I see media as an important platform where this struggle is being resolved. For instance, while the media can be used to reiterate the dominant trafficking narrative, other articles can appear that provide alternative understandings, and challenge the dominant tropes of powerless victims, foreign traffickers or diligent anti-trafficking agencies known for their efficacy. Mass media play an important role in constructing the reality of crime. Further, they increasingly serve to manipulate through crime spectacles designed as masked endeavours of social control, necessary to maintain and (re)produce political power (Ferrell, et al. 2008). Therefore, understanding human trafficking and its meaning is impossible to achieve without breaking down media representations of the phenomenon that need to be understood as products of culture.

2.2.3. Moral panics

Moral panics is a theory that explains social reactions to (and constructions of) deviance. It emerged in British sociology of 1970s, originating in the work of Cohen (1972) and Young (1971) who studied media amplification of deviancy of different youth groups and public responses to it. The idea behind the moral panics theory is that events and behaviours get exaggerated by the mass media, and social groups involved in those events and behaviours get labelled as the 'folk devils'. As a result, unjustified moral panic occurs in society. Cohen emphasized that moral panics do not occur as accidental misunderstandings. In his eminent research on mobs and rockers, he linked the moral panics about the behaviour of the two groups to the anxiety of older generations whose normative standards were threatened by the behaviour of youth. Also, Cohen was aware that reactions to moral panics by the power structure are also not coincidental, but always in line with their interests, values, and statuses (Cohen, 1972). Five defining features of moral panics are the presentation of the ordinary as extraordinary, the amplifying role of authorities, definitions of morality, notions of risk associated with social change and the salience of youth (Jewkes, 2011:85).

Since the 1970s, moral panic theory has been used to explain fears related to a variety of criminal and deviant behaviours. Panics over immigrants were linked to mass migrations and globalisation sparked security anxieties (Ferrell et al. 2008). Moore (2014) tested if the theory can be applied

to mediated representation of sexual violence. In her conclusion, she introduces the concept of a cautionary tale that uses fear induced by the news to control behaviour:

These media stories share certain characteristics with the moral panic: media coverage is voluminous and disproportionate to the threat in question and there is a clear moral rhetoric employed in reporting. The cautionary tale, like the moral panic, exaggerates the threat. Nonetheless, there are clear differences between these two forms of media coverage of crime. In the cautionary tale future and hypothetical crimes are given emphasis; sometimes news reports are nothing more than warnings about what *might* happen. As I discuss below, this is particularly the case in reporting on sexual assault where entire stories are given over to warning people to be on their guard.

Moore, 2014:123-4.

The concept of moral panic was used in the attempts to study representation of human trafficking as well, particularly in relation to the migration aspect of human trafficking, as well as representation of all sex workers as victims of trafficking (Hill, 2011, Andrijasevic, 2010, Weitzer, 2007). In her research focused on the reporting of the UK press, Hill (2011) found many indicators of moral panics induction through media representation of trafficking: the use of unsubstantiated claims, disproportionate response of the authorities, and moralistic language banking on the concepts of 'good' and 'evil'.

However, application of the moral panic perspective in scholarly research has been criticised for focusing on sporadic individual episodes that have dramatic echo in the public arena, but easily die out. In the updated introduction of his book published in 2002 to mark the 30th anniversary of its first edition, Cohen personally stressed that moral panics should be only used to conceptualise those mediated events that reflect genuine public anxieties (Cohen, 2002:x-xi). More criticism came as a result of media development - the expansion and decentralisation of the media on the one hand and changes in news consumption that gave consumers greater control over what to consume as news outlets expanded to and migrated to the realms of the internet on the other (Moore, 2014). That led some to believe that the significance of the moral panics theory and its capacity to explain the perception of deviance have decreased. However, the idea that online media consumers have control over what news to click on and what to ignore is simplistic if not idealistic. It does not take into account that, for instance, sponsored content is pushed over widely consumed social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. One must not forget the pertinent role of internet influencers who also have the power to make a particular piece of news reach millions of their followers. So, even though it can be argued that

news makers and editors have less power in the domain of news selection and placement that does not mean that this power has been delegated directly to the news consumer.

2.3. Black and White World of Human Trafficking Representation

...the sad irony of throwing poor black people in jail as a means of “fighting slavery” appears to be lost. (Bernstein, 2007:142)

Academic interest in the issue of human trafficking is vast. Scholars have tried to scrutinise the issue from various different angles. While many tried and had limited success in measuring the extent of the problem (Bales et al., 2009, Weitzer, 2007, Zhang, 2007, Raymond and Hughes, 2001), others have focused on determining its causes (Ham, 2010, Huckerby and Gu 2010, Davitti, 2010, Betz, 2009). A great number of academics critically addressed anti-trafficking policies and preventive strategies developed as a response to the criminal act (Grundell, 2015, Kuchynski, 2013, Farrell & Fahi, 2009, Friman & Reich, 2008, Nieuwenhuys & Pécoud 2007, Gallagher 2006, Oxman-Martinez et al., 2001). The research on human trafficking was also looked at and criticized (Weitzer, 2015a, Zhang et al, 2012, Goździak & Bump, 2011, Zhang, 2009, Laczko & Goździak 2005, Kelly, 2005, Bruckert & Parent, 2002). The list provided here is nowhere near exhaustive, as many other attempts were directed towards documenting cases of human trafficking and emerging types of exploitation, exploring occurrence of the crime in particular historical or geographical contexts, understanding actors involved in human trafficking, researching consequences of the phenomenon, scrutinizing attempts to end it, and grasping social construction, representation and discourses of trafficking in human beings. Yet, despite the growing literature on trafficking, relatively few studies are based on extensive or empirical research (Zhang et al, 2012, Laczko and Goździak 2005).

Due to the limited scope of this research project, in this review of literature I only turn to the existing scholarship on public discourse and the media representation of the human trafficking phenomenon. The two are examined together because of the firm nexus between them - media echo the human trafficking discourse of official policies and opinion-making orators, but at the same time serve as a platform for alternative discursive models to emerge and be promoted. The works discussed below are based on analysis of a wide range of materials: news reports, films, documentaries, TV shows, books, anti-trafficking campaigns, law and policy documents, academic

publications, art, cases of trafficking, content of relevant websites, press releases, public debates, and historical documents. For coherence, the overview is structured into four parts. Each discusses a different dichotomy of trafficking discourse, such as the victim-perpetrator, the victim-prostitute, the slave-saviour, and the foreigner-citizen. Also, each provides an account of implications of such discursive practice and politics behind human trafficking representations. Here, attention is paid to links between human trafficking and migration control, the nation state, securitisation, neoliberal capitalism, and sexual humanitarianism.

2.3.1. Good and Evil: the Victim and the Perpetrator

The role crime victims play in public and legal discourse has changed drastically in the last few decades. Once neglected in criminal justice policy, victims of crime have become the backbone of political discourses on the regulation and implementation of law (McAlinden, 2014). Contemporary human trafficking discourse has also re-emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s as human rights based and victim-centric. Expert organisations and the media started spreading warnings that an appalling practice of sexual exploitation of naïve girls trafficked from the impoverished regions of the world was taking place in the midst of our ordered and progressive Western societies. Stories of such practice were incredibly newsworthy – the phenomenon appeared to be new, it was shocking, it involved both violence and sex, and it was happening in our neighbourhoods. Each of these elements²⁵ increased the news value of the early trafficking reports. Simplification is another news value (Jewkes, 2015) that involves reducing elements and themes of the news content, and consequently limiting the number of possible meanings that could be assigned to the portrayed story. News stories on human trafficking were easily translatable to a simple conflict between good and evil, one of the most common conventional themes in the literature. The embeddedness of the myth of evil (in this case the traffickers) clashing with the good (i.e. the exploited virginal victims) in our culture explains how similarly framed contemporary news reports on human trafficking for sexual exploitation are likely to be internalised and their meaning unchallenged.

In the pioneering study of trafficking discourse, Doezema (1999) noticed how anti-trafficking efforts drew upon the mythical notion of the ‘innocent victim’ who was coerced to sell sex and the ‘evil foreign trafficker’ who exploited her. Weitzer (2007) who observed the process of the social construction of the phenomenon of ‘sex trafficking’, challenged depictions of essentially evil traffickers as one of the core claims of the moral crusade against human trafficking and

²⁵ For the complete list of the elements of newsworthiness in crime news, see Jewkes, 2015, or Chibnall, 1997.

prostitution. He claimed that not all people involved in trafficking women to work in the sex industry necessarily fit the role assigned to them by the anti-trafficking movement:

‘Some facilitators are relatives, friends, or associates who recruit workers and assist with migration, and these individuals have a qualitatively different relationship with workers than do predators who use force or deception to lure victims into the trade.’

Weitzer, 2007:454

Other scholars showed that traffickers were also uniformly portrayed as personifications of evil in the journalistic media, typically being foreign, male, and belonging to an organised crime network (Farrell & Fahy, 2009, McCornick & Herron-Zamora, 2000).

‘Good and evil’ is not the only dichotomy characterising the representation of victims and perpetrators. In public discourse and media reporting on trafficking for sexual exploitation, victims are almost exclusively portrayed as female, whereas perpetrators are nearly always identified as male individuals (Virkus, 2014, Kuchynski, 2013, Denton 2010, Weitzer 2007, Doezema, 1999). The unvaried portrayal of naïve, young, and innocent girls who fell victim to brutal and insuperable trafficker served to create panic about the safety of women who migrate for work and fear of unscrupulous foreign criminals. This fright stemmed from moral concerns about women’s purity and the need to control them (Doezema, 1999). Portraying traffickers as omnipotent criminals belonging to powerful organised networks also reinforced the idea that trafficked people are powerless victims who need to be rescued. Consequently, what started as a victim-centric political discourse calling for protection of women and children trapped in trafficking rings, developed into a crime-control discourse focused on punishing offenders and imposing strict anti-trafficking policies. Protecting people from falling victim to crime became the perfect excuse for state-imposed measures of penal repression (Garland, 2001). The same discursive shift was recorded in the media reporting on human trafficking (see Farrell & Fahy, 2009).

Stereotype-based misrepresentation had a negative impact on victim protection that became available only to those women and girls who represent the ‘ideal victim’. Abused men, women and children who do not fit the picture of the exploited virgin and other heteronormative prejudices surrounding the commercial sex industry, were thus susceptible to secondary victimisation and discrimination within the system allegedly design to help them. Also, by not recognizing it is not only foreign men who exploit people in trafficking rings, clear limitations were imposed upon proper identification and sanction of all the perpetrators involved in the criminal act.

Even though there are several studies that looked at representation of trafficking victims and offenders in the media, their focus was on determining characteristics such as age, gender, and nationality of victims and traffickers (see for instance Denton 2010, Wilson & Dalton, 2008). Using media to determine characteristics of trafficking operations and people involved in them is highly problematic. Firstly, this is because of the clandestine nature of the crime of human trafficking which implies that not all cases will be discovered and hence made available to journalists to report on. Secondly, of those cases that do come to the attention of media professionals, not all will end up being reported on. Wilson and Dalton (2008) combined press analysis with interviews with local anti-trafficking experts in towns believed to be two major trafficking hubs in Ohio. Though they identified 15 known cases of human trafficking in the observed period, they learned that local newspapers covered only 4 of those cases. Therefore, scholars exploring the media and crime need to be more critical and take into account the fact that the process of news making is highly selective and far less objective than the ethical codes of journalism demand. What is more, the study of the news reports from Ohio showed that the media reported on the cases involving minors and females only, even though cases of exploitation of men and adults were recorded in the region at that time. Furthermore, Wilson and Dalton identify the majority of traffickers in their sample to be black. The two authors do not, however, raise the question of whether this has something to do with biases in the police work and/or media selection of stories to report on. It is also worth noting that the sample of four cases that media reported on is rather too small to draw conclusions about the selectivity of the local press.

Gulati (2010) explored how (in)frequently were victims and traffickers used as sources in news stories on human trafficking, and Virkus (2014) went a bit further, showing in her newspaper content analysis the frequency of positive and negative portrayal of these two categories in the press. However, all the aforementioned studies mainly rely on quantitative methods and provide little detail and in-depth analysis of the tropes of victims and traffickers in THB media reports and the implications of such representations. This research does not fall into the trap of making inferences about victims' or traffickers' demographics based on media reports. It also helps bridge the knowledge gap by combining quantitative and qualitative methods in the extensive analysis of online news reports on human trafficking.

2.3.2. Innocent and Bad: the Ideal Victim and the Fallen Prostitute

The second binary opposition that I want to address is the one focused on the figure of the trafficked person. In trafficking discourse, people who were trafficked are associated with agency-less, child-like creatures who are unable to fend for themselves and are paralysed by the horrors of their own experience. They are not able to escape from traffickers, and even though they can

be rescued from this situation, they remain fixed in their suffering and in need of constant help and intervention. Their crying, bruised faces are the ones that belong to the trope of the ideal, innocent victim of human trafficking. Sexually exploited women who are not teared up, and wear provocative garter belts instead of whip marks on their skin are their antithesis. The later are represented as whores rather than victims, deserving of their suffering rather than compassion and support. The two conflicting representations have been present in discourses on exploitation through prostitution for centuries and were extensively analysed in the trafficking literature (Attwood, 2016, Krsmanović, 2016, Snajdr, 2013, Andrijasevic, 2007, Doezema, 1999, 1998, 2010). Their existence discourages in-depth analysis that would take into account the more nuanced experiences and contexts relevant to understanding the complex nature of the human trafficking construction.

The clash between innocent victims and the fallen women who were not forced to work in prostitution has been an integral part of the trafficking debate from the very beginning. The scare about human trafficking first emerged in the 1870s, in the midst of anti-prostitution sentiment that was particularly strong in the late-Victorian age (Pajnik, 2008). It is worth noting that in some countries the media have played a crucial role in the establishment of human trafficking as an important social concern. For instance, in England the issue became prominent after an article on the trade in white virgin girls sold to unscrupulous aristocrats was published in 1885 in the *Pall Mall Gazette*²⁶. From that time on, the human trafficking/prostitution and victim/prostitute dichotomies served to distinguish misfortune from immorality, and categorise women who work in the sex industry as either innocent or criminal. Analysing the divergence between victims and prostitutes, Doezema (1999, 36-37) notes that the real concern of the anti-trafficking movement had little to do with helping women who are exploited in the sex industry; rather the goal was to prevent the 'innocent' girls from engaging in prostitution in the first place.

After the prohibitionist era, the abolitionist approach gained momentum and that was reflected in the international treaties on suppression of human trafficking that were created in the 20th century (see Chapter 1.1.). The modern anti-trafficking regulation brought the issue of consent into focus, first deeming it irrelevant and denying all agency to women in prostitution (The 1933 International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and the 1949 UN Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and the Exploitation of Prostitution of Others).²⁷ This strengthened the notion of helplessness and innocence of victims in the anti-

²⁶ The article titled 'The Maiden Tribute of the Modern Babylon' was published in the London based evening newspaper *The Pall Mall Gazette* and was arguably the tabloid story that was most widely talked about in 19th century England. cf. Doezema, 2010, Pajnik, 2008, Walkowitz, 1980.

²⁷ For detailed analysis see Doezema, 2010 and Wijers & Lin, 1997.

trafficking discourse. The UN Palermo Protocol of 2000 recognized the relevance of the consent for the exploited individuals who are 18 and older. Scholars have exemplified how focusing on consent over exploitation had negative consequences for victim protection, and how it centred anti-trafficking efforts on eradicating prostitution and discouraging migration of women instead (Coskun, 2015, Doezema, 2010, 2002, Agustín, 2007).

When it comes to media reporting, several scholars have shown that cases that involve trafficked individuals who fit the stereotype of the ideal victim receive more attention. While he recognizes the binary themes in the accounts of human trafficking victims, Snajder (2014) notes that deviations from stereotypical representation of an ideal victim rarely occur in the official trafficking discourse. Greer's (2007) observations considering victims of crime in general seem to be supportive of the notion that newspapers tend to neglect stories that portray atypical victims, and that their usual focus is on those who are vulnerable, young, innocent, and helpless. This negatively affects newsworthiness of trafficking cases that involve women who did sex work voluntarily, had a history of substance abuse, or were involved in any other behavioural pattern that is deemed immoral in a given society. Consequently, the public image of trafficking for sexual exploitation, its victims, causes and prospective remedies get distorted.

When it comes to visual representation, however, I have found that photographs published in Serbian online journalistic media are equally likely to portray trafficking survivors as innocent victims and unworthy prostitutes (Krsmanović, 2016). This thesis is also encompassing analysis of visual images published in trafficking articles that is set to determine whether framing in the text matches the way victims were framed in the accompanying photographic illustrations. Studies have shown that readers of the press first look at a photograph, scan the caption, read the title, and then, if still interested, read the text (Ninkovic-Slavnic, 2006). Visual illustrations in the press that are largely neglected in trafficking studies are the first thing readers base their impression on, and a unit upon which their further interest in the text depends. For that reason, it is essential to contrast photographic and textual components of news on trafficking and understand photographs as basic framing devices.

2.3.3. Us, Them, and Those in Between: the Citizen, the Legal Migrant and the Illegal Alien

Studies of trafficking discourse have shown that the separation of the figures of prostitutes and victims is intricately linked to the notion of 'foreignness'. Based on this factor, a distinction is being made between those victims of human trafficking who are domestic nationals and those who are not. Furthermore, the notion of foreign victims also generates another dichotomy – the one between the legal migrant and the illegal alien. This levelled discursive bifurcation is closely

linked with victim blaming in the media and in the victims protection practice. It also has important legal implications.

As with other elements of the contemporary trafficking discourse, the concept of victims' origin is deeply rooted in the way the phenomenon was constructed in the prohibitionist era. Human trafficking narratives of the 19th century demonstrate a twofold anxiety of Western societies. The first stream was directed towards notorious foreign criminals who trade in white slaves. It was believed that they deceive, abduct or coerce local white girls into prostitution, thereby disgracing not only the virgin girls, but also the national honour through the pollution of female purity. Doezema's (1999:40) analysis showed how trafficking discourse relies on this myth of white slavery. She recognized that behind the pioneering anti-trafficking efforts stood mounting fears of women's growing independence, the collapse of the traditional family, and the national identity crisis. The influence of the white slavery myth in contemporary trafficking discourse and its manifestations in the media was later confirmed in other analyses (De Villiers, 2016, O'Connell Davidson, 2010, Weitzer, 2007, Hallgrimsdottir, et al., 2006) even though the racial aspect of this myth, i.e. the dominant representation of the trafficked girls as white was challenged (Attwood, 2016).

The second anxiety of the West concerned bad foreign women of loose morality that migrate to and contaminate communities of the civilized developed world. The early scare about human trafficking followed massive migrations of women who left their families to look for work opportunities in wealthier countries. The Western bourgeois interventionists were vehemently against such deviations from the traditional gender norms. Banking on arguments of natural moral depravity and sexual corruption of immigrant women, they succeeded in advocating for more restrictive policies to restrain their projects of migration and exercising independence (Kempadoo, 2016, Attwood, 2016, Doezema, 2010, 1999). The same people who fought for salvation of their fellow-country women trapped as white slaves, did not apply the same humanitarian motives to victims arriving from foreign countries who were persecuted for being involved in prostitution in countries such as England, The Netherlands, and France (Pajnik, 2008: 41). The idea that it is the morally inferior foreigners who corrupt and introduce the problem of human trafficking into the otherwise unsoiled societies of the West became an integral and very resilient motif in human trafficking conceptualisations. What is more, this misrepresentation and alienation of women involved in sex work sometimes happened within the same community. In her study of the English Jewish Association's involvement in the anti-trafficking movement, Atwood (2016) concluded that out of fear for Jewish reputation in 'the respectable English society', the organisation othered the newly arrived migrant Jewish girls that they were claiming to be helping. In consequence, the group endorsed the anti-alienist and anti-Semitic prejudices

that they wanted to avoid in the first place (ibid:115). The construction of human trafficking as a product of powerful international criminals and immoral foreign women situated the question of responsibility outside the trafficking debate (Bartley, 2000).

Whether it is Russian and Ukrainian women, their Romanian, Bulgarian, and Hungarian Eastern European successors, Asian girls, or Nigerian ladies under juju spells, trafficked women are still perceived as a plague forcefully introduced to our world by (also foreign) dangerous criminals. Consequently, efforts put in place to improve migration control and restrict opportunities for migrants to work legally abroad remain important strategies in the fight 'against trafficking' to this date. Therefore Agustín (2007) challenges the moralist voices of the contemporary human trafficking 'rescue industry', and shows that trafficking stereotypes have little to do with the experiences of women who work in the sex industry she interviewed. She argues that migrant sex workers are framed as victims of trafficking by activists seeking to 'rehabilitate' them. Moral panics raised through anti-trafficking discourse involve demonization of various forms of sex-related migration (Witzer, 2007, Agustín, 2007, Aradau, 2004) and social and moral governance through 'sexual humanitarianism' (Mai, 2013) that have negative consequences for both sex workers and victims of human trafficking and the way they are perceived by the public. Andrijasevic (2007) and Nieuwenhuys & Pécoud (2007) specifically showed how awareness-raising materials produced in anti-trafficking campaigns serve to steer female migrants away by spreading the fear of horrific exploitative practices in the sex industry that became reality for many of their peers who left the safety of their homes to chase their naïve dreams. Similar warning messages to and about migrants are spread in the media reports as well (Szörényi, 2016). Also, a study of American journalistic media showed that both victims and traffickers are more often represented in a negative light if of foreign origin (Virkus, 2014). Cojocar (2016), a scholar who is a migrant woman and a survivor of human trafficking herself, used auto-ethnography of an art exhibition to demonstrate inconsistencies between art-mediated constructions of THB and her own experience as a survivor. She confirmed how deeply ingrained victim-related stereotypes are, and how difficult it is to challenge them.

Scholars have also explored the framing of human trafficking as a grave security threat, and much was written about how, consequently, anti-trafficking discourse empowers governments to deport unwanted aliens, impose barriers to migration, and exercise stricter crime punishment strategies, all the while claiming to be acting in the best interest of the vulnerable populations. Berman (2003) believes that the need for greater security measures popularised in the discourse on trafficking allowed states to exercise statecraft and re-establish their eroded sovereignty and authority in times of increased border panics and national identity crises. She acknowledges the work of Stoler (1995:83), and writes that:

In criminalizing trafficking, the state presses its 'right to intervene' over the individual by deporting women and over its population by eliminating 'internal threats' (like the 'undisciplined and irregular' sexuality of trafficked women and other 'white' women immigrants) to a European 'manner of living'.

Berman, 2013:50

According to Aradau (2004:252), situating human trafficking as a threat to the state that is closely linked with other security threats such as illegal migration, trafficking of drugs, organised crime, and terrorism, served to provide a substitute for the communist enemy in the post-Cold war era, and justify the policing of cross-border movements sparked by globalisation. Aradau explores two seemingly opposing discourses in approaches to fighting human trafficking – 'the politics of pity' and 'the politics of risk' and reveals how the poor suffering victims get reframed as a category of people 'at risk'. The traumas they suffered are represented as indicators of future risk of abuse and exploitation; hence measures taken to discipline and police victims of trafficking are masked as humanitarian measures that serve their 'best' interest. Many scholars argued that steps taken to eradicate human trafficking had detrimental effects on the most vulnerable populations, whose chances to improve their livelihood became even more severely restricted (Andrijasevic & Mai, 2016, Hill, 2016, O'Connell Davidson, 2015, Siegel 2009, Sassen, 2000, Bartley, 2000, Kempadoo and Doezema, 1998). What is more, recent efforts taken to stop undesirable migrants from reaching European, American and Australian soil made people more reliant on human smugglers and illegal channels of movement, which made them fall under even greater risk of trafficking and exploitation.

When it comes to media, nationality-based double standards in representation of migrants/victims are also common (Szörényi, 2016, Virkus, 2014, Siegel, 2009, Jahnsen, 2007, Greer, 2007, Dekić et al., 2003). Siegel (2009) found evidence that non-European women are shown as THB victims, whereas migrant sex workers are frequently labelled illegal and criminal in the Dutch media²⁸. On the other hand, Szörényi's (2016) analysis of an Australian trafficking-focused TV programme showed how migrants exploited in trafficking cases also get reframed as illegal regardless of their recognized victim status. Pajnik (2010:45) investigates the Slovene press and illustrates how the employed framing of human trafficking reinforces an understanding of human trafficking as a criminal issue and calls for greater policing, victim rescuing, and stricter

²⁸ Whereas EU citizens can register as sex workers in the Netherlands, the Dutch law does not allow non-EU citizens to work in the sex industry (see Chapter 7.1.). There were also cases where EU citizens were denied the right to sell sex in the Netherlands, as shown in the cases of four Polish and Czech sex workers who were denied work permits, but sued the Dutch authorities and won the case before the European Court of Justice (Reuters, 2001).

border control. As the world is struggling to deal with the current migration flows, we are further witnessing a schizophrenic media frenzy in which human trafficking cases are represented as instances of human smuggling, human smuggling cases are confused with trafficking for exploitation, migrants are portrayed as victims of trafficking, victims are portrayed as economic migrants, refugees are framed as criminals and rapists, smugglers are praised for helping the misfortunate one minute, and accused of allowing terrorists in for financial gain the next. In this utter confusion, old and dangerous ideas are revived and human trafficking is used for political advances of seclusionist nature.

2.3.4. Enslaved and Free: the (White) Slave and the Benevolent Saviour

The final dichotomy I want to address in this literature review is the one between the enslaved and the free: those who are portrayed in stories about human trafficking and those who consume them. Scholars have presented an argument that both modern and historical discourses on trafficking serve to establish 'them' (the trafficked, the enslaved) and 'us' (free human beings) as essentially different. Brace (2014) theorized that trafficked individuals get reduced to disposable bodies through their exclusion from citizenship. Others concluded that victims' objectification and erotization of their bodies had similar dehumanizing effects (Andrijasevic, 2007, Aradau, 2004). With regards to that, Hua and Ray (2010) propose an interesting concept of hierarchical agency that is typical of trafficking representations. They analyse a video called 'Cleaning Woman' produced within the UN awareness raising campaign, in which a white girl that works as a cleaner helps sexually exploited women of colour to escape from their traffickers. While the video proclaims that something can be done about human trafficking and that everyone can help eradicate this crime, it also, according to the two authors, signifies that sexually exploited women portrayed are excluded from the population that has the power to act. Victims of trafficking are all represented as ethnic minorities devoid of agency, and the white cleaner as someone who can help. Therefore, Hua & Ray conclude that anti-trafficking discourse internalises neo-colonial ideas that certain races and nationalities need to be guided and introduced to the moral realms of modernised humanity (ibid:253). The viewers are also assumed to be in a position of power to intervene and assist the victims. In a recent analysis of visual representation of trafficking in the media, I suggest that the voyeuristic gaze of media consumers allows them to use the objectified and dehumanized depictions of trafficked women in order to cope with anxieties and re-established their privileged position in terms of safety and agency (Krsmanović, 2016:160).

The enslaved-free binary occupies an important place in the contemporary neoliberal social order, where it serves to preserve the division between the privileged and those who are not (Doezema, 1999). Campaigns aimed at raising awareness of human trafficking and securing

adequate protection of victims of human trafficking resulted in legislative measures and humanitarian missions that protected capitalism rather than women who work in prostitution and/or have been trafficked with the purpose of sexual exploitation. Neoliberal capitalism brought rapid changes and economic struggles both in the first world countries where it dominated economies for decades, and countries that transitioned to it more recently. Higher unemployment, poverty, immense public debts and decreasing state budgets troubled even the most powerful of world's economies, whereas countries in transition suffered even more severe consequences, dealing with market failures and perpetual growth of drastic differences between the rich and the poor on top of the aforementioned problems (Kovačević, 2012). Academics interested in human trafficking also explored the links between the issue and capitalism. Pajnik (2008, p. 40) argued that by promoting the idea that migrants (especially women) are not safe outside their homes, males and females were fixed in their gender roles as custodians of family and moral virtue respectively; consequently, the position of family as a motor of capitalist production and consumption was fortified.

Parallel to the troubling economic developments, neoliberal capitalism had serious social implications, including a diminishing of the welfare state and decreased state influence and power. A number of scholars interested in human trafficking devoted attention to the links between neoliberalism, capitalism and trafficking in human beings (Andrijasevic & Mai, 2016, Hoefinger, 2016, O'Connell Davidson, 2015, Kempadoo, 2015, Hua & Ray, 2010). For instance, British sociologist Julia O'Connell Davidson (2015) is critical of the liberal emphasis on the 'voluntariness' of work in relation to human trafficking, and the violence and compulsion that need to be present for something to be considered human trafficking. She asserts that the dominant vision of human trafficking promotes the view that people are either passive objects, i.e. slaves, or freely contracting subjects. In such a way complex realities of people migrating to work in sex and other industries abroad are oversimplified and the nuanced experiences of people who are indeed trafficked are erroneously and narrowly represented. In such a way, O'Connell Davidson claims that capitalism-related structural factors that compel people to expose themselves to risks of exploitation are side-lined and ignored. In her analysis of contemporary and prominent anti-trafficking campaigning styles, Kempadoo (2015) reaches the same conclusion and argues that the humanitarian anti-trafficking efforts of white men and women protect neoliberal interests while at the same time masking their endeavours under the veil of good intentions. Furthermore, it is these, typically privileged benevolent saviours who define what should be considered as sexual exploitation and what not, who trafficking victims are, what is in their best interests and what are their needs, desires and possibilities. According to available

research the voices of trafficking survivors and women working in the sex industry are silenced and ignored in these debates (for example, see Agustín, 2005, 2007).

Contemporary trafficking discourse tends to ignore the role of neoliberal capitalism in creating and sustaining conditions that make people vulnerable to exploitation. As demonstrated, scholars have also argued that it ignores the fact that some of the people who sell sex choose to do so to improve their life conditions and exit a life of poverty and deprivation. Victims of trafficking are typically framed as exceptions and not products of the capitalist and neoliberal order, and used as a justification to intervene in poor countries and stop the migration of deprived people (Andrijasevic & Mai, 2016). Thereby, the current system acts for its own preservation, further impoverishing the most vulnerable regions and making people more susceptible to exploitative practices.

2.4. Conclusion

Journalistic media are selective in choosing what to report on and how. This process depends on a number of factors, including newsworthiness of a story, pragmatic routines of the news production, the influence of frame sponsors, the interest of the media owners, and personal beliefs and experience of the author of the news content. Framing theory proposes that selection of material to present and decision on which information to make more salient is a necessary part of the news reporting process. When this information is interpreted by news consumers, as a rule, they rely on the same cultural stock of frames, which makes them more likely to internalise the message and not oppose the dominant frame chosen by the journalist. By making some aspects of news stories more salient than others, media are, therefore, likely to affect the public perception of the portrayed issue.

In relation to human trafficking, this means that by highlighting some aspects of the phenomenon (e.g. links with migration or prostitution), different knowledge sets are likely to be activated in the minds of news consumers, which affects their consequent views and actions. This research relies on the constructivist approach to the framing theory that recognises the role of culture and power in media framing and communication in general. In examining frames employed in portraying trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation, it takes into account both aspects of trafficking stories that are highlighted and those that are neglected and considers cultural, social and political context typical of the period and place the analysed articles pertain to. This

research also does not neglect the increasing role media play in contemporary society. Banking on the socio-constructivist understanding of mediatisation, it perceives media to be interdependent with people and social institutions and argues that social world is constantly being transformed through these interactions between the media and other social institutions. This explanation is used to clarify how politicians, media, and society object, promote and shape responses to and understandings of human trafficking.

Media play an important role in conceptualising crime. Not only do they serve as an important source of information about criminal conduct that happens in the world around us, they also represent an arena in which different meanings and forms of representation fight for influence. For a comprehensive analysis of the way media frame a crime-related phenomenon, such as human trafficking, it is important to acknowledge the influence of culture and observe both crime and media reporting as cultural phenomena. Pursuant to the approach to studies of crime that cultural criminologists advocate for, this research views media as a realm in which the meaning of the human trafficking phenomenon is continuously shaped and re-negotiated. In the consequent analysis, the mediated texts and images of human trafficking are taken to be as real and as consequential as the crime they represent - in shaping public attitudes, spreading fear and anxieties about dangers of trafficking, influencing policies, providing entertainment, affecting lives of those involved or affected by the crime, and provoking certain actions as a response to human trafficking.

Review of the existing scholarship on public discourses and media representation of trafficking for sexual exploitation has been provided in the second part of this chapter. Researchers who focused on official trafficking discourse and its implications gained more insight into links between human trafficking, political aspirations to control migration, reaffirmation of state power, promoting securitisation and harsher crime control measures, and preserving the current neoliberal capitalistic system. They have also uncovered the role humanitarian actions have in supporting these politics, as well as governing behaviour and sex-related morals through their campaigns. Research on mediated representation on human trafficking has given important insights into the abundance of stereotypes human trafficking stories bank on and the anxieties that shape them. As a consequence, both have had major impacts on early and current anti-trafficking response measures. A simplified black and white world of trafficking dichotomies translates well into newsworthy media reports. However, it reiterates misrepresentations of victims' and traffickers' characteristics, focuses on the most extreme and violent cases, and is not immune to ethnic and gender biases that influence the selection process on which stories to report on.

Even though academic scrutiny has raised some important questions in relation to trafficking representations, most of the studies focused on media reporting are purely quantitative; very few are conducted outside of the United States of America, and even less outside the European Union; the visual elements of trafficking representations are rarely studied, and the way they relate to the text of the media report still remains to be explored. Furthermore, accounts of media reporting on human trafficking need to take into account the political and cultural contexts in which these media contents are created, which is another area that has been neglected by scholars who have explored human trafficking. This study is designed to bridge aforementioned knowledge gaps and explore what media framing of the issue of trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation has to reveal. What follows is an account of the methodology employed to fulfil this task.

CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

This chapter sets out to discuss the methodological assumptions which underlie this research project and explain and justify the methods employed to collect and analyse the data. In so doing, the first segment of the chapter elaborates on the epistemological foundations of the current study. This is followed by detailed accounts of the data collection tools employed, the research design, and the way the research process was carried out. In this section, the chapter focuses on the advantages of combining qualitative and quantitative content analysis of media articles. Furthermore, I stress the importance of using interviews to determine what preceded the frames used by the media and what follows from them, i.e. to examine how frames on human trafficking for sexual exploitation are connected to antecedents and consequences influencing and influenced by reporting. This chapter of the thesis also includes a discussion on the validity and reliability of the research conducted, as well as the triangulation used to validate the data obtained. It also contains an overview of ethical issues, relevant considerations and limitations of this study.

3.1. Epistemology

Much has been written about the importance of epistemological orientation in social research and the implications it has for methods used, decisions that guide the research process, as well as the types of answers and knowledge gathered (see for example see Vasilachis de Gialdino, 2009 and Bateson, 1972). Criminology has been traditionally linked with positivist views and objectivist epistemology. Thereby, studies of crime have been shaped and limited by assumptions of reductionism, linear causality, and neutral objectivity, i.e. the belief that a researcher can employ empirical scientific methods to discover a unique and objective reality. This study, however, distances itself from this tradition, and approaches the research subject from a cultural criminology perspective, relying on social constructivism and interpretivism. Rather than assuming there is such a thing as objective scientific truth about human trafficking and its media representation, it sets out on a quest to analyse the different ways the issue is being framed by the media with the aim of assessing various meanings promoted through such framing and repercussions thereof. Therefore, this research does not use media reports on human trafficking to unveil the truth about this criminal phenomenon as some researchers have attempted in the

past.²⁹ In fact, I find such an approach to be highly problematic, as it can strengthen stereotypes and promote inadequate solutions to the issue of trafficking.

The approach adopted in this study relies on social constructivism, and assumes that knowledge is a social construct. The constructivist view is based on the premise that knowledge is not dependent on objective reality, nor is it passively internalised through sensory cognition and/or communication. On the contrary, the assumption is that knowledge is created through consensus reached by a group that, as a rule, shares cultural, ethical and social values (Mašović, 2013). Importantly, social constructionists maintain that people actively participate in the construction of knowledge (Gergen, 1985). For instance, Berger and Luckmann (1967) contend that the process of knowledge construction is social and interactive, which is why social studies need to focus on analysing this construction rather than set on a quest to discover the ultimate truth and reality. In other words, reality is created by the observer who gives meaning to the observed (Van Niekerk, 2005, Jonassen, 1991, Von Glasersfeld, 1988). One phenomenon can have numerous meanings assigned to it, and the diverse knowledge constructions that different people reach about the same phenomenon are equally valid. As Mašović (2013) summarises, postmodern constructivist understanding of knowledge is based on the idea that knowledge is relative and inseparable from the context in which it was constructed. He also points out that constructionists replace the principle of validity with the principle of viability of constructions and recognise the link between the (active) knowing subject and the object of perception. Therefore, social constructionism scholars focus on induction rather than deduction, hermeneutics rather than heuristics, and qualitative methods in place of quantitative ones.

Following the logic of the social constructionist epistemology, the focus of this study is on the meanings assigned to trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation in media texts. Also, this research pays close attention to the social and cultural context in which meanings of trafficking are created, promoted and negotiated. This too stems from a social constructionist paradigm that insists that all knowledge claims must be reflected upon in relation to their given context and close consideration of the community that accepts these knowledge claims.

As detailed in the previous chapter, this study adopts a constructionist approach to media framing. In addition to drawing on constructionist epistemology, it also relies on interpretivism. The study accepts the interpretivist idea that there can be no knowledge without interpretation and rejects the view that meaning exists independently of consciousness. Next, the chapter

²⁹ Dugan (2013) uses press reports to determine the number of victims of trafficking for labour exploitation in the UK. Denton (2010) draws conclusions on demographics of victims and offenders in the US based on media reports on trafficking cases, as do Leechaianan & Roth (2014) and Wilson & Dalton (2007).

moves on to describe in greater detail the research design, data collection tools and research procedures.

3.2. Research Design

Tensions between authors who call for a traditional empirical approach in the application of framing theory in research and scholars who are challenging the empirical realism of the framing literature are still unresolved. Tankard (2001:104) for instance, is strongly in favour of a rather positivist methodology. According to him, such an empirical approach gives replicable results, allows the reliability of the measurement to be determined, brings greater potential for theory building and testing to framing research, and, to an extent, solves the problem of subjectivity that is so frequently attached to frame analysis in its critiques. Other scholars depart from a different starting point and assert that meanings also exist outside the empirically ordered world. These thinkers often point out that the positivist approach is reductive. For them, the problem lies in stripping frames of their context and not taking cultural, historical, and other factors into account. For instance, Durham (2001:132) uses an example of media framing of a flight crash to show how there is little logic in applying the same frames to the analysis of later incidents, as such an appropriation entails so many adjustments that the original meaning of the frame would 'have to have been so adapted to the contemporary need to explain the case that it would no longer have represented that past'.

This study sides with the latter school of thought. However, it does combine quantitative and qualitative content analysis. The distinctly abstract nature of frames calls for combinatory use of quantitative and qualitative research methods that allow interpretation (Van Gorp, 2007). Some quantification is applied in this study in order to determine the frequency of given frames, assess the influence of certain frame sponsors, and explore certain frame characteristics. I also look at certain characteristics of victims and offenders to determine if there are biases in representing some groups as victims or offenders. However, in doing so, I contrast findings from the media analysis with information obtained through interviewing anti-trafficking specialists and media professionals. Furthermore, I compliment the inferior explanatory value of quantitative methodology by opting for inductive extraction of frames and in-depth text-based analysis. After all, as both crime and its media representations are socially constructed phenomena, their scientific understanding must involve an element of interpretation (Mathews, 2009:354).

3.3. Data Collection Tools

3.3.1. Content Analysis

Framing theory has scattered conceptualisation and analysts using it are encouraged to use a variety of research techniques to identify frames in the news. The research method of content analysis has proved to be very useful in analysing media framing. Entman (1993:57), for instance, highlighted how content analysis, if based on the theory of framing, helps avoid treating all terms in a text as equally salient and important, and acknowledges the difference between positive and negative terms that other approaches frequently neglect. When discussing the compatibility of framing and content analysis, Van Gorp (2007:71) raises an important question of how to fulfil the criteria of reliability, reproducibility and validity while measuring latent meaning structures in a text. He sees the answer in the less traditional form of content analysis that is informed by framing theory, and gives the following answer to the above question:

‘This can be achieved by accepting a heuristic principle, namely that a series of manifest variables can represent a latent concept (Neuendorf, 2002). The respective framing devices, transmuted in measurable variables, all refer to the frame as a latent meaning structure.’

Van Gorp, 2007:71

For almost a century, content analysis has been used to investigate different texts, images, sounds, video recordings, works of art, numerical entries, and other types of meaningful data. As the method evolved, so did its definition. In the literature, one can find three groups of definitions that vary in their conceptualisation of content. While initial attempts to define content analysis took content to be inherent in a text, later definitions thought of it as a property of the source of a text (Krippendorff, 2004). Both groups are reductive, and do not take into account the fact that one text can be read in a number of different ways which are not necessarily congruent to the meaning the author of the text had in mind. For this reason, a third group of definitions, contemplating that content emerges in the process of analysis that is always relative to a particular context, seem to best match contemporary thinking on the communication process and its complexity. One such definition comes from a communication professor, Klaus Krippendorff (2004), who defines content analysis as a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts to the contexts of their use. The reliability and validity of content analysis are particularly important traits of the research technique. According to Singleton and Straits (2010:421), these two factors depend on the clear definition of content categories and strict rules for assigning units to categories.

This method is particularly useful for looking at large volumes of media coverage and, if done carefully, allows making some general inferences. Further, content analysis is suitable for this study because it typically allows the researcher to evaluate differences in media framing across countries or over time (Moore, 2014). As the interest of this study is to compare media reporting on human trafficking in the sex industry in three different European countries, relying on content analysis yielded informative results. However, to fully discover nuances distinguishing reporting styles in different countries, the analysis conducted in this study included qualitative inspection as well. After all, the meaning of crime is shaped within the intricate interaction between the media, culture and personal experience, which is why quantitative methods cannot fully discover its complexity. Qualitative analysis is essential to gaining deeper understandings of analysed content, whereas quantitative analysis adds value to the reliability and validity of the study, and enables the researcher to analyse a greater number of articles.

As previously stated, the meanings perpetuated in media reporting on human trafficking are insufficiently explored in academia, especially in European scholarship. Therefore another reason for applying content analysis is the fact that the method is suitable for identifying the main themes related to trafficking portrayal and measuring their frequency and intensity. In addition to that, content analysis of media framing can be used to learn about social phenomena of a concealed nature that are difficult to observe (Nueman, 2011), which is the case when dealing with trafficking in human beings. This research technique allows implementation of a systematic description of specific communication content. It can show the presence or absence, frequency and variation of certain characteristics of the analysed text (Milivojević 2010).

In his book 'Content Analysis – An Introduction to its Methodology', Krippendorff (2004) asserts that meanings invoked by texts are not necessarily shared and that content analysts need to acknowledge that. He reminds future analysts of certain characteristics of texts that are relevant for content analysis and are the foundation of the approach to the analysis applied in this study. Krippendorff (2004: 22-23) maintains that texts do not have qualities that are independent of the reader and can have various meanings, which is why the mission to find the 'single or principal' meaning of a text is an impossible one. Krippendorff also notes that the context in which analysed texts are created is of immense importance and that the meanings of texts are relative to 'particular context, discourses, and purposes' (ibid.). Therefore, it is essential to contextualise each content analysis, which I did in the introductory chapter. All the inferences that I make about the analysed content in the subsequent analytical chapters are tied to that specific context – spatial, cultural, historical, and political.

3.3.2. In-depth Interviews

Framing research allows scholars to account for media content, its production, and effects of news at the same time. This trait factored greatly into the decision to employ framing theory and use related methods in this study. To research the media framing of any particular issue, it is necessary to examine how frames are connected to antecedents (e.g. production conditions and context) and consequences (e.g. policy implications and awareness raising) of the reporting (Matthes, 2009). Framing researchers have combined their analyses with interviews with content producers in the past (Richards & King, 2000, Parmelee, 2002, cited in Matthes, 2009). However, in the study area of media reporting on human trafficking, researchers have greatly neglected a comprehensive approach that takes into account both the production and effects of studied contents. To contribute to knowledge building, this study includes in-depth interviews with media professionals who specialise in the topic of human trafficking. In addition, interviews were carried out with a heterogeneous group of anti-trafficking professionals who come into contact with journalists in their line of work and provide the media with information on the topic. In this section, the decision to obtain information through semi-structured in-depth interviews is justified.

There are many different interviewing techniques applied in social studies and it is the responsibility of the researcher to choose one that is methodologically most fit. The importance of selecting an appropriate interviewing style, type of questions and the approach to questioning was emphasized by Noaks and Wincup (2004). The purpose of introducing this research technique to this study was twofold. Firstly, it provided insights into areas inaccessible through content analysis of articles on human trafficking for sexual exploitation. Interviews with media professionals and people who collaborate with them provided valuable information about the production of analysed contents - conditions in which texts were created, attitudes of journalists, other content creators and editors towards the issue of THB, structural conditions in which media operate and journalist work, etc. Interviewing also allowed for inspection of consequences of trafficking reporting according to anti-trafficking experts. They reported on implications that media writing had for cases of human trafficking they were working on, consequences for the lives of victims, results in policy changes, etc. Secondly, interviewing served to triangulate the data (see section 3.4.6. of this thesis), confirm biases identified through content analysis, and complement findings derived from media analysis.

The decision to use semi-structured in-depth interviews was taken in order to enable respondents to give their own, non-conformist account of media reporting on human trafficking in the sex industry. Semi-structured interviews are among the most wide spread questioning techniques in the social and human sciences. They are valued for allowing flexibility in the variation in the use

of questions and the order of questions posed. Also, in-depth interviews are suitable for exploring complex matters and learning about social processes that are hard to observe (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This interviewing method allows the researcher to explore emerging issues of interest and to ask new questions prompted by respondents' replies. This, however, does not mean special precautions should not be taken in creating the set of questions and pretesting them. In her book 'Mastering the Semi-Structured Interview and Beyond : From Research Design to Analysis and Publication', Galletta (2013:45) states that each interview question should be clearly connected to the purpose of the research, and its placement within the protocol should reflect the researcher's intentional progression toward a fully in-depth exploration of the phenomenon under study. Data elicited through this interviewing style is known to be both grounded in the experience of the participant and guided by existing constructions within the field (ibid.), which means this method is suitable for gathering data on how interviewees reflect on the topic of media reporting on human trafficking and gaining insights into existing socio-cultural constructs they reflect in their responses.

3.4. Research Procedure

3.4.1. Content Analysis – Data Collection

This study used Google News (GN) aggregator for data collection. Google News aggregator encompasses content from more than 50,000 publishers (Filloux, 2013, February 25), and covers 4,500 news websites just in the English language (Segev, 2010). It gathers articles from news websites that include digital presentations of traditional media as well as online news sources. The GN aggregator excludes social media publications and a great majority of non-journalistic products³⁰ through its complex algorithms (for details on how GN works, see Filloux, 2013, February 25). Yet, it includes news sources that specialise in certain topics and various independent news platforms, which allowed for the collection of articles that target readers of different education levels.

³⁰ Several non-journalistic publications were identified in the data gathered but were subsequently excluded from the sample. These were several personal blog posts that were probably identified because of high traffic of the blogs as well as the fact that I went through all hits, including those who were less favoured by the GN algorithms and therefore appeared as the very last hits identified.

The decision to use this tool to access relevant articles published in online media was made because GN allowed searching for articles in all three languages, unlike other available search tools. Another advantage of GN aggregator is that it allows for a free web news archive search that can go back in time and cover the observed period from the 1st of January 2011 until the 31st December 2015.³¹ In addition to that, GN is a very influential platform that is widely used – it reports sending 6 billion visits per month to news sites and claims to connect 1 billion unique users a week to news content (Filloux, 2013, February 25). The huge traffic the aggregator generates is an indicator of how influential it is, which was also factored in when choosing the data collection tool. This said, GN aggregator has been criticised for favouring ‘legacy media (print or broadcast news) over pure players, aggregators or digital native organisations’ (ibid.), which should be taken into account when assessing limitations of this study.

This search method also helped avoid dealing with poorly maintained archives and tags of Serbian news websites that would impede direct search on individual online media archives.³² A key-word search of Serbian, Dutch and UK news was conducted, and the equivalents of the following terms were searched for: ‘human trafficking’, ‘sexual exploitation’, ‘forced prostitution’, ‘trafficking in women’, and ‘white slavery’. The table below shows what terms were searched for in what language. Initially, all six terms were searched for in all three languages, but as the term ‘white slavery’ yielded none to very few results in English or in Dutch, it was only used to collect articles from Serbian media. For the same reason, term ‘sex trafficking’ was omitted from the search of Serbian media and used only to scan Dutch and UK news sources.

Table 2 - Search terms used in data collection

United Kingdom	The Netherlands	Serbia
Human trafficking	Mensenhandel (<i>Engl. human trafficking</i>)	Trgovina ljudima (<i>Engl. human trafficking</i>)
Sex trafficking	Sekshandel (<i>Engl. sex trafficking</i>)	/
Forced prostitution	Gedwongen prostitutie (<i>Engl. forced prostitution</i>)	Prinudna prostitucija (<i>Engl. forced prostitution</i>)
Trafficking in women	Vrouwenhandel (<i>Engl. trafficking in women</i>)	Trgovina ženama (<i>Engl. trafficking in women</i>)
Sexual exploitation	Seksuele uitbuiting (<i>Engl. sexual exploitation</i>)	Seksualna eksploatacija (<i>Engl. Sexual exploitation</i>)
/	/	Belo roblje (<i>Engl. white slaves</i>)

³¹ As explained in more detail under section 1.4, this study was conducted in three European countries that have different cultures and legal frameworks when it comes to regulating prostitution. The period explored (01.01.2011 – 31.12.2015) was chosen because of the important anti-trafficking (UK) and prostitution (NL) policy developments and the lack thereof (Serbia) in the period under scrutiny.

³² In the early phase of this research, before I decided on methodological particulars, I searched archives of most popular online news websites in Serbia and learned that key words searches yielded few if any results.

The search was extended to include these terms because journalists use all these phrases to refer to human trafficking for sexual exploitation (even though the term ‘human trafficking’ is broader, sometimes it is used in its reduced form to label only sexual exploitation). The contested term of white slavery was also appropriated by the press to label trafficking in women in the Serbian language, and it remained in use despite the critics. To avoid having some of the results not displayed in the search, I searched for each term by month – starting from January 2011 and concluding with December 2015. Further, GN allows researchers to use advanced search specifications. I used this feature to eliminate articles that pertain to other forms of human trafficking, or criminal acts that involve trafficking of illegal goods and not human beings.³³ In that way, I secured lower occurrence of false-positive hits among the search results.

Articles that focus on other forms of human trafficking (e.g. trafficking for labour exploitation, forced begging, etc.) were excluded from the sample, and so were texts that mention human trafficking but focus on some other issue, such as human smuggling, irregular migration, organised crime, violence against women, etc. GN search engine algorithms are designed to limit the number of duplicates (Denton, 2010), but the search results still contained a number of the same articles. These were disregarded too. Finally, the search results included a few article previews. As the full access to these articles had to be paid for, and no funds were available for that, I left out these texts from the final sample too. The final number of articles on trafficking for sexual exploitation published in the period between 2011 and 2015 was 1,544 texts in British online media, 776 articles in the Dutch online media, and 280 published on Serbian online news websites. Detailed tables of search results per term and per country are provided below. It is important to note, however, that these tables are not representative of frequency of the use of terms media utilize to refer to trafficking for sexual exploitation. This is because some articles appeared in results of searches for multiple terms and they were only counted as valid results for the chronologically first key term search. That explains why term ‘human trafficking’ has most results in all three languages³⁴. As this research encompass qualitative text analysis as well, it was

³³ I introduced exclusion of terms only after I had gone through 6 months of searching for each term in each language without it. In that way I was able to identify what topics frequently pass as relevant even though they are not. That was the case with labour exploitation in searching for the term ‘human trafficking’ in all three languages. Word ‘prošnja’ (*Engl. begging*) was excluded from the search for the term ‘trgovina ljudima’ (*Engl. human trafficking*) in the Serbian language. The words ‘drug’ and ‘narcotics’ were excluded from the search for ‘human trafficking’ and ‘sex trafficking’ in the English language, and so was the word ‘cocaine’ for a few months during which a lot of media reported on a big case of trafficking of this drug in the UK. I did not use the exclusion of terms feature in searching for the other terms as the number of results was not that high.

³⁴ For demonstrative purpose, I first searched for the term ‘sex trafficking’ in the 2015 English language search only. Expectedly, it yielded more results than the ‘human trafficking’ search that followed, and even

not that important to determine frequency of term use at this point of the research. Therefore, the tables below serve to illustrate the data collection process rather than to inform analysis.

Table 3 - Number of search results per term/per annum in the United Kingdom

UK	Engl. human trafficking	Sex Trafficking	Engl. forced prostitution	Trafficking in women	Sexual exploitation	Sum
2015	75	199	57	21	80	432
2014	251	90	18	60	90	509
2013	177	58	7	26	81	349
2012	70	24	4	19	69	186
2011	15	17	1	6	29	68
Sum	588	388	87	132	349	1544

Table 4 - Number of search results per term/per annum in the Netherlands

NL	Mensenhandel <i>Engl. human trafficking</i>	Sekshandel <i>Engl. sex trafficking</i>	Gedwongen prostitutie <i>Engl. forced prostitution</i>	Vrouwenhandel <i>Engl. Trafficking in women</i>	Seksuele uitbuiting <i>Engl. sexual exploitation</i>	Sum
2015	145	2	122	12	55	336
2014	74	1	72	27	22	196
2013	47	0	47	24	12	130
2012	34	0	22	10	7	73
2011	9	0	10	5	17	41
Sum	309	3	273	78	113	776

Table 5 - Number of search results per term/per annum in Serbia

SRB	Trgovina ljudima <i>Engl. human trafficking</i>	Seksualna eksploatacija <i>Engl. sexual exploitation</i>	Prinudna prostitucija <i>Engl. forced prostitution</i>	Trgovina ženama <i>Engl. Trafficking in women</i>	Belo roblje <i>Engl. White slavery</i>	Sum
2015	37	3	4	13	6	63
2014	48	6	3	5	2	64
2013	78	4	3	5	1	91
2012	36	3	0	5	0	44
2011	16	0	0	2	0	18
Sum	215	16	10	30	9	280

3.4.2. Coding for Quantitative Content Analysis

The starting point of this research was the literature review and preliminary analysis of media and public discourse that helped induce frames typically employed when speaking about trafficking

more so than consecutive searches for ‘forced prostitution’, ‘trafficking in women’, and ‘sexual exploitation’.

for sexual exploitation. The literature review and preliminary investigation into media reporting on human trafficking for sexual exploitation helped devise a coding book used in the quantitative content analysis. Values assigned to each category were defined during the initial phase of the coding process. The unit of analysis in this research is a text, defined as a graphical and content whole (regardless of its length and type of the article) with its accompanying components (titles, illustrations, photographs, fact boxes, etc.). Video and audio materials that were included in some of the articles were not analysed in this thesis. At this stage of the research, the focus was on identifying the inventory of frames used to shape texts on media reporting on trafficking for sexual exploitation. The following dominant frames were identified in the sample: criminal justice, violence, prostitution, migration, and human rights. An additional frame was employed in the UK media to refer to trafficking of children of British nationality. This dominant frame was labelled child sexual exploitation (CSE), as this is the term appropriated by the media to signal that trafficked children are not foreign nationals.³⁵ In identifying dominant frames I was guided by Van Gorp's (2007:72) suggestion that 'frames must be sufficiently abstract to be applicable in other cases and in similar situations'. Apart from the dominant frame used in the article, texts were coded for sources used, article length and genre, regions covered, as well as victims' and traffickers' demographics (gender, age and nationality) where applicable. Detailed coding categories and corresponding values thereof are included in the Appendix A. Appendix G provides a comparative overview of the coded data in the three studied countries.

Quantitative methods are not typical of research guided by principles of cultural criminology. Therefore, it is important to note that the approach I took to treating the quantitative data as well as triangulation with qualitative analysis and interviews, prevented some issues that cultural criminologists associate with quantitative studies. In his article 'Voodoo Criminology and the Numbers Game', Jock Young (2004) criticises criminological studies based on quantitative

³⁵ The decision to treat CSE as a separate frame was made because it was evident media were treating trafficking for sexual exploitation of domestic minor citizens as a separate phenomenon to that of minors who do not hold British nationality. In addition to that, a large number of articles fitted this category (10% of the sample), making it the third most common way of framing the issue of human trafficking in the UK media. A number of stereotypical and often inaccurate representations when it comes to victims' and traffickers' demographics and other specificities of this sub-sample are analysed under sub-section 6.3.3. These stories focus on activities of 'organised crime gangs' of Asian men exploiting British white teenagers. While there are similarities between CSE framing in the UK and the way 'loverboy' cases are represented in the Dutch sample (see chapter 7), the loverboy phenomenon is rather represented as a method of recruitment into human trafficking for sexual exploitation in the Dutch media. Contrary to that, the tendency in the UK is to represent child sexual exploitation as a phenomenon that is different to sexual exploitation of (non-UK born) minors in human trafficking rings, which is why special attention was devoted to its scrutiny in this analysis. To make sure CSE deserved a status of a separate frame, I asked participants in my research from the UK what the CSE term meant to them and most reported on different ways of treating exploitation of foreign and domestic children in the sex industry. Furthermore, interviews showed this distinction is being made not only by the media but also by some institutional actors involved in addressing modern slavery and human trafficking in the country.

approaches, such as large-scale surveys, for not being representative as they claim to be. However, this study does not use numbers derived from the analysis of media articles to establish 'facts' about the criminal act of human trafficking. On the contrary, it contrasts these numbers with other sources to identify potential biases in media reporting and then tests these findings based on data collected through interviewing relevant pundits. Furthermore, this research puts emphasis on rich, in-depth analysis of various frames employed by the media – regardless of their frequency and takes into consideration the cultural, political and social context in which articles were produced.

Coding for the quantitative part of the content analysis of the Dutch articles was completed by a research assistant who was fluent in the Dutch language. To ensure inter-coder reliability, the research assistant was first familiarised with the coding book and later trained to apply it. After two weeks of training was completed by the research assistant and all dilemmas clarified, further steps towards ensuring intercoder reliability were taken. According to Lombard et al. (2010), the appropriate size of the sample used to measure reliability of coders depends but it should not be less than 50 units or 10% of the full sample. Therefore, 10% (77) of randomly selected articles in the Dutch language were translated into English, and coded by both the main researcher and research assistant. During this test, the researchers were coding independently, without consultation or guidance. Discrepancies in coding occurred in less than 5% of texts. It is worth noting that the nature of the majority of the categories was such that no disagreements between the two researchers occurred (this was the case for the length of article, sources used, regions covered, and demographic characteristics of victims and offenders). Few discrepancies in coding were recorded in dominant frame and article genre categories. Disagreements between coders were resolved, as other techniques such as random selection of coders' decisions or majority decision rule were inappropriate (this is because only a subset of text was translated into English and also there was an even number (2) of researchers involved in coding). After that the research assistant proceeded to code the remaining articles from the sample.

3.4.3. Sampling and Coding for Frame Analysis

The total number of collected articles (2,600) was too great to analyse all articles qualitatively. This was due to the constricted time for completion of this PhD programme, as well as the fact that only one person was available to do the data coding at this stage.³⁶ Therefore, a subsample

³⁶ As explained earlier in this section, the research assistant was involved only in data collection and coding in the initial phase of the quantitative analysis of articles published in the Dutch media. For reasons explained under section 3.4.6. and due to limited financial resources, frame analysis was entirely undertaken by me.

was chosen for further analysis. In the section below, the process of selection of articles is described, followed by an explanation of the subsequent coding process and approach to analysis.

Production of media content is subordinated to advertising cycles that vary in substance and intensity during the week. For this reason, simple random sampling that can over-sample certain days and under-sample others, does not give the finest results compared to other types of sampling used in media research (Lacy et al, 2001). Studies have shown that constructed week sampling³⁷ usually gives results of optimal validity, both in traditional media studies (Riffe, et al, 1993, Riffe et al, 1996), and in relation to researching online media content as well (Hester & Dougal, 2007). However, the main goal of this study was to explore different frames in media reporting on human trafficking for sexual exploitation in depth. Therefore, it was important to ensure that the sample for frame analysis contains a large enough number of articles belonging to each identified dominant frame, so that inferences about them can be made. Therefore the chosen method of sampling for this research was stratified, based on dominant frames identified in quantitative analysis. Within the dominant frame strata, articles were selected randomly, in order to ensure higher degree of validity of conducted analysis.

There is no universally accepted rule in determining appropriate sample size in the application of content analysis (Neuendorf, 2002). Qualitative media content analysis typically uses smaller samples that allow researchers to explore the contextual meaning of data. Despite that, it is important to make sure sample size is big enough and take necessary precautionary measures to avoid unnecessary sampling biases. Unlike the quantitative content analysis that produces reliable findings and can encompass large amount of data, qualitative content analysis is more focused and hard to do with scientific reliability. Nevertheless, qualitative analysis is essential to understanding the deeper meanings of mediated texts and their likely readings, which is why Macnamara (2005:5) proposes the combination of the two as the ideal research approach.

To keep the sample size manageable in the allocated time frame for the completion of this research project, I restricted frame analysis to approximately 30% of all the articles collected and coded in the initial phase of the research. By applying stratified sampling based on dominant frames, 246 articles published in each country were selected for analysis (738 in total). Numbers of articles per annum and per category (dominant frame) for each analysed country are presented in the Appendix B.

³⁷ Constructed week sampling is a type of stratified sampling in which days of the week in which news is published/broadcasted are used as strata. This sampling method is used to account for systematic variation due to day of week and specificity of content published during certain period in the week (e.g. articles published in Sunday specials in daily papers are much different than articles published in regular sections of the same newspapers published on Tuesdays).

Not all frames are equally present in media reporting on human trafficking in the selected countries. The Migration and Human Rights frames are less common in all three countries, whereas Criminal Justice and Prostitution frames dominate the reporting. The violence frame was very popular in Serbia and still notable in the UK, but the Dutch sample included very few texts that fitted the frame³⁸. Even though I was aiming at selecting an equal number of articles for each frame, some of the frames were simply not dominant in as many articles in the total sample which is why the number of articles analysed per category vary. When a category did not have enough articles to draw a proportionate sample, more articles were randomly selected in other remaining categories to reach the targeted number of articles.

3.4.3.1. Coding for Frame Analysis

Frames are abstract variables which is why researchers need to be careful when defining and coding different frames employed by the media. As outlined in Chapter 2, in this research media framing is understood as a process of selection of certain aspects of the perceived reality that are made more salient in order to promote particular views of the portrayed issue (Entman, 1993). Frames, accordingly, are regarded as culturally shared organising principles used to meaningfully structure perceived social phenomena (Reese, 2011). To identify frames used by the media to portray human trafficking in this study, deductive and inductive strategy was applied. Literature and public discourses were surveyed first. After establishing what were the existing ways of understanding and portraying trafficking, preliminary coding was performed to identify whether similar or different frames are typical of the scrutinised sample. Such procedure was in line with the frame analysis method proposed by Van Gorp (2007:72), who argued that identifying different frames is a process that should combine analysis of media content, public discourse, and literature review, and that after this inductive process researchers could proceed to deduce to what extent devices of the identified frames are present in their data sets. The process of identifying frames was a reflective one and involved the researcher going back to research questions, and checking if identified frames did, in fact, focus on different problems, underlined the responsibility of specific actors, proposed unique solutions, etc. (see Appendix C). The difference between the literature review and dominant frames identified in the research is therefore consequent to the focus on validity and the goal to identify those frames that are typical of the sample analysed. Most of them correspond to the literature (criminal justice, prostitution,

³⁸ In the Dutch sample the migration frame contained only 3 articles and the violence frame only 12. For this reason it was hard to generalise and make conclusive inferences. Therefore, these two sections were approached with more caution and sections that cover analysis of the two frames in the Netherlands (7.3.4. and 7.3.5.) should be read accordingly. The reader will also notice that less has been said about these two frames than others and this is due to the above mentioned reason.

human rights, migration). However, violence frame emerged as a sample of articles focused solely on elaborate descriptions of the suffering that victims of human trafficking endure. Child sexual exploitation was identified as a separate frame typical of the UK sample that treats trafficking of domestic children for sexual exploitation in a unique way (see footnote 35 for the reasoning behind the decision to regard this as a distinctive frame). Such bottom up approach in identifying frames is advantageous because it avoids imposing predefined categories that may not be characteristic of the sample under scrutiny.

Once dominant frames had been identified, I selected a sub-sample of articles for frame analysis. Then I proceeded with data coding in NVivo, the qualitative data analysis software, that was used to store and code the data both in the quantitative and qualitative stage of analysis. Here, all the articles were sorted according to the country. Each country folder contained separate folders and the corresponding codes for each dominant frame. This enabled me to focus on different characteristics within each dominant frame and relative to the country.

I first composed a framing matrix based on Entman's (1993:52) functions of framing that influenced the formulation of research questions. I searched for problem definitions, responsibility assigned for the problems (both for causing and solving them), underlying moral judgements and solutions offered in the analysed articles. In addition to that, I paid attention to coding images used to illustrate articles on trafficking for sexual exploitation. In that way, I ensured that visual elements are not neglected in this study, and acknowledged that frames can manifest in the visual aspects of mediated texts. Finally, I used emerging coding categories to ensure my original codes are not limiting the analysis. Each text was read twice, and only reoccurring themes were analysed in the thesis. This process helped identify metaphors, patterns and other framing devices typical of each dominant frame.

The problem linked to all research based on content analysis is the issue of definitions of coding categories. As Bertrand and Hughes (2017:244) emphasize, it is almost impossible to establish watertight definitions of categories, and it is often the less precise categories that allow for more interesting analysis. Therefore, special attention was paid to constructing clear operational definitions of coding categories (see Appendix C). To counteract researcher subjectivity, I first used the exact wording the journalist used, and then I grouped categories with similar theme under an umbrella category. For instance, within the human rights frame, problems linked to inadequate support for victims of human trafficking varied greatly. Some texts spoke about a lack of accommodation capacities and specialised shelters for human trafficking survivors, others were focused on the failure to secure compensation for victims of trafficking. When grouped together with other akin issues, these were categorised as 'inadequate victim protection'.

Similarly, deportations due to the failure to award victim status to foreign victims and failures to distinguish between voluntary sex workers and those who are trafficked were categorised as 'inadequate identification'. However, the NVivo software allowed me to return to the exact wording used in articles in other stages of the analysis and writing up phase, which helped achieve greater validity of the analysis.

Obtaining reliability in coding is an obstacle faced by this and any other research involving qualitative analysis. Yet, in media analysis, too great a focus on reliability can cause problems with validity of data (Van Gorp, 2005, Krippendorff, 1982). In relation to this methodological issue, Van Gorp (2005:488) recorded that analysts that concentrate on reliability checks too much, risk recording all kinds of media content and missing the frame. Reliability reached in this research is not as high as reliability of studies focused on measuring word frequencies. However, the emphasis on validity rather than reliability helped avoid abstract empiricism that has a low explanatory value. Not falling into traps of objectivist episteme, such as reductionism and linearity, this research yielded much richer analysis of mediated representations of human trafficking.

3.4.4. In-depth Interviews

Parallel to content analysis of online media, I commenced conducting interviews in September 2015 and completed this part of the fieldwork in October 2016. I interviewed anti-trafficking professionals who provide information to the media on the phenomenon studied (see topic list in the Appendix E), and media experts who specialise in reporting on trafficking in human beings (see topic list in the Appendix F). This allowed me to better understand the framing of trafficking for sexual exploitation through gaining access to information on the media production process and the consequences such framing had in practice. Having chosen two populations that have different roles in the framing process (frame sponsors and content-producers), I opted for the method of in-depth interviews that made it possible to account for opinions and experiences of two groups with different interests – having the issue represented in a certain way (sponsors) and publishing a newsworthy story on a current issue (media). In-depth interviewing allows researchers to explore multiple perspectives towards an issue and, consequently, capture the complexity of the social world more adequately (Rubin & Rubin, 2012:4).

I started the interview phase with three pilot interviews conducted in Serbia in the summer of 2015. One was with a journalist and two with anti-trafficking professionals. A thematic guide that was used in interviews was finalised and adjusted after the pilot interviews. It was based on my preliminary exploration of media content on human trafficking, as well as related issues I was

familiar with by having worked in the sector and with/in the media myself (see section 3.6.1. of this thesis in which I refer in detail to my personal involvement in the anti-trafficking sector in Serbia). A list of potential informants was composed and was amended during the fieldwork through snowball sample strategy.

The first interviews took place in the Netherlands in the period between September and December 2015. Here, 11 anti-trafficking experts and 6 media professionals were interviewed. In January and February 2016, interviews of pundits from Serbia took place and experiences of 12 anti-trafficking professionals and 8 people working in the media were recorded. Finally, interviews with British respondents took place between March and October 2016. In the UK 7 anti-trafficking and 4 media professionals were interviewed. In total, 48 interviews were completed in the three countries – 30 with experts in anti-trafficking and 18 with media professionals specialising in the topic of human trafficking. Average duration of an interview was 61.5 minutes (ranging from 10³⁹ to 148 minutes).

Graph 1 - AT experts/media ratio of people interviewed per country



Interviews took the form of face-to-face questioning whenever possible, in order to secure greater involvement of the interviewee and make the most of the full dialogical potential. These interviews were conducted in the work places of interviewed professionals, coffee places and their private spheres. Participants were always left to choose the place where they felt most comfortable talking to a researcher in order to make sure they feel secure and confident to give an interview. This was particularly important when talking to professionals who disagree with the trafficking policies at their workplace or fear to express their opinion openly for some other reason (e.g. due to a poor situation regarding media freedom in Serbia, journalists from the country preferred meeting me in coffee places away from their workplaces). On several

³⁹ This interview was interrupted due to an accident in the family of the interviewee which is also why the interview could not have been rescheduled within the data collection period of the research. Most interviews were in the range between 45 and 80 minutes.

occasions, I had to resort to Skype or telephone interviews. This was either because of the physical distance between the researcher and respondents (e.g. interviews with anti-trafficking experts from Scotland in the UK) or because the respondents preferred not to do a face-to-face interview and agreed only to be interviewed through a call. A complete list of research participants is provided in the Appendix D, where their occupation, date and place the interview was conducted and the mode of interview are noted for each participant.

Considering the occupations of people interviewed for the research, most of the media professionals interviewed were specialised journalists (14). Yet, editors (2) and film makers (2) who produce documentaries about human trafficking were also interrogated. Respondents from the anti-trafficking sector had various backgrounds, but the thing they had in common was the fact that their work in anti-trafficking involves collaboration with the press. For the purpose of this research I spoke to representatives of specialised non-governmental organisations (13), academics researching the field (7), officials from the police (2) and prosecution (1), a national anti-trafficking coordinator (1), a representative of the Independent Reporteur's Bureau (1), an Ombudsman representative (1), a politician (1), a victim-activist (1), a sex worker-activist (1), and a legal expert (1). By resorting to a diverse group of respondents, I was able to gain insights about trafficking representations from various angles and avoid having biased results.

The number of interviews conducted in this research was limited by the small number of professionals who participate in creating the mediated picture on trafficking in human beings. This also explains why I was able to target and interview more professionals in the anti-trafficking sector than in the media. However, I had problems accessing respondents in the United Kingdom. Here, I received a considerably higher number of negative responses (or no responses at all) on interview requests compared to the number of rejections in Serbia and the Netherlands. Those respondents who declined participating in the study and provided the reasons for their decision said that their current workload does not allow them to accommodate the request for an interview. I used snowball sampling and participated in a number of anti-trafficking events in order to gain access to the studied population in the UK, and was able to bridge this gap to an extent. However, the discrepancy between the number of respondents in the UK and other countries remains visible and is probably related to the fact that I had less personal connections and acquaintances in the AT sector in the UK than in the Netherlands and Serbia. It is possible that a higher number of research requests sent by postgraduate researchers in the UK factored into this as well. Nonetheless, during my stay in the United Kingdom I was able to approach the major anti-trafficking actors and speak to specialised media professionals. Therefore, the number of interviews undertaken was sufficient to explore the research topic in the UK context. Besides, scholars have shown that in qualitative research a greater number of interviews does not

guarantee a more valid and reliable analysis (Brinkmann, 2013, Kvale and Brinkmann, 2008, Guest et al, 2006).

All interviews were audio recorded, transcribed and qualitatively analysed with the help of the NVivo data analysis software. As interviews were anonymous, transcripts were cleaned of all information that could identify who the respondent was. In coding the interviews, I was looking for topics relevant to dominant frames identified in trafficking reporting. The data gathered was used to test and validate findings of the content analysis and to fill in some information gaps, particularly in relation to contextualising the findings of the media analysis. The interviews also proved to be a rich source of information on the collaboration between the press and actors working in the anti-trafficking sector, malpractices, and negative effects journalistic practice has had on prosecuting trafficking cases and assisting trafficking survivors to recovery.

3.4.5. Validity, Reliability, and Triangulation

Methodological concerns that some scholars have raised concerning the validity and reliability of framing research (Matthes & Kohring, 2008, Tankard, 2001, Miller, 1997) are important to consider in relation to this study, as well. Frames are notably abstract variables that are not easy to identify and code in content analysis, which makes neutralisation of the researcher's impact difficult (Matthes & Kohring, 2008:258, Van Gorp, 2007, 2005:503). For those reasons, special attention was paid to the validity (i.e. making sure findings of this research reflect the studied issue and can be generalised and related to similar studies) and reliability of this study (i.e. ensuring findings can be reproduced or replicated by another researcher).

To ensure that the findings of this research are reliable, I devised a coding book with clearly defined coding categories. I also made sure that assigning units are precisely defined and gave explicit and communicable instructions to the assistant coder. This was done because precise formulation of content categories and rules for assigning units to categories is of pivotal importance for the reliability and value of research based on content analysis (Singleton & Straits 2010:421, cited in Leechaianan & Roth, 2014). Frames and framing process were conceptualised, which contributed to the validity of frames and subsequent analysis⁴⁰. Elements of which a frame consists of were demarcated, which ensures more reliable and valid frame measuring (Matthes & Kohring, 2008). With regards to coding texts published in the Dutch media, the assistant coder underwent training in coding, and it was ensured that there was strong inter-coder reliability before the research assistant got involved with data coding. Her participation in the research

⁴⁰ Matthes (2009) sees the use of precise frame definitions as central to frame validity.

project was limited to quantitative data coding, whereas all the qualitative analysis was done by the main researcher. Thus, possibilities of incongruent interpretations of the same data by different researchers were additionally constricted. Intercoder reliability in this study and any other framing research could never reach the level of content analysis focused on measuring more easily detectable variables, such as word frequencies (Van Gorp, 2005). On the other hand, this study did not involve statistical tests and intracoder reliability test, which can be considered to be a methodological limitation given the large number of articles analysed and having only one researcher involved in frame analysis. However, even though such testings could ensure greater reliability of the research project, the chosen epistemological approach and research questions called for a greater emphasis on validity. To gain in-depth understanding of media framing of human trafficking opting for research that does involve some level of interpretation was more suitable. As Krippendorff (2004: 213) and Van Gorp (2005:488) pointed out, reliability in content analysis frequently stands in the way of validity.

Furthermore, I used triangulation to overcome problems of bias and validity that are frequently related to social research endeavours. According to Denzin (1970:26), no single research method results in findings that are free of opposing interpretations. To overcome this issue, he advocated for the use of multiple methods allowing an investigator to expose different aspects of the social world and the observed phenomena. For that reason, methods triangulation was carried out here by mixing the methods of quantitative and qualitative content analysis and in-depth interviews. Thereby, greater confidence in the research data was made possible, as well as more comprehensive understanding of the media framing of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. By interviewing media producers and frame sponsors, and inquiring about consequences of media framing with relevant professionals, all aspects of the media communication process were considered. This comprehensiveness is one of the major advantages of this research project.

To increase the value of this study, most relevant actors in the anti-trafficking sector and in the media were interviewed. Targeting specialists in reporting on trafficking and people whose work in anti-trafficking involves collaboration with the media ensured data obtained on media framing of the issue of human trafficking for sexual exploitation is credible. To affirm the accuracy of interview-derived data, the data collected was cross-checked with different sources, including information corroboration through subsequent interviews. Additionally, confidentiality was guaranteed to all interviewed persons which helped in obtaining honest responses, especially among participants who had reasons to fear for their job if they expressed attitudes that are not congruent with those of their employers. Apart from checking the data obtained from participants of the study, the research process involved a high degree of self-reflection, discussion

of research findings with other academics researching the issue of human trafficking and other experts in the field, in order to minimise chances of the researcher's bias affecting the results.

3.5. Ethical Issues

Media contents, including those published online, by nature fall under public and intentional communication. For this reason, scholars are not required to obtain informed consent from the media in order to research contents of their sites (Herring, 2004), provided that general research ethics rules and procedures of acknowledging the sources are followed. Also, critical analysis of media articles and publications is a matter of public interest that does not harm, but benefits members of society. However, researching the field of human trafficking typically calls for a high level of caution and close consideration of ethical concerns. As Siegel and De Wilt (2015) assert, issues of harm, consent and confidentiality are important to consider in studies of human trafficking. These matters are considered in relation to this study and its participants in the following section of this thesis.

The principle of not doing harm to participants of social research, especially if the research is focused around sensitive and traumatising phenomena such as human trafficking for sexual exploitation, is of great importance. Interviewees should not be used, harmed or embarrassed by questions posed during an interview or the material published subsequently (Rubin and Rubin, 2012: 89). As I was studying a sensitive matter, I was constantly aware that some of my participants could face serious consequences for talking openly about their experiences to me and I took adequate measures to prevent this from happening. A number of participants expressed their concern about losing their job or being suspended for disclosing too much information. Confidentiality of data and anonymisation of participants served as a counter measure and concerned participants were reminded of this as well as their right to refuse to answer any question during the interview. It is also important to bear in mind that I interviewed experts in media and the anti-trafficking field, meaning the discrepancy in power between the researcher and research participants was not considerable and the chances of them feeling pressured to answer a question were minimal. In addition to being informed about their rights, data confidentiality and anonymisation, most research participants had considerable experience and familiarity with the social research context.

One interview conducted for this study requires special consideration with regards to ethics. Namely, one person who was interviewed as an expert in trafficking with experience in providing information about the phenomenon to the media was a survivor of trafficking for sexual exploitation. While this interviewee was contacted to share personal experience in collaboration with the media and expert-view on how the issue is being framed by and through the media, I was still cautious not to cause harm and push the respondent towards reliving the traumatic experience of trafficking unduly. The interview was conducted many years after the person in question left the situation of exploitation. After having received lengthy psychological support, recovered, and accomplished noteworthy professional success after recovery⁴¹, the person interviewed was, according to self-report during our conversation, able to talk about experience in trafficking and this topic in general and not feel harmed by that. Even though the principle of doing no harm is of utmost importance in social research, it is also important not to limit our potential for understanding the phenomena we are studying by denying the agency of trauma survivors and giving in to unfounded 'dark fantasies' (Zhang, 2016) of potential interview outcomes.

Informed consent is one of the key ethical requirements social researchers need to meet. It implies that the researcher needs to make sure that all the participants in the study fully understand its nature and goals, are aware of any potential risks that participation in the study may entail, and are under no pressure to participate in the study (Rubin & Rubin, 2012: 91, Garramone & Kennamer, 1989). In this research, participants were contacted for interviews either through telephone conversations or via email. Upon this initial contact, when participants were asked to participate in the study, they were informed about the nature and purpose of the research that is being conducted. The interviewing procedure was then explained, and information provided on how the interviews are recorded, how audio recordings of the interviews are transcribed and anonymised, and how the recordings and transcriptions are stored and handled during and after analysis. At this stage, participants would also be informed of their right not to answer questions that they are not willing to discuss, as well as their right to withdraw from the interview and cancel participation in the research. It was then that their informed consent to participate in the study was requested. Upon meeting participants face-to-face or connecting through Skype/telephone call for an interview, each interviewee was again asked for permission to record the interview and it was repeated that they may refuse to answer questions or participate in the study at any point during and after the interview, and before the thesis is

⁴¹ The respondent in question runs a successful and well-reputed organisation. On top of that, the respondent is involved in awareness raising on the issue of trafficking in the sex industry and helping people who had similar experience of exploitation through prostitution.

finalised and published. None of the participants withdrew their participation from this research, but some did choose not to respond to certain questions. No covert interviews or observations were undertaken for the purpose of this study.

As mentioned above, confidentiality and anonymity were discussed with research participants upon contact, that is, prior to their participation in the research. Once the interviews were conducted, the data set was cleaned and all the identity indicators were removed to prevent their recognition. Names, ages, work-place and functions interviewed participants have in their work organisations were left out in the subsequent analysis. The profiling of interviewees in the analysis and used quotations was based solely on the sector they work in. Also, the detailed list of interviewed people included in Appendix D does not reveal if a media expert is a specialised journalist, editor or film-maker. For anti-trafficking experts this list reveals if the informant comes from the civil sector (which includes NGO professionals and activists), the public sector (comprising of the national equivalent of anti-trafficking coordination body, police, prosecution, and specialised social services), or the education and research sector (that included academics, social researchers and independent experts). The occupation of interviewees is only mentioned in the methodology chapter under section 3.4.5. (In-depth interviews), where the number of interviews conducted with professionals of different occupations is shown. Here, however, no other information (e.g. country of origin) that could help identify research participants is presented.

Even though most participants in the study did not require that high level of anonymisation, and some even asked if their name could be used instead, I decided to follow consistent and strict anonymisation and confidentiality criteria in all cases to avoid easier identification of remaining participants who were not eager to share their identities. This was done because anti-trafficking communities and groups of media experts specialised in trafficking are rather small in all three countries and revealing details of some research participants (e.g. names and place of work) could help deduce who the rest of interviewees were. This is also the reason why I did not name the cities where interviews were conducted in Appendix D, but rather demarcated only the country in which the interview in question took place. Finally, in the analysis itself I strived to reflect the full complexity of experiences and perceptions encountered in the research, which is according to Kelly and Coy (2015:47) a prerequisite of ethical research on human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

3.6. Other Considerations

3.6.1. Personal Involvement in Anti-trafficking in Serbia

After having worked in radio and television journalism for three years, I left the profession and started working as a public relations manager in an anti-trafficking non-governmental organisation based in Belgrade, Serbia. My work there involved handling media relations for the organisation, representing the NGO publicly, implementing media campaigns that were created to raise awareness of human trafficking, developing communication and media plans, participating in advocacy and lobbying activities, etc. I worked in the organisation for close to three years and stopped to start my doctorate studies in England, the Netherlands, and Germany. My experience in working in both journalism and anti-trafficking put me in a unique position in terms of understanding problems that emerge in creating the media image of the trafficking phenomenon. This understanding was layered – I could grasp the issue from the perspective of the media as well as the perspective of organisations committed to fighting the crime of trafficking, but first and foremost, protecting the interests of human trafficking survivors. Before I even started my research I was familiar with the conflicting interests of journalists who want a good story and anti-trafficking specialists who want to raise awareness, but are reluctant to share information on cases and people who survived exploitation in trafficking rings. Further, I was also familiar with bad practices of some institutions and organisations, who misrepresented the trafficking situation according to their political interest or in order to exaggerate the problem and attract future funding for their project activities.

During this time I met and closely collaborated with all the relevant anti-trafficking experts in my country and many foreign pundits. In addition to that, I had developed close professional relationships with local journalists interested in the topic of trafficking in human beings. Prior to commencing my research, I was aware that my involvement in the sector can prove to be a two-edged sword. As much as it helped me gain access and rich information in interviews with people who knew and trusted me, it also made me cautious of potential implications that my previous professional role could have. The anti-trafficking world in Serbia is a small, but divided one. Much progress has been made in the last 20 years in strengthening the response to human trafficking, and establishing cross-sector collaboration in this area. Yet, even though there are many committed professionals working in both the governmental and civil sector, a sense that NGO workers are ‘foreign hirelings’ determined to undermine the state is still present in the country. Therefore, I knew I had to be very clear with my respondents and stress that my role as a researcher was categorically independent of my previous work in the sector. To avoid issues, I explained that the nature of my inquiry was purely scientific and that I no longer worked in the sector in Serbia when approaching potential respondents. On the other hand, the experience was

useful in gaining access, understanding professional context and preparing for the fieldwork. Having experience in anti-trafficking, media relations, and journalism helped me identify additional areas worth exploring in this study, and enabled me to define adequate topics for both groups of interviewed professionals.

Another thing to consider here was that my integration in the anti-trafficking sector in Serbia provided me with a deeper understanding of the context and situation in Serbia compared to the other two researched countries. To balance that out, I conducted an extensive literature review to become familiarised with trafficking situations in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom before conducting the interviews. I also used contacts of my colleagues working in the anti-trafficking sector that I established in these two countries to expand my networks and gain better access to targeted populations. Therefore, my professional involvement in the anti-trafficking sector in Serbia was not only useful in the country, but also proved to be an asset in conducting fieldwork in the Netherlands and UK as well. It also enabled me to recognise misinformation in one of the interviews, which I will turn to next.

Finally, it is important to note that I used self-reflexivity techniques to avoid potential bias in data interpretation that could have had stemmed from my involvement and expertise in anti-trafficking. For this reason, I did not rely on my knowledge in the empirical chapters of this thesis where I present the findings of the study. Occasionally, I did relate to my professional engagement and the knowledge acquired thereby, but only in relation to some of the data that I encounter in my empirical data. I did so to situate the analysed data in a wider context of the anti-trafficking scene, or to contrast and complement the acquired data with the experiences I had while working in the sector. However, whenever this was done, it was done with caution and awareness of the high level of subjectivity involved. All information coming from outside this study, including information based on my previous involvement in anti-trafficking, is transparently labelled as such in this thesis.

3.6.2. Socially Desirable Response

Human trafficking for sexual exploitation is a complex issue deeply connected to numerous unresolved conflicts over morality, sexual freedom, femininity, freedom of movement, and social inequalities. These frictions divide anti-trafficking professionals, making a war on human trafficking appear as the war on which approach to fighting trafficking should be taken. Among examples are the abolitionist-liberal feminist debate on the links between prostitution and trafficking in the sex industry that moulds public discussions on trafficking in the Netherlands, and the dispute between the state and the civil sector on whether an anti-crime or a victim-centred

response to trafficking is more appropriate in Serbia. Researching a topic situated in the context of such heated debates can be difficult, especially if respondents assume the researcher has opposing attitudes to their own. That can result in denial of the request for an interview, but can also cause problems if the respondent agrees to talk to the researcher. Namely, the respondent may choose not to fully disclose his/her opinion, attitudes and experiences, or might choose to answer dishonestly to please the researcher, avoid conflict, or protect certain interests.

With this in mind, special precaution was taken to prevent social desirability bias from happening. As stated in the section above, I distanced myself as a researcher from the previous role I had in anti-trafficking in Serbia and explained to each interviewee that I acted as an independent researcher looking to explore media representation of human trafficking for scientific purposes only. Further, I worked on establishing relationship of trust and eliciting truthful answers from the respondents. To accomplish this, I made sure posed questions were not suggestive. Prior to, during and after interviews I avoided disclosing personal attitudes and showing if I agree or disagree with what interviewees were saying. When it was necessary to confront respondents, I used more neutral forms, e.g. suggesting that some people I interviewed previously had suggested otherwise, or citing reports with findings contradictory to the stated information. In such situations, no judgement was shown; rather, they were asked for an opinion and provided with a chance to further elaborate their position.

However, in one of the interviews I conducted, I was able to tell an interviewee was not telling the truth. While discussing the tendency of the media to push for interviews with survivors of human trafficking, the participant claimed the absolute priority of their organisation was to always protect the identity of the victim, and that they would never disclose any information about users of their services. I knew this was not the case as I had heard from numerous sources that this organisation has facilitated contact between trafficking survivors and the media in the past. Also, I was present in person when the person I interviewed gave a victim's name to a journalist after the conference we both spoke at. I inquired about organisational politics a bit further and as the interviewee kept repeating the same, I started to wonder if the reason was social desirability bias (SDB). SDB is known to happen in in-depth interviewing situations (Guest, et al, 2005, Williams & Heikes, 1993) and it is important to take it into account when assessing the information obtained through interviewing. Whether this respondent felt pressured to give a desirable response, or we had different views on what protection of a victim's identity comprises, is of lesser relevance. However, as there was enough indication of insincerity on the respondent's part, I decided to leave out the interview in question from this study.

3.7. Limitations

This study seeks to bridge gaps in the existing human trafficking literature on media reporting, particularly in the context of European countries. However, as any other research project constricted by time, resources, logistics, etc., it has some limitations. It is my hope that the gaps mentioned in this section will be filled in future research endeavours focused on this subject.

Several limitations can be identified related to the content analysis conducted in this research project. Biases of the GN news aggregator outlined in section 3.4.1. are one limiting factor. In addition, analysing web content that keeps changing and gets removed from the internet clearly affects the reliability of every content analysis conducted on content published online.⁴² However, given the importance of online news sources, this challenge is not something that should direct researchers towards studying less popular, but more stable content sources. Rather, important developments in media functioning and consumption need to be taken into account and it is imperative that media scholars adapt to its consequences. The decision to collect only articles available to the public for free is also a limiting factor. Yet, based on previews of these texts, most of the articles that were disregarded for this reason concerned cases or trafficking-related events (policy developments, campaigns, reports, etc.) that were thematised in other articles included in the data set. One of the strengths of this research project lies in the fact that it does not neglect visual aspects of mediated representation of human trafficking and analyses photographic illustrations of articles in the sample. Yet, the analysis did not encompass video materials that were posted alongside some of the articles, which is another limitation of this research design.

Also, the lack of Dutch language proficiency had an impact on this study, but necessary precautions were taken to avoid problems with the data set from the Netherlands. Intercoder reliability was tested and research assistant was given clear instructions for data collection and underwent training in coding. It is possible that some subtle textual meanings were lost in the translation of Dutch articles into English prior to qualitative analysis. However, professional, bilingual translators were hired to minimise the chances of this happening. As explained previously, intracoder reliability was not conducted and this is a limiting factor when it comes to reliability of this research. However, greater emphasis was placed on validity, as answering research questions called for rather qualitative approach and in-depth analysis.

⁴² For a detailed account of challenges of applying content analysis in the dynamic environment of the web see McMillan (2000).

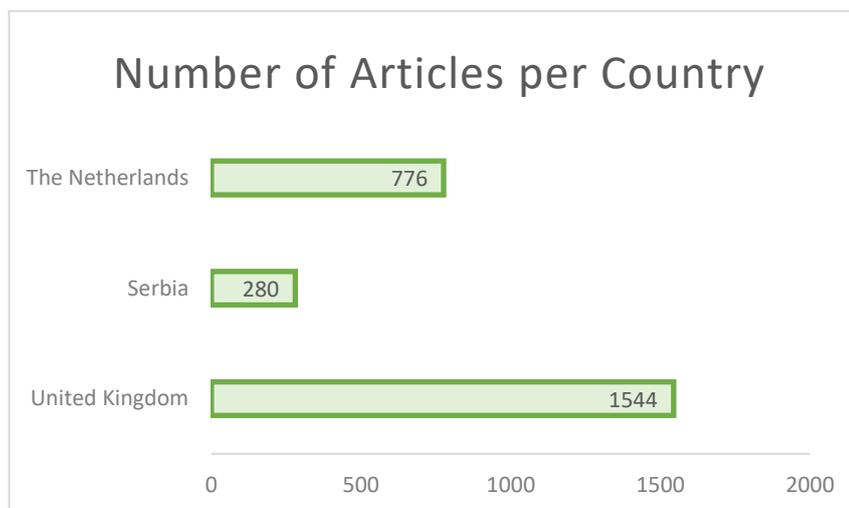
The production of articles on trafficking for sexual exploitation was explored in detail in interviews with media professionals who specialise in this topic. The content itself was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively, and dominant frames were explored together with their characteristics and manifest devices. With regards to effects of media framing, this analysis relied on testimonies of interviewed professionals only. It is probable that the understanding thereof would be expanded if the research design included methods targeting media consumers, or analysis of comments posted by readers of the analysed articles. However, time restrictions and scarcity of other resources to do so factored into my decision not to further expand the scope of this study.

CHAPTER 4 - ZOOMING IN: FEATURES OF THE ARTICLES

The key term search and exclusion criteria explained in Chapter 3 resulted in 2,600 relevant hits, i.e. articles on human trafficking for sexual exploitation published in online media in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands or Serbia between January 1st 2011 and 31st December 2015. All these articles were coded and included in the quantitative analysis presented in this chapter. During the observed period, 280 relevant articles on human trafficking for sexual exploitation were identified in Serbian, 1,544 in British, and 776 in Dutch media. Key word searches initially resulted in a significantly larger number of articles, but most of these were excluded from the sample as their main focus was not on the trafficking for sexual exploitation.⁴³

When observing the number of reports, however, the size of the respective country together with the media market size should be taken into account. The estimated population of UK is almost three times that of the Netherlands and Serbia combined. Also, with revenue of 103.9 billion US dollars the UK has the 5th largest media market in the world, and is 2nd only to Germany in size when it comes to Europe (PwC, 2017).

Graph 2 - Number of identified articles on THB for sexual exploitation per country 2011-2015

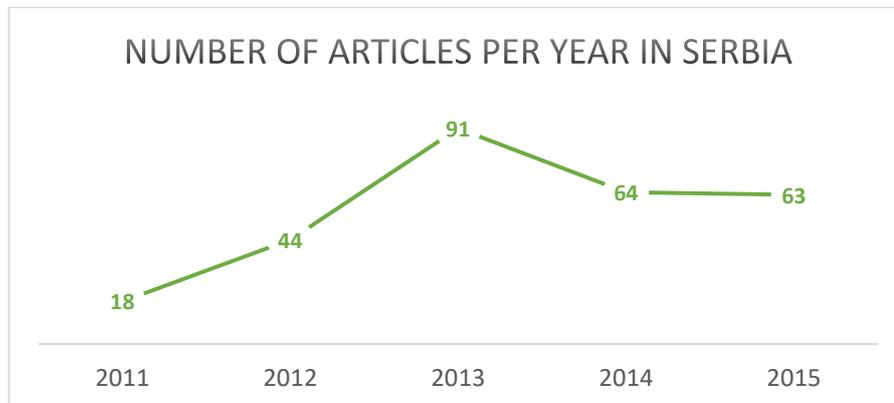


The number of articles identified per year varied. In Serbia, the number of publications peaked in 2013 when 91 texts were produced. In 2011, on the other hand, only 18 relevant hits were identified. Graph 1 shows the total number of hits per year. In this period laws on human trafficking were not changed in the country. However, there was an intense political interest in

⁴³ The excluded texts were providing general information on human trafficking phenomenon, such as statistical information on the number of victim identified and other demographic information about victims of all forms of human trafficking. There were also press announcements published on books, plays, and other fiction and art forms that deal with the issue of human trafficking. A number of miss-hits in the key word search were articles on international police actions on organized crime, where trafficking in human beings was just listed as one of the activities the police was aiming to suppress, or articles that are focused on other forms of exploitation but mention trafficking in the sex industry as another form the crime of trafficking can take.

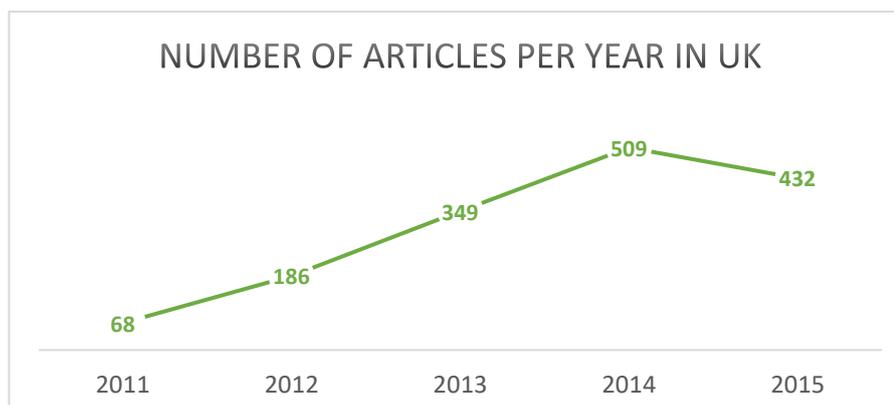
showing that Serbia, as an EU-candidate country, is doing a good job in handling human trafficking, human smuggling and other cross-border crimes in the wake of unprecedented migration flows through the Balkans region.

Graph 3 - Number of articles per year in Serbia.



In Britain there was a gradual annual rise in the number of publications on human trafficking in the first 4 years observed – from 68 in 2011 to 509 in 2014. The issue became more topical with the proposal of the Modern Slavery Act by the Home Office (plans were announced in August 2013 and the bill was adopted in March 2015, see chapter 6.1. for details). Following the adoption of the new legislation, a small decrease in the number of reports in 2015 was recorded where the total number of hits was 432 articles.

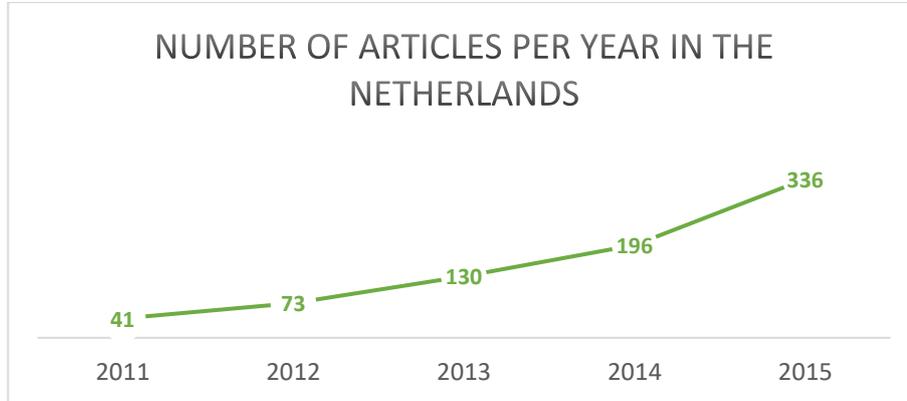
Graph 4 - Number of articles per year in the United Kingdom.



The Dutch sample shows a continuous annual rise in publications, starting with 41 texts in 2011 and ending with 336 articles in 2015. Increasing interest in the topic of human trafficking for sexual exploitation in the Netherlands is related to the heated debate on prostitution regulation in the political and public arena that followed recent endeavours in changing prostitution regulation. On the national level, a major factor was the Regulation of Prostitution and Tackling Abuses in the Sex Industry Bill proposal (the bill was considered and disputed in the House of Representatives and did not become a law in the observed period). Other developments played

a role in keeping the topic of trafficking for sexual exploitation on journalists' agenda, such as cases of domestic trafficking and measures of harsher prostitution regulation undertaken in order to suppress human trafficking and abuse in the sex industry.

Graph 5 - Number of articles per year in the Netherlands.



Frequency of reporting on human trafficking is, according to the data analysed here, correlated with the level of the political will to tackle human trafficking. On the other hand, the later chapters will demonstrate that the content of the reports depends on the policy development and political agenda being pushed by actors aiming to combat human trafficking, or control and influence other related social issues.

The UK sample of collected articles reveals 218 different media outlets reported on trafficking. The BBC alone published 219 texts, followed by the Daily Mail with 210, and The Guardian with 67. These three outlets alone published two thirds of the numbers of articles published in the Netherlands and close to double the amount of texts publicized in Serbian online media in the observed period. UK media outlets that had 10 or more articles on trafficking for sexual exploitation published in the period observed are presented in the word cloud below.



Picture 1 - UK media outlets that had 10 or more publications on HT for sexual exploitation in the observed period.⁴⁴

These 28 media outlets accounted for 70% of the overall UK sample, with the remaining 30% distributed between 190 different outlets. The majority of articles were published on online platforms of tabloid dailies (mostly Daily Mail, Daily Express, Daily Mirror, Metro, Daily Record, London Evening Standard, and Daily Star). With the exception of The Guardian and The Daily Telegraph, the broadsheet and compact media in Britain did not pay much attention to the issue of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. The Times and The Financial Times had one text published online each. Significant attention to the topic of human trafficking was devoted by local media that accounted for approximately one third of the sample (502 articles).

Coverage of the topic in the local media was high if there was an ongoing case in the region (e.g. a child exploitation case in Oxford) or change in legislative measures that affect the region (e.g. the adoption process of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation Act 2015 in Northern Ireland). Over 21% of articles (333 texts) were published on radio and TV web presentations, with the BBC (218), ITV (52), and Sky News (23) paying the most attention to the topic of human trafficking. Online news platforms that do not exist in print, TV or radio form accounted for 12% of the sample (187 texts). Of these, the Independent (43), IB Times (41), and Huffington Post UK (20) most frequently reported on this topic. Weeklies that publish texts online showed very limited interest in covering trafficking-related stories, with only 31 texts published in the course of 5 years (2% of

⁴⁴ BBC (219), Daily Mail (210), Guardian (67), Daily Mirror (49), ITV (52), Independent (43), IB Times (41), Belfast Telegraph (35), Thomson Reuters Foundation (32), Newsletter (27), The Star (23), Daily Express (23), Sky News (23), Daily Record (22), The Telegraph (22), Oxford mail (21), Huffington Post UK (20), London Evening Standard (18), Peterborough Today (16), Metro (16), Reuters (16), Manchester Evening News (15), Open Democracy (13), Wales Online (11), Shropshire Star (11), Bucksfree Press (11), Birmingham Mail (10), and Daily Star (10).

the overall sample). An exception is Buckinghamshire local weekly, Bucks Free Press that reported extensively on court proceedings involving offenders from the Chesham and High Wycombe area.

In Serbia, 27 media outlets published articles on trafficking. Of these, the three news platforms that were most likely to publish articles were all tabloid – Blic.rs (79 articles), Novosti.rs (46 articles), and Alo.rs (37 articles). 58% of all the articles in the sample were published in these three news websites only. In terms of outreach, Gemius reports that Blic.rs was the most frequently visited news website in the country for over 5 years, i.e. ever since the company has been tracking data for Serbia. In 2015, Blic was the first on the list of the most visited news websites, and Novosti and Alo held positions 6 and 7 respectively⁴⁵. Summed up with other media (i.e. tabloids Press, Kurir, Svet, 24 sata, and Svet Plus) the total number of texts published in tabloid media accounts for 65% of articles in the sample. A significant number (21%) of publications came from website presentations of electronic media, mainly television. These include the following outlets: B92.net (29 articles), RTS.rs (10 articles), RTV.rs (1 article), N1info.com (3 articles), slobodnaevropa.org (RSE) (12 articles), and Glasamerike.net (3 articles). It is concerning that the public broadcasting service showed such a limited interest in the topic of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, with a negligible 11 articles published in the course of 5 years.⁴⁶ In comparison, the BBC had 20 times more publications on trafficking than RTS in the same period.

Serbian news portals reported on trafficking in 12% of cases (Vesti-online.com (16 articles), Telegraf.rs (6 articles), Mondo.rs (3 articles), E-novine.com (2 articles), Glas-javnosti.rs (2 articles), Akter.rs (1 article), 021.rs (1 article), Sandzakpress.net (1 article), and Srbijadanas.rs (1 article)). Web presentations of broadsheet papers had the lowest number of articles published, accounting for a mere 2% of the sample. This suggests, and the subsequent qualitative analysis confirms, the lack of analytical, investigative pieces that cover human trafficking for sexual exploitation. To add to that, weekly papers that by the nature of production allow for more in-depth research and more time to prepare a text showed almost no interest in this topic – only one serious weekly magazine dealt with this topic, and two more articles were published in a weekly tabloid. An overview of papers that published articles on trafficking in the observed period reveals also that local media did not report on this issue enough – 5 articles were published in the 5 year long period, of which 4 were in Novi Sad based media, and one in a news portal focusing on the

⁴⁵ Gemius data can be extracted for any period from December 2014 until now through this website: <http://www.audience.rs/>. I selected period from 01/01/2015 until 31/12.2015 as 2015 was observed in this study. Retrieved on 01.08.2017.

⁴⁶ Ten published on the national public broadcaster Radio Television of Serbia (RTS) website, and one at provincial public broadcaster, Radio Television of Vojvodina (RTV).

Sandzak region. This is concerning because research shows that people from the countryside know much less about human trafficking than their fellow citizens living in the capital (Radović, et al, 2008). Even though it is possible that some local news websites escape GN algorithms for being too small and not generating enough trafficking, lack of attention to the issue of human trafficking was corroborated in the interviews.

The number of media outlets that published on human trafficking for sexual exploitation in the Netherlands was 74. Compared to the other two countries, Dutch online media that regularly reported on trafficking were more diverse. Apart from the tabloid papers' web presentations that accounted for 37% of articles in the sample, electronic media (33%) and news portals (20%) also paid considerable attention to the issue. It is worth noting, however, that the division between tabloid/broadsheet media is not that straight forward in the country (and elsewhere for that matter) as the new market conditions forced many broadsheet media to convert to compact and tabloid formats. With regards to that, outlets that were regarded as tabloid media online presentations were those who made the switch in format before the beginning of the observed period or after, but no later than 30th of June 2013 (e.g. this was the case of NRC Handelsblad, Het Parool, etc). De Telegraaf, on the other hand, changed to a tabloid format in October 2014 and as for the most of the observed period it was still published as a broadsheet, it was accordingly categorised here. Websites of tabloid papers had the highest density of publications in the five-year long period observed (320 articles). The following outlets that print in tabloid format were most frequently reporting on trafficking for sexual exploitation: Algemeen Dagblad (106 articles), Het Parool (37 articles), Trouw (26 articles), Volkskrant (19), Gelderlander (17), Eindhovens Dagblad (16), and Metro (16).

Electronic media were also keen on reporting on trafficking for sexual exploitation on their online platforms, accounting for one third of the overall sample (257 articles). Television programs were much more likely to report on human trafficking for sexual exploitation on their online editions than were radio stations (30% and 3% of the overall sample respectively). PownedTV published relevant articles on trafficking 54 times over the five years examined, Omroep Brabant 38 times, NOS 32 times, SBS6 19 times, and RTV Utrecht 16 times. Other TV and radio stations that had 10 or more relevant publications are represented in the word cloud below.



Picture 2 - Dutch media outlets that had 10 or more publications on HT for sexual exploitation in the observed period.⁴⁷

More than 20% of the collected articles in the Dutch sample were published on online news portals (166 articles). The greatest number of hits came from NU.nl (40 articles), Nieuws.nl (29 articles), Blikopnieuws.nl (15 articles), and Crimsite.nl (14 articles). De Telegraaf, the only existing broadsheet papers in the country in the observed period, published 35 articles on trafficking for sexual exploitation. As stated before, little coverage of the issue was present in weeklies, yet the one that stood out was Elsevier that published 21 relevant articles between 2011 and 2015. One text was published on the news agency website.

As demonstrated, the majority of articles in all three countries were published on the sites of tabloid dailies. Interestingly, however, very few of these outlets had a journalist who is a specialist in the topic of trafficking and regularly covers it. Therefore, I was able to target and interview only a few media professionals who worked in tabloid dailies and met the interviewee selection criteria applied in this research. Those who have been interviewed reported on having very tight deadlines to produce their articles and, consequently, little opportunity for exploring new angles and deviating from standard sensationalistic, hard-news pieces on topical trafficking cases. While this is typical of the dailies' dynamics and reflected in the data sample in all three countries, The Netherlands and The United Kingdom had more to offer to a more critical readership compared to Serbia. Counter narratives to the stereotypical representation of trafficking emerged from opinion journalism, freelance news production, and the more recent online forms of news

⁴⁷ Algemeen Dagblad (106), PownedTV (54), NU.nl (40), Omroep Brabant (38), Het Parool (37), De Telegraaf (35), NOS (32), Nieuws.nl (29), Trouw (26), Elsevier (21), Volkskrant (19), SBS 6 (19), Gelderlander (17), RTV Utrecht (16), Metro (16), Eindhovens Dagblad (16), Blik op Nieuws (15), Crimsite (14), RTL (14), Camilleri (12), PowerVrouwen (12), BNR (12), AT5 (11), Den Haag FM (11), Dichtbij (10).

sources where academics and researchers pair with experienced media editors to share their critical insights with the wider public in a more news-friendly tone.

Although the presence of such narratives that are crucial for improving reporting on human trafficking and making it more responsible is encouraging, the issue of limited audience these platforms attract still persists. In order to deconstruct trafficking stereotypes and establish an atmosphere of responsible reporting on human trafficking, alternative voices and stories need to be represented in the more popular media as well. Even though this study included specialised reporters and media professionals who have a disproportionately extensive knowledge of the issue, I still identified great resistance to deviating from the newsworthy elements of trafficking stories, such as interviewing victims, portraying the sexual and physical violence, suffering, and brutality of exploitation (albeit people interviewed frequently stressed this is not the entertaining and shocking voyeurism of the press, but rather an attempt ‘to raise awareness’, ‘ensure justice for victims by giving them voice’, etc.). However, a number of research informants from all three countries showed greater sensitivity and familiarity with the negative consequences of current reporting on trafficking. Not only were they aware of the problems that media reporting can create, but they also took responsibility and identified possible solutions and applied them in their work:

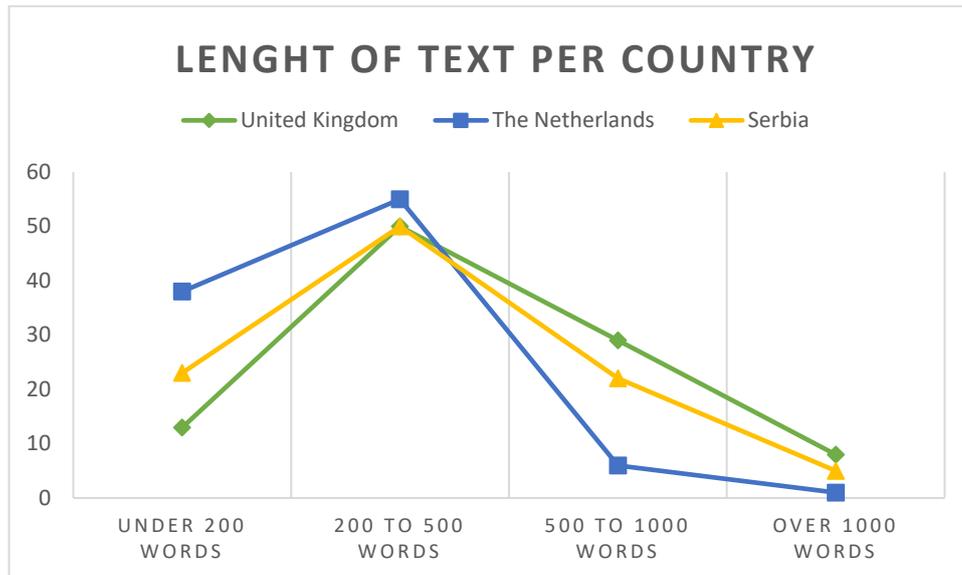
‘I think the question is not so much about the distinction between sensational stories that get clicked on and critical that don’t, the distinction is about editors who have imagination to present critical stories in a clickable way and those who are lazy or unimaginative and don’t do that.’

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Differences between the political, economic, and social conditions in which the media in the three observed countries operate seem to suggest that changes leading towards more responsible reporting could be anticipated only in circumstances that involve a high degree of media autonomy, safe and fair work conditions for journalists, and close collaboration with the anti-trafficking community that is ready to work with the media towards communicating human trafficking content better.

When it comes to the length of published articles (see the graph below), most texts were between 200 and 500 words long. Whereas in Serbia the distribution of texts shorter and longer than that was equal, articles that exceeded 500 words were more common in Britain, and short articles of less than 200 words were preferred in the Netherlands. The Dutch sample contains only 6% of texts that exceed 500 words, which is comparatively low to Serbia (27%) and the UK (37%).

Graph 6 - Length of articles analysed in the three observed countries (in percentages.)



Most of the articles published in all three countries were news features/reportages, followed by hard news. Opinion and analytical pieces were much rarer in the observed period, ranging from 77 texts in the UK (5% of the country sample) to just 5 articles published in Serbia in the five-year period examined in the thesis. One of the problems identified in this study is the lack of an analytical and investigative approach to the topic of human trafficking. This was partially due to changes in the media market, including growing competition, budget cuts, tabloidization, demands for faster delivery, etc. This applies to all three countries. However, in Serbia political censorship also played a role. Media censorship became particularly pronounced when the government of then Prime Minister and now President Vučić was established. Serbian journalists interviewed for the study offered another country-specific explanation for the general lack of interest in the topic of human trafficking. In their view, human trafficking used to be more attractive to the media in the late 1990s and early 2000s because of the different form it had in the past. Back then, dozens of women from ex-Soviet republics would be found in sex clubs raided by the police. Behind their exploitation were organised crime gangs such as Zarubica and Dalmacija groups⁴⁸. These film-like actions were very attractive to the press, unlike the contemporary cases that mainly concern one or two women exploited by criminally opportunistic individuals. Finally, interviews were the least common form for human trafficking stories to take,

⁴⁸ Milivoje Zarubica and Mladen Dalmacija are both ring leaders of two separate organised crime groups involved in trafficking Eastern European women (mainly Ukrainian and Romanian) in the 1990s and early 2000s. Both exploited women in sex clubs in Serbia and Italy. The two cases drew major attention of the media and the men were labelled as 'Balkan kings of prostitution' by the press. For details on the cases see Anđelković et al. (2011).

not even amounting to fully 1% of texts gathered in any of the countries. The exact distribution of news genres in three countries is depicted in the chart below.

Graph 7 - Representation of different news genres per country.



4.1. Dominant Frames

Five dominant frames were identified in all three countries: criminal justice, prostitution, violence, migration, and human rights. Due to the unique framing of human trafficking for sexual exploitation of underage British nationals, a sixth frame was identified in the UK and labelled Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). Criminal justice was the most common way to frame human trafficking stories on sexual exploitation in all three countries. This was not surprising, as the shift in focus in anti-trafficking discourse from the human rights angle to the criminalisation angle was previously detected in the literature (Farrell & Fahy, 2009, Kreig, 2009, Aradau, 2004). The second most common frame was the prostitution frame. Some differences between the countries exist when it comes to frequency of other frames, but all remain comparatively low in comparison to the number of articles that frame human trafficking as a criminal justice or prostitution related issue. It is worth noting that the violence frame was quite prominent in Serbian media, and Child Sexual Exploitation in British outlets.

The greatest prevalence of the criminal justice frame was recorded in the Netherlands where 68% of coded texts fitted this category. This also indicated a propensity towards case-based reporting

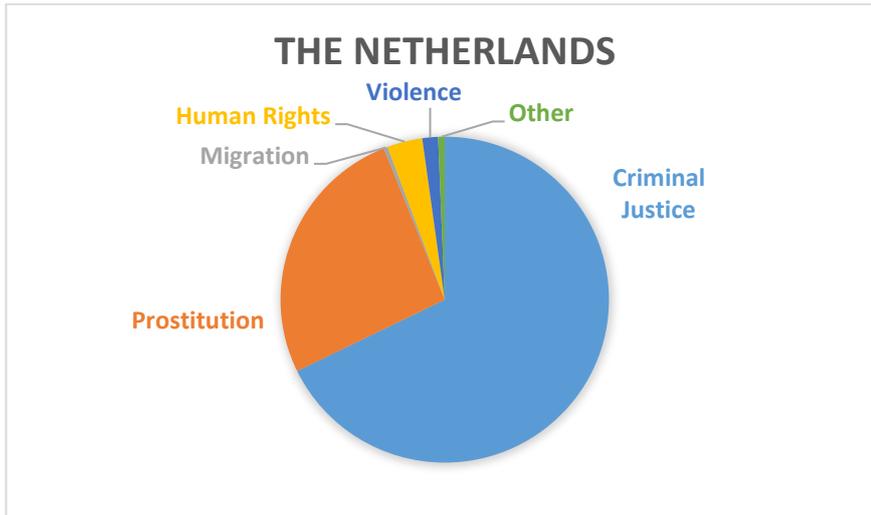
that mainly revolved around following developments of court proceedings, mainly in the hard news genre and short forms. More detailed insights into the problem of human trafficking for sexual exploitation were typical of the prostitution frame that accounted for 26% of the sample. The heated debate on prostitution regulation in the country and the links between human trafficking and prostitution were the central themes of these articles. Less than 4% of articles dealt with the topic from the human rights perspective, and half as many framed the stories in the violence frame. A trifling number of reports focused on migration in the Netherlands, but manifestations of this frame were identified in the qualitative analysis of prostitution and criminal justice-framed articles.

In Serbia, the criminal justice frame was present in 46% of articles. The prostitution frame was the second most common, accounting for 22% of articles, followed by the violence frame (13%), human rights (4%) and migration (4%). As in the other two countries, the lack of interest in human rights issues reflects the change in the official discourse on human trafficking that became overly focused on suppressing crime, punishing the perpetrators, introducing stricter legislation, improving the court efficacy, etc.

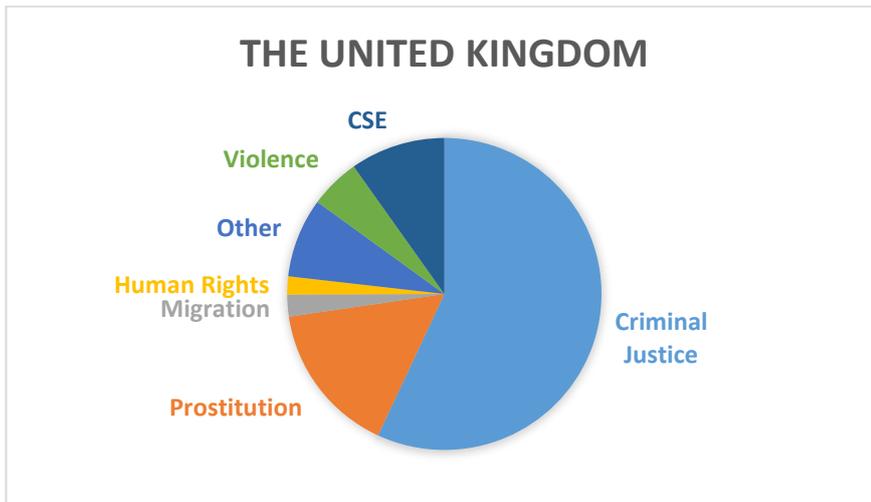
As explained, the issue of human trafficking for sexual exploitation was predominantly framed as a criminal justice related phenomenon in the United Kingdom as well (57% articles). Close to 16% of articles fitted the prostitution frame, 5% the violence frame, and 2% the migration frame and human rights frame. Similarly to the Netherlands, the migration frame was manifested in criminal justice and prostitution articles, where authors stressed victims (and often traffickers) are of foreign origin. A pronounced distinction between domestic and international trafficking in Britain was being made by the British press, which is best demonstrated by the distinct characteristics and volume of articles within the dominant frame category of CSE. The frame category of child sexual exploitation accounted for 10% of the overall country sample. These articles only pertained to sexual exploitation of British children in human trafficking.

Distribution of articles according to dominant frame category in the analysed countries is represented in the graphs on page 97:

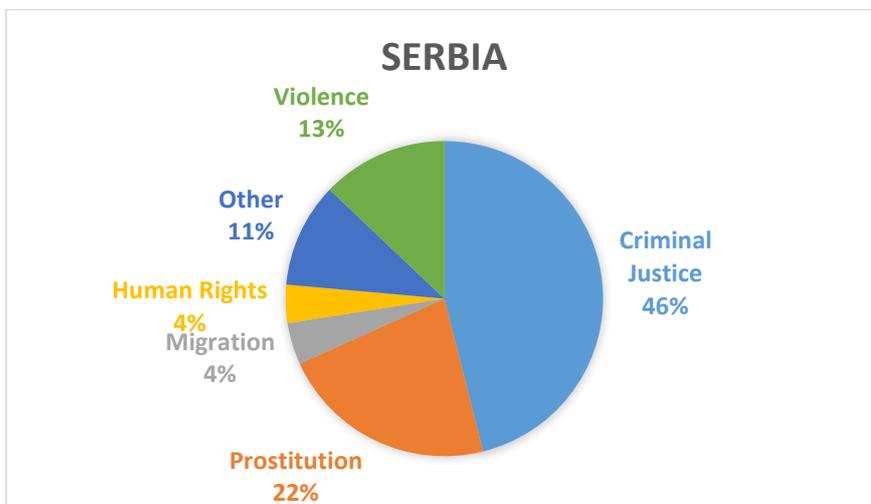
Graph 8 - Representation of dominant frames in the Netherlands.



Graph 9 - Representation of dominant frames in the United Kingdom.



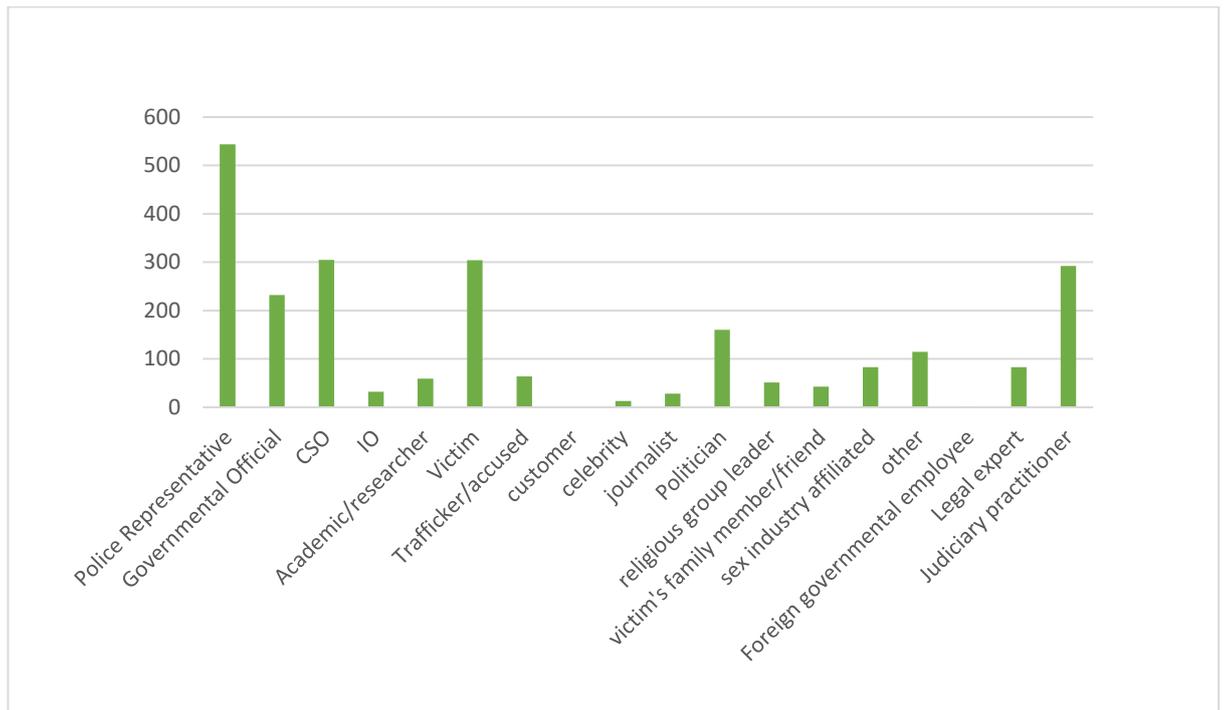
Graph 10 - Representation of dominant frames in Serbia



4.2. Media Sources

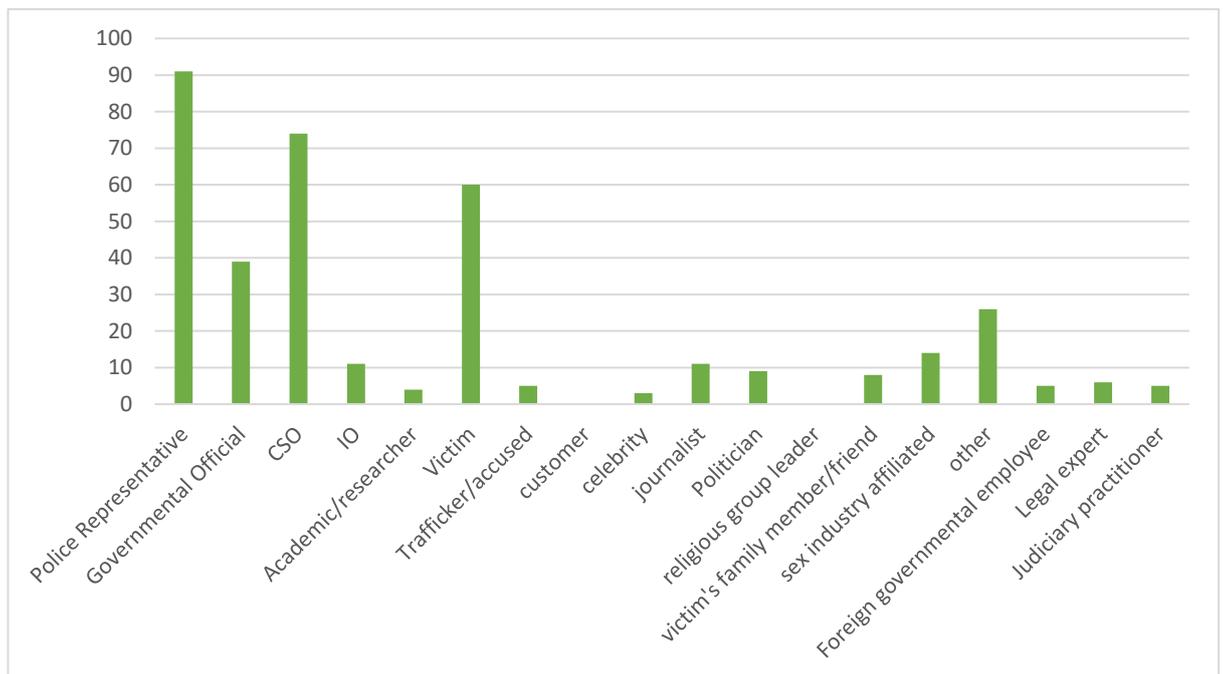
Congruent with the prevalence of the criminal justice frame, journalists in Britain most frequently relied on official sources, such as the police (544), judicial practitioners (292), governmental officials (232), and other politicians and parliamentarians (160). Together, all the official sources accounted for 51% of quotations published in British online media in the observed period. Non-governmental organisations (305) and victims of human trafficking (304) also had their voices represented in the media. Other sources quoted in the UK press are shown on the graph below, and among others include legal experts, sex industry affiliated practitioners, traffickers, academics and researchers, and representatives of international organisations. Unlike in the other two countries, British journalists also interviewed religious group leaders on the issue of human trafficking. This group of informants included Christian pastors and nuns engaged in campaigning against human trafficking, as well as Muslim imams who were consulted mainly on CSE pieces to comment on alleged links between Islam and propensity to exploit women.

Graph 11 - Number of quotations per source in the UK online media

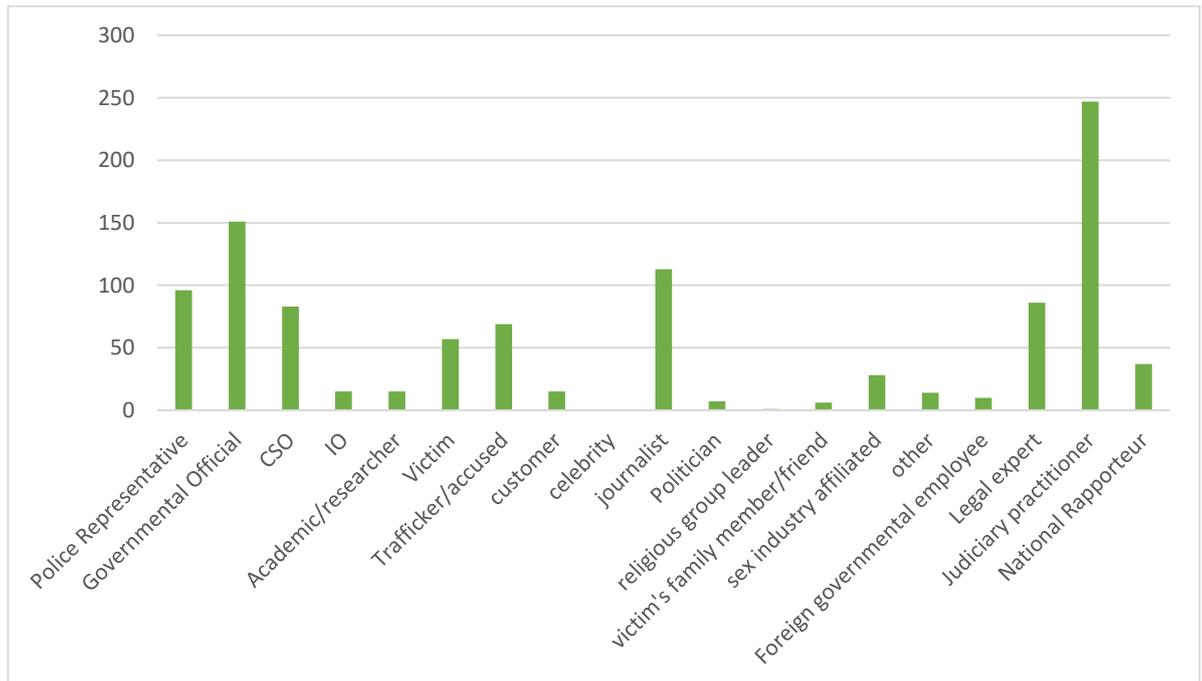


Most texts published in Serbia also relied on official sources (135 quotes), of which the police were most commonly quoted (91), followed by governmental employees (39), and prosecutors and judges (5). Civil society organisations (mainly the anti-trafficking non-governmental organisations ASTRA and Atina from Belgrade) were also frequently asked for statements by the press (74 quotes). In total, one fifth of the quotations were provided by NGO representatives in Serbia, which is a considerably higher percentage than in the UK and the Netherlands. While anti-trafficking organisations in Serbia had a pioneering role and brought the issue to the attention of the government, reliance of the press on these sources is not only linked to their reputation and influence. Interviews with media and anti-trafficking practitioners in the country show that journalists face difficulties when trying to obtain statements from official sources. Police representatives, judges, and prosecutors in the country have to obtain special permission from their bosses to speak to the press, which is a gruelling circumstance especially for daily media. On the other hand, the low level of political interest in the topic also limits the number of experts, public officials and politicians who are ready and knowledgeable enough to inform the media about the issue.

Graph 12 - Number of quotations per source in the Serbian online media



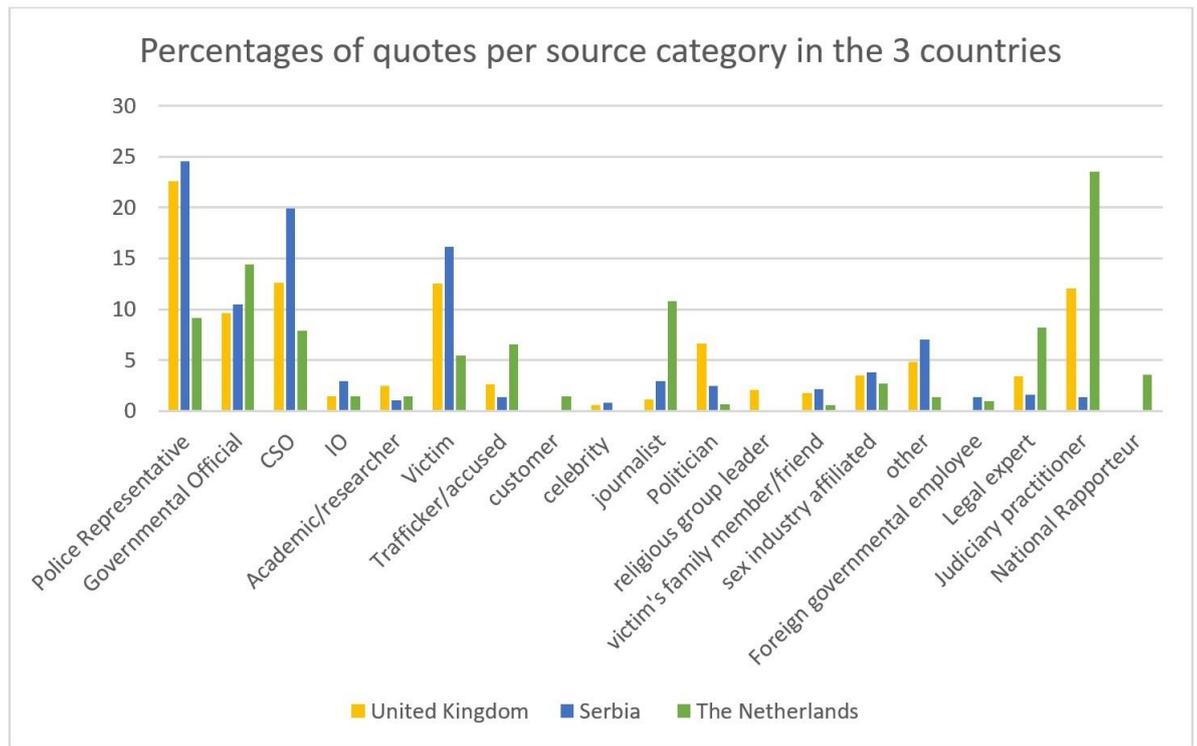
Graph 13 - Number of quotations per source in the Dutch online media.



Official sources were also preferred by the Dutch media. Judges and prosecutors were quoted 247 times, governmental officials 151, and Police representatives 96 times. Other vocal groups included civil society organisations with 83 quotes, other media professionals with 113, the National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children with 37, and victims and traffickers that unlike in other countries, had a similar number of quotes (57 and 69 respectively). Notably, journalists more frequently turned to judicial practitioners and legal experts for information than the police. This is related to the fact that the focus of the press in the Netherlands is on covering human trafficking court cases. A greater number of quotes coming from governmental officials is linked to their involvement in the prostitution debate and pushing policies that are meant to further reduce trafficking and abuse in the sex industry. Several journalists who are very vocal in the prostitution debate are uniquely positioned as opinion makers on the topic in the country. A similar phenomenon was not recorded in the UK and Serbia.

As illustrated in the below graph, journalists in all three countries showed propensity towards relying on official sources, mostly from the police and the government, but also judiciary when it comes to the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. While legal actors were not that vocal in Serbia, civil society organisations were frequently turned to for information. The graph shows victims of human trafficking as another vocal category. However, it is important to stress victim testimonies often pertained to cases of human trafficking happening in the remote regions of the world (e.g. South-East Asia). Many outlets also published victims' court statements, sometimes not even disclosing that this was the case. Therefore, the number of trafficking survivors who get to be heard in the media is not as high.

Graph 14 - Percentages of quotes per source category in the 3 countries

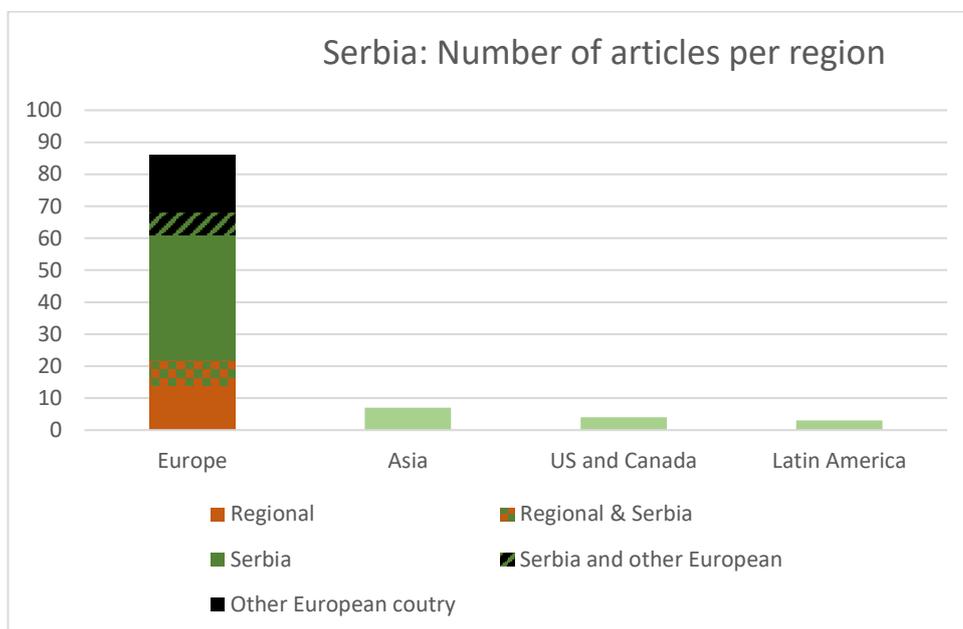


4.3. Regions Covered

In terms of regions covered in the analysed texts, domestic cases of human trafficking, or international cases of trafficking involving the home country were predominately featured in the analysed texts. Media in all three countries were also more likely to write about trafficking for sexual exploitation in other European countries compared to other regions of the world. The news value of proximity helps elucidate such prevalence. Namely, proximity as a news value has both spatial and cultural dimensions, meaning that an event has greater potential of being portrayed in the media if it occurred (a) geographically near to the targeted media consumers, or (b) it is relevant to them (Jewkes, 2011:54). The United States and Canada-related stories were covered more than stories pertaining to other continents. This might have to do with the newsworthiness of these stories that banks on the cultural proximity between Western European and North American societies. However, another factor to take into account is the fact that stories on trafficking in the US and Canada were published in English, in very prominent and easily accessible media, and hence easy to repackage and put out in the local news. Trafficking in Asia

and Latin America also received some attention in all three countries. The most neglected were stories on sexual exploitation in Africa and Australia.

Graph 15 - Number of articles per region featured in Serbian online media.

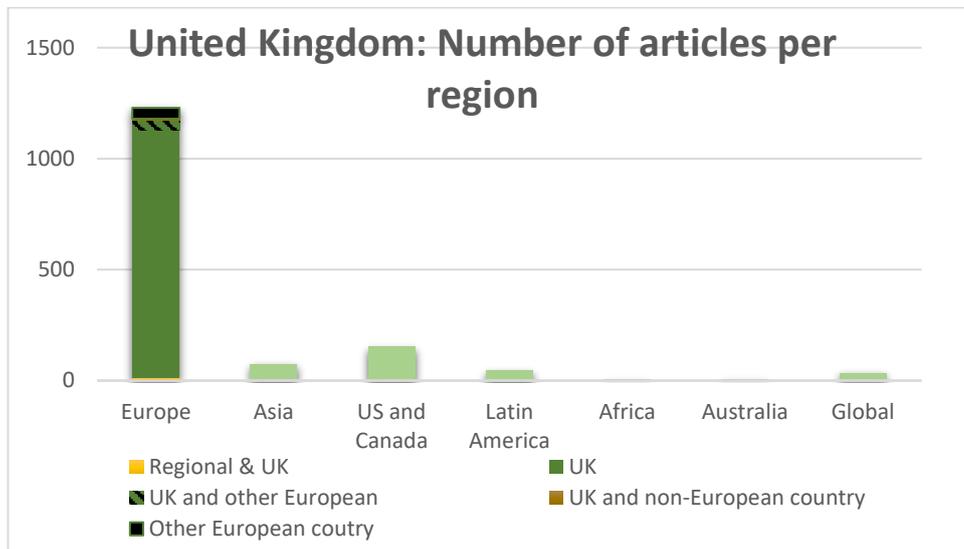


108 articles were identified in the Serbian sample that featured cases of domestic trafficking for sexual exploitation. Stories on trafficking in countries from the West Balkans area (e.g. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro) were also common – 50 texts were published on trafficking in the region, and another 19 on cases that involve both Serbia and another country from the region. Stories from other European countries were thematised in 62 articles, 23 of which were on cases of cross-border trafficking that also involved Serbia. The remaining texts were concerned with the Asian region (20), US and Canada (10) and Latin America (8), whereas 3 articles approached the topic globally. No articles were written on human trafficking for sexual exploitation in Africa and Australia. Most of the texts that were not dealing with Serbia were taken from foreign media and translated. In total, 54% of articles dealt with trafficking in Serbia, and another 25% with trafficking in the region.

The British media also produced the greatest number of articles that were focused on human trafficking situation in Europe (80% of articles in the sample). Cases of trafficking that involve the UK were most frequently featured in the British online media (1229 texts, out of which only 56 mention other countries in conjunction to trafficking developments in Britain). US and Canada centred texts were the second most common (153 articles), followed by stories on trafficking for sexual exploitation in Asia (75), Latin America (45), and those covering the global perspective (34). Similarly to the other two countries, the number of articles that focus on non-European trafficking

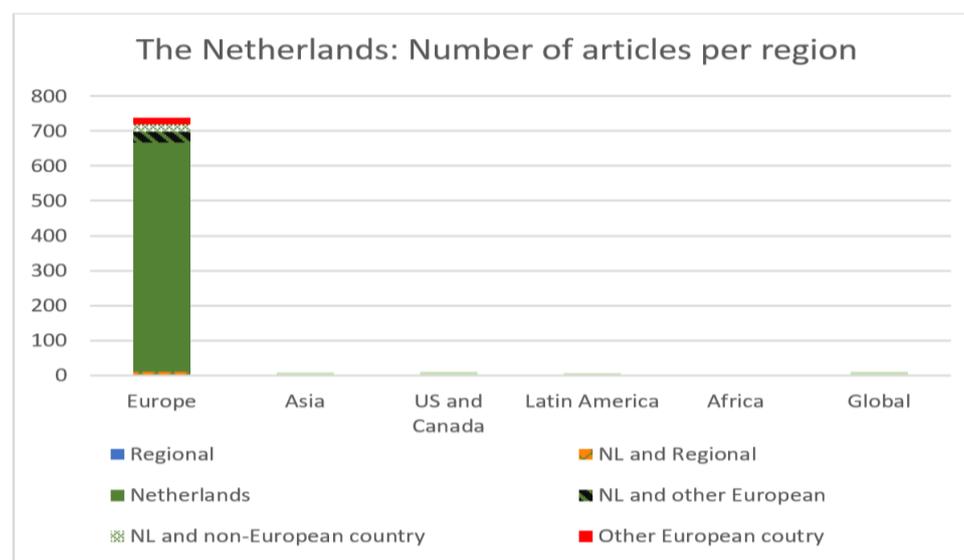
developments was comparably low, especially when it comes to remote regions of Africa (5) and Australia (4).

Graph 16 - Number of articles per region featured in British online media.



The media in the Netherlands were even more exclusive when it comes to covering local issues in trafficking for sexual exploitation. Nine out of ten texts were written on trafficking cases and issues that involve the Netherlands (655 texts dealt with domestic cases of human trafficking and an additional 62 thematised international cases that involved the Netherlands and another country). Other European countries accounted for 2% of the overall sample, and US and Canada (11 articles), Asia (9 articles), and Latin America (7 articles) for 1% each. Africa and Australia were not in the journalists’ focus in the observed period, and neither were stories dealing with the global aspect of the criminal act of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Graph 17 - Number of articles per region featured in Dutch online media.



4.4. Victim Demographics

Quantitative data coding included also victim and trafficker demographics. These were not recorded in order to draw conclusions on the reality of trafficking based on media reporting. Rather, the goal was to compare the data with official statistical reports and see if some characteristics of victim/perpetrator populations made the story more attractive to the press. For both categories of victims and perpetrators their age, gender and nationality were marked if specified. It is also worth noting that each of the three countries has different systems for compiling statistics on characteristics of the identified victims and traffickers. In the United Kingdom the statistics on identified victims of human trafficking are recorded through National Referral Mechanism (NRM), a victim identification and support provision framework. In the Netherlands, that task is completed by CoMensha, the Coordination Centre for Human Trafficking. In Serbia, the Centre for Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking is producing annual statistical reports pertaining to victims identified in the country, and the police publishes reports on traffickers based on the number of criminal charges.

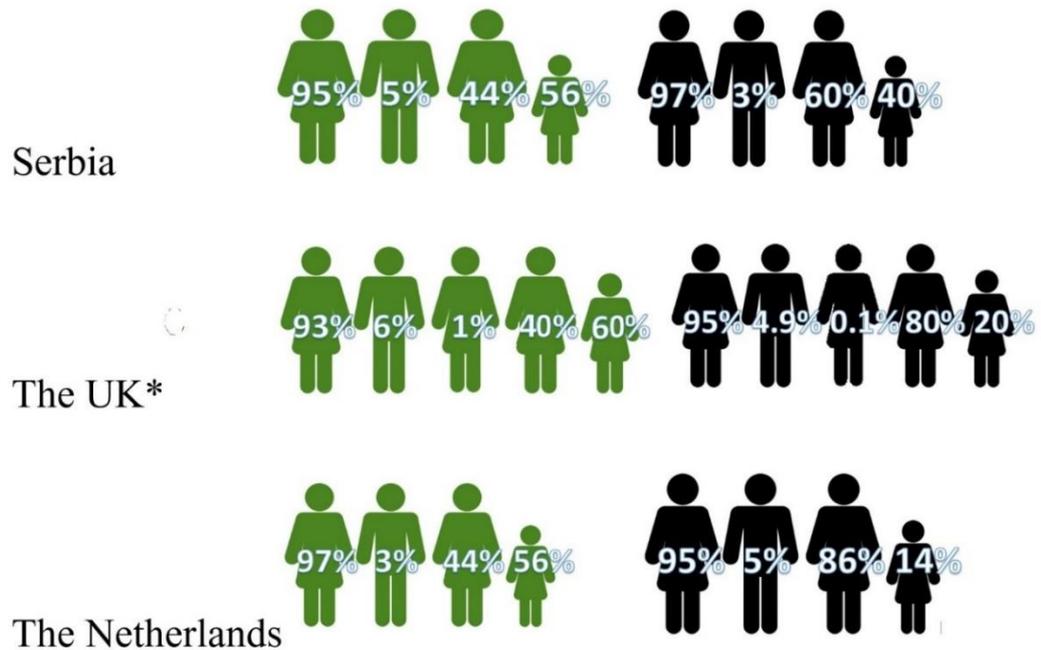
Some data is missing from the official statistics, especially when it comes to information on human traffickers. Also, the type of data recorded over time changed in some of the countries. For that reason, for some of the categories, the comparison should be taken with some caution. This will be clearly indicated in the text for each category that was affected. Furthermore, statistics derived here from the media reports include a small number of articles on trafficking outside the home country, whereas official statistics in all three countries pertain exclusively to victims identified in the country and traffickers who were caught there. While the mentioned limitations of making inferences on the over-representation of certain categories in the media based on the comparison with the official statistics do exist, this part of the analysis served to identify indicators of certain media biases. These were not taken for granted, but rather triangulated with qualitative analysis of articles in question and interviews with relevant actors. These links were further explored in Chapters 5 to 7.

In Serbia, official annual statistical reports on victims' demographics are not equally detailed, and fail to show categorisation of victims based on nationality for each form of exploitation. Additionally, it should be noted that the official statistics data pertain to the period from 2012 to 2015, because data for 2011 is not available.⁴⁹ This should be taken into account when

⁴⁹ The official statistics published by the Centre for Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking are retrieved from here <http://www.centarzztlj.rs/index.php/statistika>. The data on 2011 is not available online. I have submitted a request for statistics for this year directly to the Centre and received the data they had available. Yet, that report did not distinguish on victims age, gender or nationality based on the type of exploitation so I was not able to use it.

interpreting the data, because the numbers derived from media reporting pertain to the whole observed period (2011–2015). Therewithal, this statistical shortcoming is an important indicator that a more comprehensive and systematic data gathering mechanism needs to be established in the country so that the trends in human trafficking and changes thereof could be observed more closely and with higher reliability. Similar can be said about data collection on victims and offenders in the UK and offenders in the Netherlands.

Graph 18 - Gender and age of victims in the media (green) and the official national statistics (black)



*The middle figurine in the UK graph represents transgender victims

Victims in the Serbian media were portrayed as female, minors, and mainly domestic citizens. As Graph 18 demonstrates, data pertaining to victims' gender is congruent with official State statistics. However, it indicates that media were over-representing minors as victims of human trafficking.

Despite the inconsistency in recording the official statistics on victims' nationality, I was able to find some information on it and whether victims were exploited internally or across borders. Media reports were more frequently written on cases that involve victims of Serbian nationality than foreign: 57% and 43% respectively. The Centre for Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking made available more detailed statistical reports that distinguish between domestic and foreign citizens for each form of human trafficking in 2012 and 2014. In 2012, 9% of sexually exploited victims (3 persons) were foreign citizens (Centre for Protection of Victims of Human

Trafficking, Supplementary statistical analysis for 2012)⁵⁰, and in 2014 that percentage was 7% (1 person) (Milanović et al. 2015). There is, therefore, reason to be suspicious of overrepresentation of foreign victims in the Serbian media. However, the extent of that overrepresentation cannot be established as data on nationality of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation is not available for the remaining 3 years.

Official statistics that include information on whether trafficking happened within the country or it was international are available for 2013, 2014, and 2015. On average, victims that were sexually exploited across the border accounted for 83% of victims, whereas 17% of them experienced exploitation within the borders of Serbia⁵¹. In the media reports, trafficking was represented as a transnational phenomenon in 61% of reports, whereas the remaining 39% focused on internal trafficking cases. As mentioned above, the news value of proximity probably factored in the overrepresentation of internal trafficking, especially if we bear in mind that the official data pertain to victims identified in Serbia only, whereas reporting sometimes focuses on other countries and remote regions.

When it comes to demographics of victims represented in the articles published in British online media in the observed period, the majority of cases reported on involved minor, female and foreign victims of human trafficking. 18% of articles did not specify any of the victim's demographics. Analysis of articles that specify some information about the victims but not the other, show that the information on the victim's nationality was most frequently left out (2.5 times more than victims' age and gender). Representation of gender in the media coincides with the official numbers. Yet, when it comes to the age of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, media representation was far from reflective of the official statistics. Whereas 20% of sexually exploited trafficking survivors identified in Britain are minors and 80% are adults, 60% of media reports were dealing with cases involving minors and only 40% thematised trafficking of adults. Threefold over-representation of underage victims once again demonstrates that child-related stories are preferred by the media and more likely to be published than stories on adults. This is also in line with the preferred victim type outlined in chapter 5.

When it comes to the victim's nationality, official statistics in the UK do not break down this data according to the type of exploitation. Therefore, a precise comparison is not possible. Both

⁵⁰ The report was retrieved from <http://www.centarzztlj.rs/images/statistika/Statisticki%20podaci%20za%202012.%20-%20dopunska%20analiza.pdf>.

⁵¹ Note that if other forms of human trafficking are taken into account, the situation changes drastically. For the same period, 50% of the total number of victims were exploited internally, and 50% of them internationally.

suggest foreigners are more vulnerable to human trafficking. Official statistics (pertaining to all forms of HT) show 95% of victims identified between 2011 and 2015 were foreign citizens, whereas media reporting indicate trafficking for sexual exploitation affected foreigners in 68% of cases (this percentage is even lower when articles that pertain to other regions are excluded). For that reason, data indicates possible media over-representation of domestic citizens as victims, but the extent of this over-representation is impossible to assess based on the data publicly available in the country.

Much like British publications, the Dutch media reports were most frequently representing victims as underage, female, and foreign nationals. As Graph 18 reveals, representation of victims' gender in the analysed texts corresponds to the official statistics on victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation identified in the Netherlands. Media were biased, however, when it comes to representing the age of the victims. Unlike the official statistics showing that 86% of victims identified in the Netherlands are 18 years of age or older, media reports suggest adults are less vulnerable to trafficking than children. Only 44% of the analysed texts portray adults who have been trafficked, where 56% of articles focus on child sexual exploitation cases. This means the vulnerability of minors was exaggerated fourfold. As for the nationality of victims, numbers derived from media reports match the official figures. Media focus on exploitation of Dutch nationals in 35% of the reports, which is close to the numbers of citizens of the Netherlands who were identified as victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in the observed period (32%). Foreigners account for 65% and 68% in media and official statistics respectively.

The over-representation of minors was recorded in all three countries. This is in line with newsworthiness of children related stories that suggests that crimes involving children are more likely to appear on the radar of journalists and editors who select topics to be covered (Jewkes, 2011). Human trafficking for sexual exploitation and other incidences of sexual abuse against children are particularly newsworthy because these stories combine several different news values: children, violence, and sex. Yet, it needs to be taken into account that the official data pertains to victims identified in the country (be it the Netherlands, UK or Serbia), whereas the percentage on media reporting also includes articles that cover other regions (see graphs 15-17 for regional representation per country). Also, it is likely that not all cases reach the media, which makes selection criteria more difficult to assess. Interviews with media professionals reveal that only one of them identified trafficking of children as a topic of special interest. On the other hand, anti-trafficking experts whom I spoke with seemed to be more aware of this media bias than professionals working in the news industry.

As for portrayal of victims' nationality in the analysed texts, an indication of over-representation of foreigners in Serbia and domestic citizens in the UK is an interesting finding. As a country in transition, struggling with economic and political stability, Serbia has traditionally been seen as a country of victims' origin. However, recorded trends in human trafficking suggest internal trafficking of domestic citizens is becoming the dominant form the criminal act is taking. This change is not reflected in media reporting. Interviewed professionals in Serbia explain this by the inertness of local media and their propensity to reiterating stereotypes. As experts in the field who collaborate with the media, it is partly the responsibility of this very group of experts to communicate new developments in human trafficking. However, I have identified their reluctance to accept this responsibility for not communicating the trends with the media effectively. The blame game is two-way, as journalists also complain about having too few reliable sources on trafficking that are available to provide them information in media-friendly and timely manner.

In contrast, the United Kingdom, as a developed Western country has been perceived as a destination country for victims trafficked from less-developed regions of the world. The media, however, paint the picture of high vulnerability of domestic (minor) citizens which is not what official numbers on trafficking seem to suggest. When asked about this, UK experts on trafficking suggested that the reasons for this are twofold. On the one hand, tabloid media are tapping into the sensationalism of potential of stories involving domestic underage victims. On the other, media outlets are reflecting the official public discourse that seems to favour underage domestic victims and prioritise actions aimed at suppression of their exploitation. In this regard, it is also useful to observe when media do not reveal details on victims' demographics, as they might not reveal victims' nationality, but will reveal other information suggesting that the child belongs, while the trafficker is othered from the British society. For example, a text might say child goes to school in England, or that the trafficker comes from a certain area of the city. For a local readership, that can be suggestive enough, as they will know which areas are populated by ethnic minorities and stereotyped as dangerous areas. The text will turn to this in the later section of this thesis that presents findings of the frame analysis.

4.5. Offender Demographics

Gathering official data on characteristics of human trafficking offenders in the three observed countries was much more challenging than identifying relevant sources on and compiling victims' demographics. In Serbia, the Ministry of Internal Affairs releases annual reports on the number of human trafficking charges raised. These reports contain information on traffickers' gender, age and nationality. However, the report does not distinguish between traffickers' characteristics based on the type of exploitation they were involved with, which makes precise comparison impossible. In the United Kingdom and the Netherlands official reports on human trafficking offenders are not being issued. To overcome this, I surveyed the literature and identified some scholarly research projects that involved studying traffickers and contrasted their findings with my own.

The below table represents the data on traffickers' demographics in Serbia. It is worth noting that over one fifth of the cases reported on had both male and female offenders involved. In terms of the age and gender of traffickers, the official statistics and media reports seem to be congruent. Similarly to victims of foreign nationality, traffickers that are foreigners are also over-represented in the media – of people charged with human trafficking, only 4% were foreign, whereas 43% of traffickers represented in the media articles had a non-Serbian nationality. The stereotype of the foreign evil trafficker is common in anti-trafficking discourse (Doezema, 1999, Agustín, 2007). Having both victims' and traffickers' characteristics misrepresented in the media is problematic for multiple reasons. It fosters stereotypes that can have negative impact on victims' identification and protection of their rights. Further, it makes it difficult for the members of the public to understand the trafficking phenomenon and reliably assess related risks. For instance, a public survey based on a representative sample that was conducted in 2008 showed that only 6% of Serbian citizens believed that domestic citizens are more likely to fall victim to human trafficking than foreign nationals (Radović, et al. 2008:60).

Table 6 - Traffickers demographics in the official statistics and the media reporting in Serbian online media

OFFENDER DEMOGRAPHICS		Media reporting statistics	Official statistics 2011-2014 ⁵²
Gender	Female traffickers	28%	23%
	Male traffickers	72%	77%
Age	Adult traffickers	95%	94%
	Minor traffickers	5%	6%
Nationality	Serbian nationality traffickers	57%	96%
	Foreign nationality traffickers	43%	4%

British media mainly reported on cases involving adult (98%) male traffickers of foreign origin (72%). Precise distribution is represented in the table below.

Table 7 - Offenders characteristics based on the reporting of the UK media

OFFENDER DEMOGRAPHICS		Media reporting statistics
Gender	Female traffickers	27.93%
	Male traffickers	72%
	Transgender traffickers	0.07%
Age	Adult traffickers	98%
	Minor traffickers	2%
Nationality	British nationality traffickers	28%
	Foreign nationality traffickers	72%

As stated, official data on trafficking offenders is not made public. It would be very interesting to see if there are any discrepancies between the media representation and the official statistics.

⁵² The official statistics are published by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and are based on criminal charges raised on human trafficking. The annual statistical reports are available at http://www.mup.gov.rs/wps/portal/sr/baner-sadrzaj/trgovina%20judima/!ut/p/z1/pVLLbslwEPwVOHCO_KKOcwwUQoGAEIUSX5ATQjBKnJAAwVvh6TMUNAWrry9rS7Mx4Z6GACyi0PKhUGIVomdl3KNGSE5f0q1-G_szpli9w-t3pu_OGpWR-_ADGbsCwj8jAZx2CvInjvg46nPleguX_xwKKGJtSrOBYbmPMhUv42OIMntpoEjqpLqW2qdcVSe5bSBTpcVBaVnLtvuVyuWFoozVCoYkWOckyaQPEagiSkCMuEJYlxzJpsxWrv0avmBp4tldOd4yPaLZ5DQSh3JQLLcVDJF5zp_osrtlKe_EHvRmE8b9m54xeG2qMJRkPyT4X-s9zsYpAqaAeppZVmA5ReF3Bxk4yFqe1uJzwbcqFN8m3g4q8pl_ks5_QI9Kk1An474keapV69fgYMzlg0/dz/d5/L2dBISEvZ0FBIS9nQSEh/?urile=wcm%3Apath%3A%2Fpublic_cyrillic%2Fbaner%2Fbaner%20sadrzaj%2Ftrgovina%20judima. Retrieved on 20.06.2017. The data on 2015 was not published yet. Note that the official numbers in the right column pertain to all forms of human trafficking. Differentiated data on sexual exploitation is not available, but most of the charges (62%) were raised for human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Research by Gadd et al. (2017) based on surveying 120 offenders identified by the Manchester Police in 2015 showed that two thirds of human trafficking offenders were female. The research report does not specify if females had a dominant role in exploiting victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. However, it does state that travel arrangements were made by predominately male (68%) and adult (98%) offenders (ibid: 2).

The last table in this chapter summarises demographics of traffickers represented in media reports in the Netherlands. As in the other two countries, media were more likely to speak about male traffickers (82%) who were almost exclusively adult (99%). Nevertheless, media in the Netherlands were mostly reporting on cases that involved offenders of Dutch nationality (69%). The articles were also suggesting foreign and domestic criminals often collaborate together. In 40% of the recorded cases, articles were mentioning participation of both foreign and domestic citizens in exploiting trafficking victims. While there are no official statistics on trafficking offenders in the Netherlands publicly available, research seems to suggest that the role of women in trafficking operations could be underestimated. Siegel and de Blank (2010) explored the roles of female traffickers based on the analysis of Dutch court cases from 2006 and 2007. Their findings revealed that women hold a variety of positions and sometimes have major roles in trafficking networks. More recently, the National Rapporteur on Human Trafficking published a report on human trafficking suspects covering the period between 2011 and 2015 (Nationaal Rapporteur Mensenhandel en Seksueel Geweld tegen Kinderen, 2016). The report showed most of the suspects were male individuals. It also highlights that every fifth suspect is younger than 23 years of age, and some are even minors at the time of offending. The greatest percentage of suspected traffickers were Dutch (44%), while the others came from Eastern European EU countries (23% are from Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary), and countries with a long history of migration to the Netherlands (13% are from Suriname, Morocco, Turkey and the Dutch Antilles). The percentage of female traffickers according to the report was 17%. Note, however, that comparison between this source and the demographics derived from the media reports is not possible, because the former pertains to all suspects of trafficking who allegedly offended in the Netherlands, whereas the media reports are limited to trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation only and cover cases outside the Netherlands too.

Table 8 - Offenders characteristics based on the reporting of the Dutch media

OFFENDER DEMOGRAPHICS		Media reporting statistics
Gender	Female traffickers	18%
	Male traffickers	82%
Age	Adult traffickers	99%
	Minor traffickers	1%
Nationality	Dutch nationality traffickers	69%
	Foreign nationality traffickers	31%

4.6. Chapter Summary

This chapter analysed features of the articles. It finds that in all three countries there has been a gradual increase in the number of reports on human trafficking for sexual exploitation over the years observed. Peaks in the number of reports coincided with important policy development dates, indicating that policy changes are the main drivers behind the reporting. The three countries show similarities in features of the articles: most texts in the sample were shorter than 500 words, either reportages or hard news pieces, and most commonly published on websites of tabloid dailies. A lack of analytical, elaborate pieces is characteristic of all three countries, but it is particularly pronounced in Serbia. Another thing the analysed countries have in common is the reliance on official sources, mainly police and the government. Furthermore, case-based reporting is dominant throughout the sample. For this reason, the criminal justice frame is the one that dominates the sample of the UK, the Netherlands, and Serbia. The second most commonly employed frame portrays human trafficking as a prostitution-related phenomena. Notably, the Serbian press relied on the violence frame, and the UK press on the CSE frame. The human rights frame and the migration frame were mainly neglected, but the second one had manifestations in other frames as authors pointed out the origin of victims and traffickers.

In terms of regions covered by journalistic writing, media in all three countries were prone to reporting on cases involving their country. The news value of proximity explains the distribution well – the closer the story is to the news reader, the newsier it is. Therefore, regional stories and

stories that involved other European countries gained more attention than trafficking topics originating from other continents.

Inconsistencies in official statistical data collection mechanisms and lack of thoroughness in data recorded made it very difficult to achieve reliable comparison between demographics derived from mediated representation of human trafficking and the official country data. However, this field was explored to serve as an indication of potential media biases that were later tested and confirmed through qualitative analysis and interviews with anti-trafficking professionals. Underrepresentation of domestic victims was characteristic of Serbia, and according to interviewed specialists a consequence of adherence to stereotypes the media refuse to let go. In the UK, on the contrary, the analysis records overrepresentation of domestic citizens among identified victims, particularly minors. This is congruent with the political focus on domestic trafficking of underage girls in the country. In relation to victims' age, all three countries show a strong indication of biased reporting that is emphasizing trafficking of children – in the UK this category is overrepresented 3 times, and in the Netherlands 4 times.

Official recording of statistical data on human trafficking offenders is highly unsystematic and neglected in the Netherlands and in Britain. Serbian data shows that foreign traffickers are 10 times overrepresented in the media compared to the police and prosecution records. This is another indication of resilience of stereotypes in media portrayals in this Western Balkan country. Research on traffickers in one region of the UK shows a possible underrepresentation of female traffickers, but with no data available on the rest of the country, further inferences can be made only if data recording improves in the future.

CHAPTER 5 - MEDIA FRAMING OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION IN SERBIA

5.1. Trafficking in Human Beings in Serbia

The Republic of Serbia is a small country of little over 7 million inhabitants that lies in the middle of the Balkan Peninsula. Due to its geostrategic location, but also dual cultural and political influences of the East and the West, the country was often fertile ground for conflicts and crimes involving trafficking of arms and other goods. Having established routes for trafficking was a facilitating factor for gangs of human traffickers (Ćopić, 2008:56) whose activities became recognised in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Conflicts and political instability also acted as migration pull factors (Nikolić-Ristanović, 2002a:133), making inhabitants of Serbia keener to take the risk and try find their luck abroad. Women recruited from former Soviet republics and transported via the infamous Balkans route to more developed European countries in the West passed through Belgrade and other migration hubs of what was then the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). Other trafficked individuals passed through SFRY on the routes connecting the Near East with Western Europe (Ćopić, 2008, IOM, 2004). While some were only in transit, other victims of trafficking were exploited in the SFRY that was wealthier than other countries in the region and offered lucrative opportunities to criminals involved in human trafficking (Nikolić-Ristanović, 2002b). The turbulent 1990s brought wars and the subsequent breakdown of Yugoslavia. As a result of poor economic management and governance of the country, as well as the sanctions during the Milosević' era, Serbia faced issues of poverty and poor prospects that contributed to greater vulnerability of Serbian citizens to exploitation in trafficking. Patriarchy, discrimination, feminisation of poverty, the violence women are exposed to, and other factors made the local women particularly vulnerable to trafficking in human beings (Anđelković et al. 2011).

After the fall of Milosević, democratic reforms took place but did not prove to be long lasting.⁵³ Yet, during this period the country did sign and ratify the UN Convention against Transnational Crime (2000), the Palermo Protocol (2000), and CoE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (2005). The act of human trafficking was also introduced in the National Criminal Code under the Article 388 in 2003. The article on human trafficking states:

⁵³ After the split of the populist and extreme right-wing Radical Party in 2008, a new party called Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) was established. It came to power in 2012 and since then the country has been governed by the authoritarian regime of Aleksandar Vučić. Despite the processes of Europeanisation and neoliberal transformation that were supposed to bring country on the path to EU integration the ruling party used the reforms to alter existing political routines and consolidate its power through the adoption of an authoritarian governmentality regime (see Cengiz & Džihic, 2016).

Whoever by force or threat, deception or maintaining deception, abuse of authority, trust, dependency relationship, difficult circumstances of another, retaining identity papers or by giving or accepting money or other benefit, recruits, transports, transfers, sells, buys, acts as intermediary in sale, hides or holds another person aimed at exploiting such person's labour, forced labour, commission of offenses, prostitution, other forms of sexual exploitation, begging, pornography, establishing slavery or slavery-like relation, the removal of organs or body parts or service in armed conflicts, shall be punished by imprisonment of three to twelve years.

Criminal Code of the Republic of Serbia, Official Gazette of RS, 72/09

When the Criminal Code was amended in 2009, the punishment for the main offence of human trafficking was raised to 3 to 12 years in prison (previously 2 to 10); harsher punishment was introduced for child trafficking and organised crime trafficking operations too, with perpetrators of child trafficking facing the minimum sentence of 5 years and organised crime group members involved in human trafficking facing at least 10 years imprisonment (Official Gazette of RS, 72/09). The changes to the law also introduced the possibility of punishing buyers of services of trafficked people if they knew or could have known the person selling the services was a victim of human trafficking. These changes were encouraged by the visa liberalisation with the European Union that took place in November 2009 and enabled citizens of Serbia to travel within the Schengen zone. Namely, for the liberalisation to take place, Serbia had to demonstrate a strong political will and take action directed towards fighting cross-border crimes, including human trafficking. However, anti-trafficking actors interviewed for this study testify that the political will to tackle the issue of human trafficking subsided after the visa liberalisation took place and little progress has been made since. For instance, the previous National Strategy for Combating Human Trafficking expired in 2011.⁵⁴ The lack of strategic approach and activities of the government to address human trafficking indicates a low political will to tackle the issue. The new Strategy and the accompanying Action Plan have not been adopted until summer 2017, six years after the deadline. This was despite the fact that the first drafts of these documents were ready in 2013. This issue should not be mistaken for a mere bureaucratic formality, because failure to adopt the Strategy and the Action plan for 4 years had severe consequences. Namely, the national anti-trafficking mechanism became weaker as former coordination bodies ceased to operate, and the establishment of the new ones envisaged by the Strategy is pending (Aleksić, 2017: 37).

⁵⁴ The text of the National Strategy for Combating Human Trafficking can be retrieved from the official website of the Government of the Republic of Serbia http://www.srbija.gov.rs/vesti/dokumenti_sekcija.php?id=45678.

Even though the act of human trafficking is recognised by the national legislation, and the law allows for appropriate sentencing, the implementation of the law is where many obstacles occur. Local anti-trafficking experts interviewed for this study largely agree that the criminal justice system is the weakest link in the anti-trafficking mechanism. Legal proceedings are long-drawn out; the trial outcomes depend heavily on the victim's testimony and sensitivity of legal actors involved; traffickers get lenient sentences or the charges get commuted to mediation in prostitution and other criminal acts that are easier to prove; victims get re-traumatised as courts fail to protect their identity, allow confrontation with traffickers, award no compensation of damages, etc. (see Anđelković et al, 2011). Various examples of court malpractice were referred to by the people interviewed for this study, including testimonies of leaking information on ongoing cases to the press in order to influence the outcome of the proceedings (see under 5.3.1 in this chapter), and discrimination against victims by prosecutors, judges and other professionals who should be there to protect them. One of the interviewees who works in the criminal justice system explained:

My colleagues confuse human trafficking with other criminal acts such as mediation in prostitution. They often blame the victim, and say things to them like "You've got what you deserved", "You were looking for it", etc. This is a cultural thing and our society promotes the concept of immobile, passive females who know their place and don't wander around alone. Even the professionals who should know more and be able to recognize human trafficking [do this]. Prosecutors here blame women for being raped because they were wearing short skirts in the night time. This happened again at X [name of the Court] few days ago.

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The domain of providing adequate assistance to victims during the recovery phase and securing protection of their rights is particularly problematic. The national referral mechanism was established in 2004, when the Agency for the Coordination of Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking was founded under the auspices of the Serbian Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy. The role of the Agency was to coordinate all actors (NGOs and institutions) involved in fighting human trafficking and organise assistance and protection of trafficking survivors. On top of that, the Agency was the only actor in the country that could formally identify a victim of human trafficking. The Agency was transformed into the Centre for Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking in April 2002. The aim was to overcome the lack of capacities of the previous state body in charge of the victim protection services. As defined in the Decision on the Establishment of the Centre (Official Gazette RS, 35/2012), the role of this entity encompasses

provision of emergency accommodation to trafficking survivors, identification, needs assessment, and assistance planning, provision of counselling, therapeutic, socio-educative and other services to victims of trafficking. The Centre was envisaged to have two organisational units – The Agency for Coordination of Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking and Shelter for Victims of Human Trafficking. The shelter, however, remains inoperative to this date. There is one non-governmental organisation in Belgrade - Atina - that runs a shelter for trafficking survivors. However, its capacities are limited. Specialised shelters for children and male victims of trafficking do not exist in the country.

In the official report of the PrEUgovor coalition that monitors progression of the negotiation process of Serbia's accession to the EU, it is stated that no funds were allocated in the budget of the Republic of Serbia apart from the money allocated for the functioning of the Centre for Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking. However, 90% of this sum is spent on operational costs of the Centre (staff salaries, utilities, taxes, etc.), and only a small portion is being used to provide services to victims of human trafficking (Aleksić, 2017). The same report analyses the last available financial report of the Centre, showing that of 121,549€ that the body had available in 2015, only 9,310€ was spent on direct victim assistance (psychological and legal support and transport services). To illustrate how insufficient this sum is to adequately respond to the needs of trafficking survivors, let us take a look at official statistics from that year. In 2015, the Centre identified 40 victims of human trafficking, which gives an average of 232.75€ per victim (in case the Centre only offered support to victims identified in that year and not others who were identified before, in which case the estimated average sum of funds per victim drops even further). Based on the Official New Lawyer Attorney Tariff and Costs in Serbia for the period of 2013-2016⁵⁵ (Official Gazette of Serbia, 121/2012), costs of the legal representation of the damaged party in criminal proceedings depend on the possible sentence. For criminal acts punishable by 5 to 10 years, the cost of a single court appearance and representation is approximately 140€, and for an act punishable by 10 to 15 years, it is 200€. An average psychotherapy session in the country costs around 30€. That means the Centre was able to provide 1 legal representation in court and 1 to 3 psychological counselling sessions per a victim in 2015. It is, therefore, clear that the Republic of Serbia does not provide enough funds for adequate support of trafficking survivors and that the Centre for Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking is not able to fully comply with its function under such conditions. Access to already

⁵⁵ Lawyers in the Republic of Serbia are obliged to stick to the attorney tariff and follow the rules pertaining to determining the costs. As the footnote in the Official New Lawyer Attorney Tariff states, lawyers may choose to take into account difficult financial situation or other circumstances of their clients and grant a discount pursuant to the Tariff. In practice that discount is not more than 50%.

limited assistance services for victims of human trafficking in Serbia is further aggravated by the fact that there are little to no referrals to other victim assistance providers in the country⁵⁶. Another alarming datum visible from the analysis of the financial report of the Centre is that the money that comes from confiscation of criminal assets that is being awarded to the Centre is not being spent in totality. In 2015 alone, the Centre came into possession of 20,452€ from confiscation, and spent less than a quarter on victims' assistance. The rest was transferred to the budget for 2016.⁵⁷ All these indicators suggest that Serbia continues to fail in establishing a functional anti-trafficking mechanism that adequately protects the rights of trafficking survivors and vigorously fights to stop human trafficking and people involved in the crime.

Formally, there are two other bodies in the Serbian counter-trafficking mechanism. The National Team for Combating Human Trafficking that gathers relevant governmental, non-governmental and international actors was established in 2002. Two years later, the government founded The Anti-Trafficking Council⁵⁸ with the purpose of coordinating national and regional trafficking eradication activities, considering the reports of the relevant international organisations and bodies, and taking measures to implement recommendations of the international community. However, both of these bodies are inactive, with the last meeting of the National Anti-Trafficking Team taking place in 2013, and some members of the Council not even being aware of their roles, duties and expectations (Aleksić, 2017:37).

In the observed period, the most common form of exploitation was sexual exploitation. The vast majority of victims were citizens of Serbia. Most of them were women, with a significant percentage of children among the victim population as well. Cases of internal trafficking were more common than cases of cross-border human trafficking. The number of victims identified per annum varied, with the lowest number of 40 identified in 2015, and the largest of 125 in 2014. These trends continued in 2016 as well. The only major deviation happened in 2014, when a large number of labour exploitation cases were identified. These cases involved local men exploited in the construction industry in Russia, which explains the drop in the number of female

⁵⁶ Two major anti-trafficking organisations in the country, the NGOs ASTRA and Atina report to having 1 and 3 clients (respectively) referred for assistance by the Centre for Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking in 2016. In that year, the Centre identified 55 victims.

⁵⁷ Similar transfer of funds is visible in the financial report for 2014 (Aleksić, 2017). Financial reports of the Centre are available here – 2014: <http://www.centarzztlj.rs/images/download/2015/lzvestaj%20o%20MFP%20za%202014.pdf> and 2015: <http://www.centarzztlj.rs/images/download/2016/mat%20fin%20poslovanje%202015.pdf>.

⁵⁸ Decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia on the Establishment of the Anti-Trafficking Council No. 02-6783/2004-1, 14.10.2004. During the writing process of this thesis, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted another Decision on the Establishment of the Anti-Trafficking Council. This may be an indication of an improvement, but it remains to be seen whether the Council will work actively towards combating trafficking or not.

victims, children, and internal trafficking, and respective rise in male victims, other forms of exploitation and cross-border trafficking (see the table below). Foreign victims are rarely identified in Serbia, but those who are mainly come from the neighbouring countries (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Romania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Montenegro, but also near-by countries such as Slovenia, Moldova, and Austria) and countries affected by the refugee crisis (Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, and Turkey). Table one summarises relevant statistics on human trafficking in the country. It is compiled based on the official statistics on trafficking in Serbia that are published annually by the Centre for Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking.⁵⁹ The number of identified victims shows a decreasing tendency in the last two years, which has to do with inadequate capacities of the state organs to address the issue adequately. For instance, the police department responsible for human trafficking is the border police that faced major challenges in dealing with unprecedented flows of irregular migration in the wake of refugee crisis, i.e. in 2015 and 2016 when we see the drop in the number of identified victims. If it is taken into account that victims identified in 2014 were mainly men exploited in construction abroad, and only 23 victims exploited in the country were identified, it becomes clear that Serbia needs to build capacities to adequately identify victims of human trafficking and respond to their needs. Local actors in anti-trafficking also report their concerns on failure to recognise and protect irregular migrants who fall victim to trafficking in human beings during their journey through the Balkans to Western Europe.

Table 9 - Statistics on Human Trafficking in the Republic of Serbia in the period 2011-2016⁶⁰

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of victims	88	79	92	125	40	55
Female victims	63% (55)	77% (61)	68% (63)	19% (24)	80% (32)	85% (47)
Male victims	37% (33)	23% (18)	32% (29)	81% (101)	20% (8)	15% (8)
Victims with Serbian citizenship	82% (72)	91% (72)	96% (88)	96% (120)	93% (37)	91% (50)

⁵⁹ Reports are available here www.centarzztlj.rs/index.php/statistika.

⁶⁰ Number of victims, their gender, citizenship, percentage of children as well as percentage of cross-border/internal trafficking are pertaining to official statistics on all forms of human trafficking published by the Centre for Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking (earlier the Agency for Coordination of Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking). The two bottom lines show the representation of sexual exploitation in comparison to other forms of human trafficking according to the official data.

Victims with foreign citizenship	18% (16)	9% (7)	2% ⁶¹ (2)	4% (5)	7% (3)	9% (5)
% of children	30% (26)	42% (33)	49% (45)	15% (19)	60% (24)	38% (21)
Internal THB	unknown	49% (39)	70% (64)	18% (23)	63% (25)	64% (35)
Cross-border THB	unknown	51% (40)	30% (28)	82% (102)	37% (15)	36% (20)
Sexual exploitation	41% (36)	53% (42)	34% (31)	12% (15)	55% (22)	53% (29)
Other forms of exploitation	43% ⁶² (38)	44% ⁶³ (35)	49% ⁶⁴ (45)	88% (110)	45% (18)	47% (26)

5.2. Mediascape in Serbia

Understanding the mediascape in Serbia requires close consideration of the post-communist media system type. This observation, however, needs to be made through the prism of the global crisis of journalism that was caused by technological development, changes in the way news is consumed, emerging platforms for news sharing, and increasing involvement of non-media professionals in informing the public. This is because all media systems are affected by geographic characteristics, language, culture, political norms, and technological development in a given country. Despite the transition into a democracy, research shows that Serbia still has an incomplete legal framework and that its citizens show low levels of political literacy and consciousness (Milojević & Ugrinić, 2011). Even though restrictive media laws that were adopted during Milošević's era were replaced, media never managed to free themselves fully from governmental influence, and political and economic pressures. On top of that, non-critical media consumption that was typical of the communist era of political single-mindedness, propaganda,

⁶¹ The remaining 2% were stateless persons.

⁶² In the remaining cases the type of exploitation is unknown

⁶³ In the remaining cases the type of exploitation is unknown

⁶⁴ In the remaining cases the type of exploitation is unknown

and media control was never uprooted from society. Despite the democratic transition, efforts to establish a free media market and have transparency regarding media ownership have failed.

Television is the most popular medium in the country, with 77% audience concentration across major TV channels (Surčulija, et al. 2011, Milivojević et al. 2012, cited in Banjac, et al. 2016). The print media circulation is low, but the popularity of newspapers that have migrated online is rising and its outreach has grown with the expansion of social media (Surčulija, et al. 2011). Numerous press, news web portals, radio and TV stations exist in the market, yet most media outlets are heavily controlled by the ruling party. Freedom of the Press (2017) categorises Serbian media as partly free, and so does the World Press Freedom Index (2017) that records the drop in ranking and relates it to the rule of president Vučić. Snježana Milivojević, coordinator of the nationwide research on media monitoring and professor at the Faculty of Political Science in Belgrade recently voiced her concerns about the state's involvement in financing the media, direct influence on the content produced, and heavy limitations on freedom of the media that the government impose (Fonet, 2017, February 2). Media also depend on business owners and advertisers, who use their financial influence to ensure favourable reporting. Both political and economic pressures are reflected in frequent lawsuits against journalists and media owners that are filed by the police, judges, politicians, and businessman, cancelation of TV shows⁶⁵, withdrawal of finance sources, banning journalists and media outlets from press conferences, threats and other forms of repression and control (see Banjac, et al., 2016, Milojević & Ugrinić, 2011, and Janković, et al. 2009). In a study of media control in the country, Matic (2013) also confirmed unregulated state involvement in media financing that results in soft censorship. According to the author of the study, this method is used to 'purchase positive image of the ruling politicians and activities the government implements and commercially punish media that criticize them'. She also estimated that the state's participation in the advertising market is between 23% and 40%, which paired with subventions given to the state owned media seriously jeopardises free competition and the development of free, independent, and pluralistic media outlets (ibid: 6).

Journalists that cover the topic of human trafficking and were interviewed for this thesis also testify of their experiences with censorship pressures. These range from receiving calls and threats, to suspensions at work and fears of getting fired, and lawsuits filed against them. Specifically related to reporting on human trafficking for sexual exploitation, a lawsuit was filed against a media outlet that broadcast a documentary film on trafficking. The film refers to a

⁶⁵ For instance, in 2014 one of the most influential and critical political TV shows 'Utišak nedelje' was banned.

trafficking case that involved a girl from Moldova trafficked to Serbia and Montenegro and sexually exploited in the period between 1998 and 2002. Media coverage of this case was extensive due to the involvement of powerful figures in the exploitation, such as the deputy of the Montenegrin Public Prosecutor, Zoran Piperović⁶⁶ and the extreme brutality of abuse the girl experienced that was heavily exploited by the sensationalistic media in the region. The lawsuit was filed by one of the accused – the above mentioned Piperović – based on the wording in the documentary.

TV station that broadcasted that film was sued because it was said in the film that ‘there was no judicial epilogue in this case’, whereas Piperović who was the plaintiff argued that dropping the case was the epilogue. It was just a wordplay, but the Court showed no understanding. We lost the case and the TV station paid a fine. (...) That man (*refers to Zoran Piperović*) threatened me over the phone and tried in numerous ways to put pressure on me, but I testified in court and explained everything as I just did to you.

ND36

Furthermore, research shows that the professional public sees the poor quality of media content, dominance of sensationalism and tabloid journalism as a major problem of contemporary Serbian media. In a study conducted with journalists and media managers, findings of Milojević & Ugrinić (2011:52) were congruent with Hume’s (2011) theorizing that tabloidization in Central and Eastern Europe diminishes the credibility of journalists and their capacities to resist political pressures. Consistent with their findings, this study confirms concerns of journalists and anti-trafficking professionals about the dominance of sensationalism, tabloidization, consequent lack of investigative stories, and related consequences.

Colleagues from X [*names a popular tabloid paper*] were recently threatened to be fired if they don’t produce such and such amount of exclusive stories, and they were told to make them up if they cannot find them.

AG2

⁶⁶ Ex-Minister of Internal affairs of Montenegro who led the investigation, Andrija Jovičević and media also reported on the involvement of Milo Đukanović, Prime Minister of the country. However, charges against him were never raised. A trial of those accused in this case did not result in imprisonment, as the case was dropped because ‘not enough evidence was found to prove that S.Č. was a victim of human trafficking’. With the help of local NGOs and IOs, she was transferred to a safe European country.

On the other hand, anti-trafficking professionals who speak to the media not only testify to their citations being fabricated in the media, but having encountered made-up stories of trafficking survivors in the media where they personally were 'quoted' in such articles.

Without the stable socio-economic base and non-democratic environment, Serbian media are particularly vulnerable to the global journalism crisis. They have little possibility of being financially independent and resisting the ever-growing control of president Vučić's authoritarian regime. Following the ideal of the public interests in such conditions becomes a luxury most media in the country cannot afford. In such conditions it is difficult to imagine unbiased, responsible and thorough reporting even when it comes to difficult, socially relevant topics such trafficking in human beings.

5.3. Frame Analysis

5.3.1. Criminal Justice

The prevalence of the criminal justice frame in media reporting is congruent with the dominance of an anti-trafficking paradigm that defines trafficking as a criminal issue, calls for stricter policing, prosecution, and migration control. A similar situation was evidenced by Pajnik (2010), in her study of media representation of human trafficking in the Slovenian press. The Serbian sample contained 129 articles (46%) that framed the issue of trafficking as a criminal justice one. Compared to the articles fitting other dominant frame categories, these texts were shorter and mostly consisted of hard news. Another characteristic of the articles in the sample was that they largely consisted of publications of agency news or press releases issued by the police, courts prosecuting trafficking cases, or NGOs aiding the victims involved. Very few of the reported cases were followed over time, from the arrest to the conviction. In addition to that, statements from people involved in or knowledgeable of the case are less commonly found in criminal justice framed articles than in other frames. The little interest in proactively covering the cases and interviewing people for additional information, together with the widespread inclination towards press-release recycling testify to the limited efforts many Serbian journalists put into their work. This was confirmed by media professionals interviewed for this study who agreed that the number of their colleagues who have enough time and resources to fully commit to a story has decreased drastically. Such a situation is related to the changes in the media environment that include major cuts in number of employees, privatisation of media, increased competition, and

saturation of the media market, but also nepotism, commercialisation, tabloidization, and political censorship. These developments meant less positions, insecure jobs, and more work for those who remained in the profession. A journalist working for a local news agency said in the interview that the amount of work tripled for them in the last few years. With no corresponding salary increase and constant fear of losing the job, motivation and work enthusiasm in news desks 'reached the bottom' (AV23).

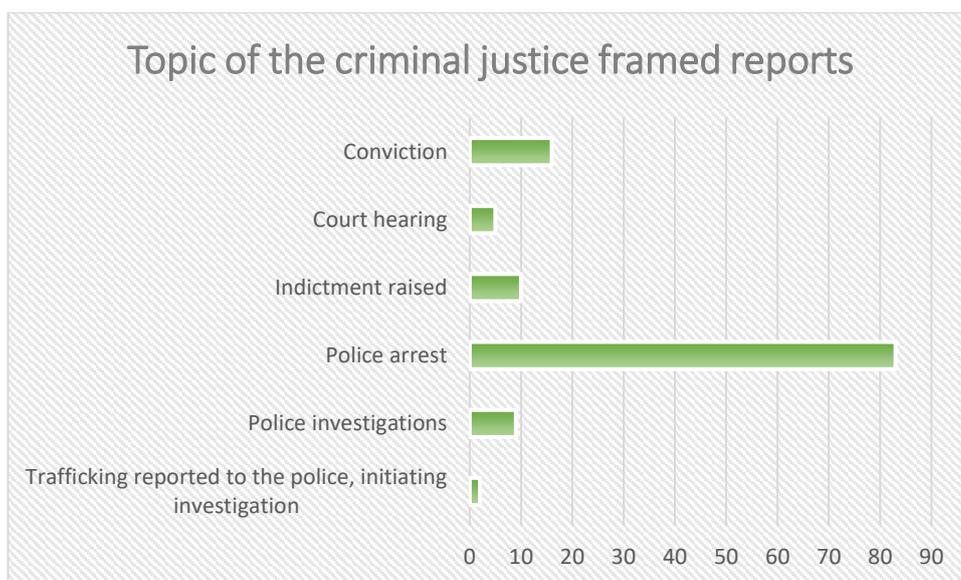
Unlike other texts in the sample that were problem-oriented, criminal justice-framed articles themed around police and court actions against traffickers in individual cases. Unsurprisingly, traffickers were represented as the sole cause of the problem with the exception of three texts.⁶⁷ Responsibility for solving the problem is assigned to the police in 85% of the cases and courts in 23% (some articles mention both), with mentions of the accountability of social welfare system and the community few and far between. In a consistent fashion, solutions that are offered in the articles are to arrest and prosecute human traffickers. The moral base these articles rely on is that of punishing crime. In contrast to other frames, the criminal justice frame is quite homogeneous and tends to represent the same problems, culprits and solutions to the issue of THB for sexual exploitation. It is centred on a crime-fighting approach and raises little concern over securing or improving victim care, prevention of trafficking, and addressing root causes of the criminal act. Analytical pieces do not exist in this portion of the sample. Given the high prevalence of the frame in the overall sample, these findings indicate an average reader is rarely exposed to alternative ways of perceiving trafficking to the one that sees it as a crime that needs to be tackled ruthlessly. This is problematic because, even though punishing the criminal act of trafficking is necessary, it will not lead to its eradication unless the root causes of the problem are eliminated.

Even though criminal-justice texts are numerous, it is worth noting that there are only a few cases each year that these articles reported on. In fact, there were only around 5 to 10 cases per annum that received significant media attention, whereas the rest were sporadic reports on police

⁶⁷ The texts mentioned at the beginning of this section for being exceptions in the sample and not portraying traffickers as culprits are also indicative of traffickers' attempts to influence the public perception in the course of the court proceedings. They pertain to two cases. The first one involves Montenegrin prosecutor Piperović, who not only sued the media outlet (see 4.2.) but the victim too. He accused her of falsely testifying and used the media in trying to discredit her. The second involves a trafficker's wife who gave interviews to various tabloid papers trying to portray her husband as innocent and the sexually exploited girl as manipulative and vindictive liar. What is problematic with these tabloid publications is that they have relied on testimony of a women who blames the victim to clear the name of her husband without checking the facts, interviewing police, judiciary practitioners, and other actors who have information on the case in order to provide the other side to the story. It is imperative to follow journalism ethics, especially when covering topics like human trafficking that involve vulnerable and highly traumatised individuals, but this, unfortunately, does not seem to be the practice in Serbia.

actions with no legal epilogue. As graph 19 indicates, police arrests were the most common cause for the reporting, with some attention paid to convictions, and very little to the steps in-between (e.g. criminal reports, indictments raised, court hearings, etc.). This is indicative of better information exchange between journalists and police compared to journalists and justice practitioners, as was stressed in interviews with journalists too. However, the great disparity could be rooted in the fact that the judicial system is the weakest link in Serbia's anti-trafficking mechanism and that the country keeps demonstrating poor conviction rates.⁶⁸

Graph 19: Number of criminal justice framed articles per topic



Interviews with trafficking experts also confirm that judicial practitioners are reluctant to speak to the press. This has more to do with securing the unhindered development of an investigation and court proceedings, than with taking care of the victim's wellbeing and protection. What is more, civil servants and NGO professionals confided in the interviews about their knowledge of corrupt legal practitioners and police officers who leaked case information to the press that harmed the trafficking survivors involved. I have encountered an example of such practice during my 2 months stay in Belgrade in the beginning of 2016. Namely, as I was conducting interviews there for my fieldwork, a high profile case of human trafficking was discovered and received notable media attention because one of the customers who paid for sex with an exploited underage girl was a well-known TV presenter. Court documentation was leaked to the press and attempts made by local tabloids to portray the girl as a lustful teen of weak morality, even though she had mental difficulties and became suicidal consequent to her exploitation. There are some

⁶⁸ The percentage of convicted traffickers was continuously dropping in the observed period. In Aleksić ed. (2016) we see that the drop was quite steep: from 79% in 2013, to 59% in 2014 and only 48% in 2015. These percentages are even lower if convictions in which trafficking was prequalified to mediation in prostitution are disregarded.

indications that the spin in the media had to do with connections that the arrested customer had in the media. Several people I interviewed claimed they had ‘inside information’ that journalist received the court documentation from the lawyer of the accused in an attempt to spin the story, represent the victim as bad, immoral teenager, and secure a favourable impact on the outcome of the trial. One of the interviewees even reported that a journalist who wrote one of the pieces openly confessed to them⁶⁹ that the lawyer leaked the information to their news desk (AS25).

This case was also indicative of journalists’ irresponsibility and unethical behaviour when it comes to protecting the identity of the victim (and in this particular case a highly vulnerable individual who was a minor and who attempted suicide after having been rescued). Namely, a press team from the most highly circulated daily paper in the country learned the location of the victim’s house, went there and ambushed her to obtain visual illustration for the article. The photo was published together with detailed information on her trafficking experience, including her age, names of suspected traffickers and customers, places where the exploitation took place, and excerpt from experts witness testimonies that revealed intelligence on her psychological wellbeing and mental development. Criminal justice-framed articles in the Serbian sample reveal other instances where victim’s identity was not concealed – one text contains an image of a victim photographed in front of the shelter. Only her face was blurred (her hair colour, figure and clothing are completely recognisable). Several texts include victims’ names. It is striking that name publishing was most likely consequence of journalistic negligence as initials were used throughout the articles, and then names mentioned either in quotes (e.g. ‘Jasmina’s mother said’) or in captions under photographic illustrations (e.g. ‘Anđela was imprisoned’). NGOs and other actors in the anti-trafficking community are much more focused on protecting the identities and interests of trafficking survivors, and are reluctant to facilitate contact between their clients who have been trafficked and the media due to their bad experiences with this in the past.

In texts that framed human trafficking as a criminal justice issue, writing seemed to be guided by the classic 5Ws of journalism and factual answers to these questions in both tabloid style and more serious media. Tabloids, however, resorted to sensationalism, lurid terminology, oversimplifications, stereotypes, graphic images, and dramatic titles. People involved in trafficking were thereby called ‘participants of the affair’, ‘controversial businessman’, and ‘pimps’, trafficking and exploitation are labelled as ‘business operations’, whereas exploited women were tagged as ‘prostitutes’, ‘street walkers’ and ‘white slaves’. Not only is this

⁶⁹ Use of the plural here was employed to conceal the gender of the interviewee. This was done elsewhere in the thesis as well.

appropriation of inadequate terms belittling of human suffering, it is also favourable to traffickers and their crimes.

Similarly to the results of studies conducted elsewhere (see Zhang et al. 2012 for studies on trafficking in Latin America for instance), this research showed that patriarchy and machismo influenced framing and perception of actors involved in the crime of trafficking. While some of the respondents explain this with patriarchy being deeply rooted in Serbian society, and violence against women still largely tolerated, I would argue there is an additional factor that plays an important role. Namely, crime doers have been historically romanticized in the Balkans: from the Ottoman era and rebellious 'hajduks'⁷⁰, to smugglers who brought Western consumer goods to communist Yugoslavia, and post-Yugoslav war criminals who, tapping into the nationalist sentiments, were represented and celebrated as 'national war heroes' (see Blisemann de Guevara, 2013). Furthermore, from Tito's regime onwards, criminals were often hired by secret services to provide information, intimidate or liquidate political enemies (Đukić, 2016, Martinović, 2015). In return their other illegal enterprises were tolerated and their reputation protected. The romanticised figure of the criminal was well established in media reports as well, which culminated in the 1990s when criminals started gaining celebrity statuses. Today's situation is not much different – societal condemnation of crime simultaneously runs with admiration and pride over successes of 'Serbian mafia'. Once part of a bigger and politically much more relevant



Picture 3 – Kristijan. Source nadlanu.com

Yugoslavia, Serbia has never really gotten over its own weak influence and nostalgia for greatness. The major cocaine shipments of Darko Šarić and movie-like heists of the Pink Panthers gang that appear on the radar of international police and foreign media prove that there is still success and excitement streaming from the region, albeit for the wrong reasons. The irrationality of

celebritisation of criminals was demonstrated at its peak quite recently, when career criminal Aleksandar Golubović 'Kristijan' (pictured above) got his prison sentence for heroin smuggling delayed so that he could continue taking part in a reality TV programme. Therefore, the paradox of favourable representation of human traffickers in some of the reports seems less illogical when

⁷⁰ Hajduks were historical figures, renegades from Serbia and other Balkan countries, who stole from the Ottoman and Habsburg occupiers and lead battles against them. They were celebrated and romanticized in the national folklores for their resistance against the occupying governments and giving back to people what was taken away from them in a 'Robin Hood' fashion.

the culturally-embedded tolerance to crime-doing and media promotion thereof is taken into account.

Coding of the sample discovered frequent clustering of three elements that appear in texts that expand on case particularities. These elements are the evil trafficker, the innocent victim, and violence. They are usually presented together, in the same paragraph. Packaged in that way, the news become easily digestible due to the simplicity and familiarity of the conventional clash between good and evil. For the same reasons these stories are likely to be internalised and their content unchallenged. With the hint of newsworthy spices of violence and sex, the recipe for the perfect trafficking news story seems to have been well established. The reader should bear in mind every second article encountered in the overall sample fits the criminal justice frame. Furthermore, the analysis showed that the binary opposition of good and evil is characteristic of other frames too (see 5.3.2. to 5.3.5.). This means that journalistic writing on human trafficking largely contributes to the reinforcement of existing trafficking stereotypes that are known to create problems in terms of recognition and adequate response to trafficking cases that do not fit the usual pattern. There is an evident need to have the media in Serbia more involved in awareness rising and stereotype deconstruction, reporting on new forms of exploitation and more subtle means of control.

Translated excerpts exemplifying how trafficking stories are narrated combining the innocent victim and evil trafficker tropes and accounts of violence inflicted.⁷¹

The girl comes from a poor family from Paracin that was using services of the local social welfare centre. Obviously, it was not difficult for the pimp to offer her a better life. As they met through Facebook, he made a marriage proposal to her, after which she left her parents' home and moved in with him. That is where her life turned to hell, because he started forcing her to have sex with men for money. She was beaten if she resisted him. She was locked in the house the whole time.

Marinković and the rest got romantically involved with the victims, gave them false promises that they will work in Italy as babysitters and alike. After that, the girls would be shipped to Italy where their IDs would be taken away and fact that they are expected to work in prostitution revealed. If they would refuse, the group would use physical force and coerce them to prostitution.

He took all the money and from time to time bought her some food and clothes. After that he took her to D. Đ., a man who promised him to find customers who would pay up to 9000 dinars [*approx. 75€*] for sex. That man locked her in a rented trailer where she was forced to provide sexual services to new clients he found. To make more money, in the end he forced her to have sex with multiple customers at the same time, from which she suffered severe bodily injuries.

Titles of the analysed articles are also indicative of sensationalism. An overview of chosen headlines shows phrases such as 'human trafficking'/'human trafficker' are often avoided, and

⁷¹ Left to right: Janačković (2013, October 12), Tanjug (2014, February 1), and Ekipa Alo!, (2014, May 30).

the phenomenon confused with other issues, including prostitution, paedophilia, human smuggling, slavery, and rape. The main stress in the titles seems to be on the danger of trafficking and the evil of traffickers, both fitting nicely with the concept of moral panics. The 'otherness' of traffickers is stressed either by their demonising through exaggeration or their ethnicity. Below examples are provided to illustrate these varying techniques.

Months of terror: He sold a slave for a laptop (the girl was sold for money and a laptop) / **Pimped her daughter for cigarettes** (texts reveals the women exploited her daughter and spent money the girl earned in prostitution, among other things, on alcohol and cigarettes).

Legless pimp from Belgrade gets 10.5 years imprisonment for human trafficking

**Kosovo: Ukrainian women and Albanians arrested for prostitution/
Croatian old man pimped young Serb girl/Turks in Bosnia recruit girls
for prostitution in EU.**

Another reoccurring theme that could be interpreted through the prism of inducing fear of human trafficking in order to control the behaviour of local populations is related to presenting the great danger of trafficking as a threat to all naïve job seekers. This is particularly common in texts that pertain to exploitation of Serbian citizens abroad and is very similar in substance to anti-migration messages Andrijasevic (2007) identified in her analysis of IOM's awareness-raising posters. For instance:

Earning ads lead the naïve to brothels and narcotics / Found job on Facebook, ended up as a slave in Italy.

When it comes to news on trafficking for sexual exploitation, the most salient information the reader comes across appears to be a fear spreading message. It is worth noting that many of the articles that were disregarded from this analysis because their focus was not on sexual exploitation but all forms of the criminal act commonly had alarming titles relying on the increasing numbers of trafficking victims identified in the country or globally, increased percentage of minors among the exploited population, etc.

Repetitive announcements of human trafficking-related arrest and prosecution stories, which present harsher policing as the antidote for the problem of trafficking activate the knowledge set suggesting we are not safe, which in consequence justifies all the proposed responses to

trafficking with the readership. The influences of power and culture in framing trafficking as a criminal justice issue are not hard to spot. As mentioned before, the great majority of criminal justice framed texts are edited publications of press releases coming mainly from institutions such as the police and courts. This means framing through the media frequently occurs in Serbia when it comes to reporting on trafficking for sexual exploitation, with power structures as frame sponsors. States have an interest in increasing border controls (in the case of Serbia, this proves the country is a model accession candidate country to the EU), protecting national interests and state sovereignty (proving to voters that the government is strong, crime is punished, and territories are well controlled). Interviewees also discussed how the media attention to the subject of trafficking depends on the political weight the issue has at a given moment, and that the way problems are going to be portrayed depends on interests of the government.

Visual representations of human trafficking for sexual exploitation that are included in the criminal justice-framed articles mostly represent trafficked people (58 images), police (25 images), traffickers (11 images), locations pertinent to the case (8 images showing locations of exploitation, maps, city and court buildings). Prison is portrayed in 3 and court in 2 photographs.



Image 4 - Source rts.rs

Representation of trafficked women tends to represent them either as oversexualised bodies and prostitutes to blame, or as innocent victims trapped in helplessness and desperation (see more details under 5.3.2.-5.3.4, and Krsmanović, 2016).

Representation of law enforcement on the other

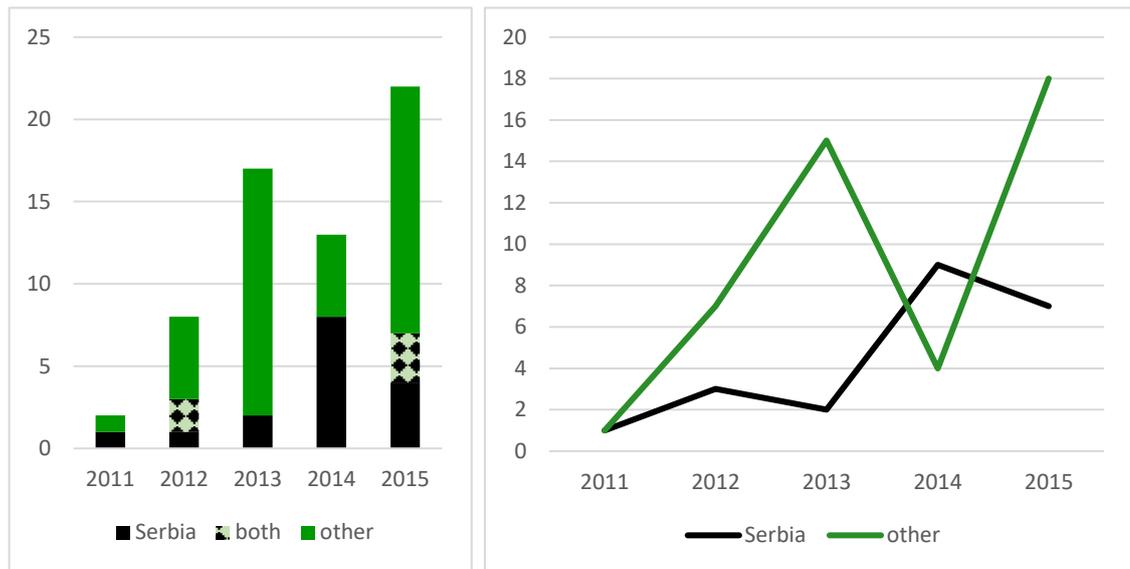
hand is either symbolic (police cars, handcuffs, and taped crime scenes) or shows re-enacted images of police in action, mostly appropriated from stock. The later images show police officers taking away criminals, interrogating suspects, and saving victims. The portrayal of the police as the saviour extends to the textual dimension of articles too, where phrases like 'victims saved by the police', 'policeman managed to free another victim from clutches of human traffickers', etc. are encountered. Unlike the UK, but like the Netherlands, the Serbian press did not publish mugshots of human traffickers. Nonetheless, personal photographs of human traffickers, mostly obtained from their social media profiles, are found in the sample.

5.3.2. Prostitution

The prostitution frame is the second most common in Serbian media: every fifth text in the overall sample framed human trafficking as a prostitution-related issue. These articles either dealt with the link between prostitution and human trafficking or equated the two phenomena. The former tend to focus on criticizing certain legislative measures for fostering human trafficking and proposing more adequate solutions. The latter include articles that confuse the two phenomena, and those who understand the assumed difference but argue it should not be made. Among problems identified, 27 articles identify prostitution as a factor that causes human trafficking and therefore needs to be tackled, while an additional 21 publications represent the two phenomena as the same issue. More than a quarter of prostitution-framed texts (17 pieces) identify problems with legislation that regulates prostitution and propose alternative measures that would lead to suppression of human trafficking. These measures include both legalisation of prostitution and criminalisation of different aspects of the sex trade, but in general, legalisation is the less favoured of the two. Additionally, few of the texts also raise the issue of difficulties in identifying and prosecuting the two crimes, failure to recognise trafficking in the sex industry and vulnerability of sex workers to human trafficking and abuse. Responsibility for the problem of human trafficking in the prostitution-framed articles is mainly assigned to traffickers and organised crime networks (46). The state is also called-out for the role it played by not creating and implementing adequate laws, not doing enough policing, and for corruption. Responsibility for solving the problem is linked to the police (34) who needs to do more to eradicate prostitution and identify human trafficking, and policy makers (22) who ought to be drafting more effective policies. Individual articles argue that the community, NGOs, inspectorates, and courts can do more to aid the fight against human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Though common, the prostitution frame is 'imported' from foreign media, i.e. a majority of texts are articles translated or adapted from foreign news portals and agencies. As Graph 20 and Graph 21 illustrate, human trafficking as a prostitution related issue became a more prominent topic in articles focusing on the situation in Serbia only in 2014. Before that, there was hardly any talk about links between these two phenomena in the domestic context.

Graph 20 and 21: Number of annual prostitution-framed publications regarding Serbia and other countries.



Two events are relevant for the consideration of the 2014 and 2015 spike in articles focusing on the situation in Serbia. The first factor that likely played a role in bringing the spotlight onto the prostitution and human trafficking correlation was a regional conference held in Zagreb at the end of 2013. The conference on human trafficking and prostitution called 'Swedish and Balkan experience' was sponsored by the Swedish institute and Swedish Embassy in the Republic of Croatia. Organisers sponsored Balkan journalists to attend (Krsmanović & Radović, 2013). The sample was inclusive of texts that attendee journalists produced after the conference. Analysis also shows an inclination towards supporting harsher prostitution regulation and the Swedish model that entails criminalisation of clients in articles produced after the event: 1 out of 9 articles that dealt with the situation in Serbia supported legalisation of prostitution, while others were advocating for stricter policy solutions. The second event happened at the end of the year, when a high profile case of elite prostitution was discovered. Salacious reporting of tabloid media, public shaming of one of the girls arrested, and covering up of the intelligence on powerful men involved as clients and organisers caused a notable public outrage at the time. Even though the women involved were not forced into or exploited in prostitution, the case was soon drawn into the trafficking debate. One of the members of the Socialist Party used the case controversy to advocate for legalisation of prostitution, relying on arguments of improving suppression of human trafficking, prevention of abuse by clients, and taxation on the sale of sex. However, responses to his campaign were mainly negative, with other politicians either condemning his endeavours to change prostitution regulation in the country or refusing to comment on the issue. The Vice President of the party publicly dissociated himself from the 'attempts to legalise exploitation of women' (M.M., 2015, January 5). It appears that the issue of prostitution remained a taboo for politicians even though the media's attention was more frequently drawn to the issue.

Positive attitudes towards legalisation of prostitution and the effects of such measure on human trafficking could be read in articles focusing on the situation in France, Germany, Italy and Macedonia, but only 9 reports in total propose legalisation as a solution that would help combat trafficking in human beings. The remaining texts label different policing and criminalisation of prostitution strategies as effective in eradicating human trafficking: stricter policing (27 articles), criminalising purchase of sex (6) and criminalising prostitution altogether (10). The other strategies include banning prostitution ads, increasing the minimum age of sex workers, segregating areas where prostitution is allowed, and ensuring brothel owners speak the same language as the sex workers employed.

The prevailing attitude in prostitution-framed articles is that sale of sex sparks human trafficking. For that reason, measures that discourage prostitution are promoted as effective anti-trafficking measures. Looking at how Swedish and Dutch/German models of prostitution regulation are represented reveals a similar sentiment. With few exceptions, media represent the Swedish model of criminalising clients as effective, whereas legalised prostitution in the Netherlands and Germany is seen as a facilitating factor in human trafficking operations. Journalistic opinion pieces on this topic are not found in the sample. However, biased reporting certainly is detectible – if an article is written in a pro-sex work tone, as a rule there will be one short paragraph at the end or no text at all suggesting that alternative positions exists. The same holds for articles written in line with abolitionists' ideas. Another issue identified is concerned with data used to back up claims. On both sides of the debate journalists use unnamed sources and vague phrases such as 'research has shown', 'reports have proven', 'experts say', 'data indicates', etc. The below quotation exemplifies this:

According to all available data, this model shows great success and is being adopted more and more in other European countries too. The result: street prostitution in Sweden is cut in half, and women can more easily leave the vicious circle of human trafficking, i.e. the world of coercion.

Milanović Hrašovec, 2015, January 8

Another example of journalistic bias is provided in the text box below. It involves a translated excerpt from a piece that gives an evaluation of positive and negative impacts of criminalisation of clients in relation to the human trafficking situation. It appears as if the author has asked two pundits with opposing views to enter a dialogue and argue their points in this section of the text. However, this dialogue was artificially constructed and favours the abolitionist position. Identifying this manipulation in the analysis was only possible because I was personally

interviewed for this article.⁷² I was asked by the journalist via email to answer the following questions:

1. Why would Swedish model and criminalization of clients not be applicable in Serbia (or would it be)?
2. Are there any local indicators of the extent to which prostitution is linked with human trafficking? They⁷³ say more than 95% of prostitutes identified were victims of human trafficking, and that the results of the legislation prove the solution was right.
3. General evaluation – can prostitution be a matter of choice, what is the general evaluation? Because they are very exclusive to this over there (they automatically give negative responses).

Sections that were edited by the journalist are highlighted. The text box below shows a part of the article written on the basis of the response to the first question, which is followed by the original statement I gave. For more details check the full text of the article (Teodorović, 2012, November 24), and email correspondence with the journalist that is included in the Appendix H.

Two opposing viewpoints will be contrasted below. One comes from Sweden and is presented by the national coordinator against prostitution and trafficking, Patrik Cederlöf, the other from Serbia, by the representative of organisation ASTRA, Elena Krsmanović.

No one denies the advantage and the breakthrough the (Swedish) law has brought when it comes to sparing sex workers from all types of criminal prosecutions, highlights Elena Krsmanović.

'We in ASTRA think that is very important. But on the other hand, punishing clients when it comes to human trafficking is something that needs to be and is part of our Criminal Code, paragraph 8, Article 388. Based on this provision a person who knew or could have known that somebody was a victim of human trafficking, and used the position of that person or helped others to do so will be punished. The law prescribes 6 months to 5 years imprisonment for this act.'

The response of Patrik Cederlöf:

⁷² This interview happened when I was working for a Serbian anti-trafficking organisation as a public relations manager.

⁷³ 'They' and 'there' refers to Sweden.

'If someone is a professional human trafficker, with high performance in that line of work, he will definitely not tell you if someone is a victim of trafficking or not. How can you expect that the client would ask something like that in the first place? I am sorry, but that is stupid. In theory, that sounds great, but in the practice it is impossible to expect that the client will be the one who will identify the person as a victim of trafficking. That is impossible'.

The bias here is evident in several aspects. First, the author gave advantage to Mr Cederlöf who was in the position to reply to my arguments, unlike me (I was neither aware that the concept of the article was to contrast our opinions, nor did I see the responses of Mr Cederlöf and have a chance to respond). Further, omitting crucial points I made and taking the statement out of context, made the opposing arguments appear stronger and more convincing. Thirdly, by editing my words, the author manipulated and misrepresented my attitude towards the issue, making it look more agreeable and supportive of the Swedish model than it really was. Saying 'no one denies the advantage and the breakthrough of the Swedish law' is quite different to 'One of the advantages of the Swedish law is', and particularly if parts where critique is provided were cut out. Also, another fabrication was accomplished by merging the end of one sentence with the beginning of another, making it sound as if ASTRA finds the advantage of Swedish law to be important, and not stressing the difference between trafficking for sexual exploitation and a voluntary career in sex work which is what I said (see text box below for the original statement, with the text that was omitted/manipulated highlighted). The same effect was accomplished by not including answers to questions 2 and 3 in the piece where I explicitly said independent and unbiased research remains to be done, and that question of choice needs to be central in distinguishing between the two phenomena.

One of the advantages of the Swedish law is the non-punishment of sex workers. However the Swedish model does not underline the distinction between sexual exploitation as a form of human trafficking and voluntary career in sex work, which we in Astra think is very important. On the first hand, punishing clients when it comes to human trafficking is something that needs to be and is part of our Criminal Code, paragraph 8, Article 388. Based on this provision a person who knew or could have known that somebody was a victim of human trafficking, and used the position of that person or helped others to do so will be punished. The law prescribes 6 months to 5 years imprisonment for this act. On the other, in the case of voluntary sex work, we do not understand why and how would sanctioning of clients be applicable in practice.

In the analysed articles, prostitution is frequently represented as evil in itself, an immoral cancer of society that needs to be eradicated. The condemnation charge is foremost directed towards sex workers, rather than people who organise/facilitate prostitution or the state that does little to eliminate prostitution-related push factors (e.g. poverty, gender discrimination, and unemployment). Tabloids label prostitution as 'shameful', 'indecent' and 'abnormal'. Sex workers are represented as wild and greedy, with several texts shaming poor women and young girls for selling sex for small amounts of money (as low as 10€), a pair of jeans, or just a sandwich. Frequently, too, substance abuse is highlighted as another trait sex workers should be blamed for. One of the tabloids taps into the nationalist rhetoric and stresses how prostitutes from Serbia have sex 'even with Albanians', 'not making any difference between them (and other clients), as long as they pay well' (Novosti.rs, 2015, March 8). Right after that sentence, the author warns that Kosovo is a human trafficking oasis, and presents a statement of a 'victim' sold five times, who claimed 'it is not that bad, because she is making lots of money, and her *owners* are satisfied as well' [emphasis added]. Instead of deconstructing stereotypes and changing public attitudes to ensure safety and protection of sex workers rights, articles like this extend such problematic moralistic condemnations and stigmatisation to women exploited in the industry. For a trafficking survivor a public image like that can have multiple negative implications. If still in a trafficking ring, they might be discouraged from seeking help. If on their way to recovery, they can be heavily stigmatised for having worked in the sex industry, albeit involuntarily. To emphasize the wrongness of prostitution, articles often include information on human trafficking without stressing these two phenomena are not the same, or list 'the most shocking' prostitution cases that all involve human trafficking but are named 'prostitution'. The terms 'prostitution', 'human trafficking' and 'white slavery' are used interchangeably.

Even though it is an open secret that military bases on Kosovo are one of the main destinations for prostitutes, police have not touched them yet. The reason is that trafficking in white slaves often involves customs officers and the police.

Press, (2012, July 30)

Visual representation of human trafficking in the analysed articles is concurrent. I have argued elsewhere that images illustrating articles on trafficking for sexual exploitation in Serbian media bank on two opposing tropes: the innocent victim and the immoral prostitute (Krsmanović, 2016). If we exclude more neutral images such as relevant locations and portraits of people interviewed (36 images), what is left are 6 images representing the innocent victim trope (see 5.3.3. for detailed analysis), and 55 portrayals of the unworthy prostitute. These images represent is an erotic spectacle of oversexualised female bodies, depersonalised and objectified parts of

womanly figures, as well as the play of lustful and greedy women who seduce men and take their money. What these images of tainted femininity achieve is to connect trafficking with the notion of a harlot. I believe violence against women who work or are exploited in the sex industry becomes normalised through constant reproduction of gender stereotypes – men as inherently violent and women as their natural (and somewhat deserving) victims. If a trafficking survivor assumes the form of an unworthy prostitute, it becomes easier for the reader to engage in victim blaming and distance oneself from the horrors and suffering that human trafficking entails. Other studies have confirmed that the belief that trafficked women are responsible for their situation is widespread in Serbia (Anđelković et al., 2011). What is curious is that research done outside of the Serbian context suggest trafficking discourse normally sticks to simple binaries of good (victims) and bad (traffickers), with little deviations from the ideal, innocent victim (Snajdr, 2013:238). In my previous analysis, I concluded that such significant incongruity calls for further questioning of the perception of women coerced into sex work in Serbian society and challenging of the deeply rooted patriarchal constructions that cling so firmly to the idea of ‘fallen women’ and the right to objectify, consume and discard their bodies (Krsmanović, 2016:154).

Examining the moral base behind texts in the prostitution frame also signals a great deal of

Slučajevi prostitucije koji su šokirali i policiju!

Autor: Miroslav | 20.10.2014 - 12:46:00h | [Komentara:](#)



Donosimo vam najšokantnije priče koje su podelili inspektori Odeljenja za javni red i mir beogradske policije.



Picture 5 – Source ALO.rs

cultural intolerance towards sex work and an inclination to deplore women. Eradicating prostitution is seen as having value in itself more often than it is linked to having positive effects on decreasing crimes like human trafficking. While eradication of prostitution dominates this frame, a significant portion of articles also highlights the imperative of protecting people from violence and abuse. However, the common thread is the great danger both phenomena represent, infusing thereby fear of trafficking among the readership. Here links to

organised crime are often mentioned, even though cases identified in Serbia mainly involve opportunistic individuals who engage in exploitation of others. Also Kosovo is used as a symbol of a criminal and moral abyss and point of no return for trafficked people.

Banking so heavily on moral purity and the idea that prostitution and trafficking are somehow correlated to the corruption of women, the prostitution frame in Serbian media promotes abolitionist values and spreads moral panics about trafficking to advocate for the eradication of prostitution. I find that culturally-embedded beliefs and motives from national folklore strongly influence such framing and corresponding readings of analysed texts. Stressing the foreign nationality of traffickers where applicable (that is characteristic not only of the prostitution frame, but is evident in other frames too) is not only in line with stereotypical perception of the criminal act (see for instance Doezema, 2000), but also corresponds to motives from old folk poems and myths. The fear of Turks and Arabs taking local virgins and corrupting them can be traced back to the Ottoman era, or as Serbs call it the 'slavery under Turks'⁷⁴. In these stories, foreign men kidnap wives of Serbian noble men⁷⁵ or rule in terror, demanding a different virgin to be sent to their bed every night from the conquered villages⁷⁶. These poems are taught in primary and secondary schools throughout the country. Thus, a fear of foreign men taking Serbian women away is deeply rooted in the national consciousness. A very important element in these folk tales is the notion of national honour that is endangered by the foreign and Muslim occupier, and has to be restored. This happens when a Serbian husband manages to save his wife or a national hero slays the foreigner who abused local girls. It is, however interesting that while Serbian males are unanimously portrayed as heroic, moral characters, women are both virginal (they sacrifice their lives in order not to betray their husbands or families) and sinful (they accept their foreign lover and live with them in sin).

This shows how deeply embedded is the idea of a morally inferior woman who is weak, inclined to sin and in need of protection from a (morally superior) male figure. Cultural familiarity with these motives, and their modern reiteration in human trafficking narratives, makes alternative readings more unlikely. The prostitution-framed articles analysed here are not likely to challenge culturally rooted and patriarchy enhanced negative attitudes towards women, and women who engage in sex work particularly. This affects survivors of human trafficking who are being blamed

⁷⁴ The country was occupied by the Turkish Empire from the 14th until the 19th century, with some parts of the territory regaining independence only in early 20th century. This period is referred to as 'ropstvo pod Turcima', i.e. slavery under Turks in the Serbian language.

⁷⁵ See song 'Banović Strahinja' in Lakićević (2006: 61-82).

⁷⁶ See songs 'Bolani Dojčin' in Lakićević (2006: 131-139) and 'Marko Kraljević ukida svadbarinu' in Mitrović & Jovanović (2001: 134-141). Local fairy tales, such as 'Čardak ni na nebu ni na zemlji' have similar motives with foreign men metaphorically being represented by dragons and monsters.

for their own misfortune and whose reputation depends on them fitting the stereotype of an innocent victim of trafficking. What such framing is likely to reinforce are ideas supportive of eradication of prostitution and the assumption that establishing moral purity eliminates problems from society. Unbiased and conclusive research on links between prostitution and human trafficking in the sex industry remains to be done and an adequate legislative model found. Yet, it seems very unlikely the problem of sexual exploitation will be suppressed in a society in which misogyny, discrimination against women, feminisation of poverty, violence, and patriarchy are not uprooted.

5.3.3. Violence

Articles that framed human trafficking for sexual exploitation as a violence phenomenon account for 13% of the Serbian sample (36 articles). These texts focus on detailed, thick descriptions of the violence the exploited women had suffered. Human interest stories dominated the sample (25 articles). Problems that were identified in the violence-framed publications were the growing scope of human trafficking (22 texts evaluate on human trafficking for sexual exploitation being a major issue in a particular country), and vulnerability of women, girls or children to human trafficking (14 articles). All articles identify traffickers as the ones responsible for the problem, and rarely mention the responsibility of the negligent or corrupt state (3 articles) and the police (3 articles). The responsibility of solving the identified problems is assigned to the police and courts (81%), with some of the texts recognising the potential role of the social welfare system and community members. Individual texts mention the international community (in relation to trafficking in women by IS fighters) and NGOs. There is an equal distribution between texts that focus on Serbia and neighbouring countries (12 and 8 articles respectively) and other regions of the world (20 articles).⁷⁷ When it comes to trafficking outside of Serbia and the Balkans, stories published in Serbian online media originate from other sources, such as agencies and foreign media. In these texts, more attention is paid to the region of South and South East Asia, as well as the area affected by activities of ISIS fighters.

Little information on the phenomenon of trafficking, its causes and possible remedies is offered in these texts, which suggests awareness raising and promotion of cautionary measures are not among reasons these texts were written and published. An accent on violence was precisely what experts involved in fighting human trafficking recognised as a discrepancy between stories described in the media and the cases they encounter in practice. Namely, stories that go beyond

⁷⁷ Some articles deal with more than one area, which is why the sum of countries elaborated on is greater than the total number of violence-framed articles.

hard news and evaluate trafficking cases in more detail are recognised to rely heavily on evil trafficker-innocent victim stereotypes, sensationalism and violence. This is not what anti-trafficking practitioners often encounter in their practice. Even though similar scenarios were frequent in the 1990s and early 2000s, cases from more recent years usually involve opportunistic criminal individuals who use more subtle means of control, and victims who had more agency than it appears in the news. Yet, the interviewees from Serbia agreed that cases like this are less attractive to the media, and that more violent and brutal cases are overrepresented in the media. The ideal victim trope, identified in the violence-framed articles confirms this. Below I present a list of traits and conditions typical of this trope. The more of these the trafficked individual meets, closer she is to the victim ideal.

Before trafficking

- Minor (the younger the better)
- Poor
- Uneducated
- No family support (e.g. Abused or being sold by a parent)
- Well behaved individual with no history of drug abuse, criminality, deviancy, promiscuity and misconduct.
- Unaware of the potential illegality the job offer entails (e.g. When victim is being recruited to work in babysitting and ends up in prostitution)

During trafficking

- Betrayed by someone she trusted (e.g. a family member, loverboy trafficker)
- Taken to an unfamiliar place (e.g. different city, or a different state; ideally does not speak the language and cannot ask for help)
- Doesn't get paid (e.g. trafficker takes all the money the victim earns in prostitution so she is not 'stained' by the work she is forced to do)
- Beaten up
- Has limited mobility (e.g. locked up, driven and supervised by trafficker all the time, spied on by other victims who work for the trafficker, etc.)
- Continues to try to escape (despite the brutal consequences of previous flee attempts)
- Desperate and hopeless (e.g. broken, ashamed, scarred for her/his life)

After trafficking

- Health impaired (physical and mental health issue as a consequence of violence inflicted, forced drug/alcohol addictions)
- Remorseful (e.g. regrets being naïve and travelling abroad for work, appreciates life in poverty from before, would never repeat the same mistakes, etc.)
- Has no hope for the future

A victim that meets most of these conditions proves pitiful and pity-worthy. The clustering of innocent victim, evil trafficker and violence codes was identified in this part of the sample too (see 5.3.1). These stories are usually based on victims' testimonies - close to 70% of the texts classified within the frame rely on victims' confessions. Human interest stories typically engage readers as 'mediated witnesses' (Peelo, 2006) and invite them to identify with victims of crime. Hence, unsurprisingly, the moral base of the analysed subsample is helping people in affliction (33 articles). The imperative of punishing crime is highlighted much less (7 articles). This is contrary to other frames, where victims' voices are muted, trafficking is mostly spoken about by public officials and punishing crime is endorsed.

Many problems are encountered in the violence-framed texts. The very stereotypical representation of 'ideal victims' is one of them. Another troubling one is an absence of content that would contribute to better treatment of victims, awareness raising or any other kind of improvement in anti-trafficking. As most of the articles in this frame were based on mediated victims' confessions, a number of important questions need to be answered. First and foremost, should victims of human trafficking be interviewed by the media? What good would that bring them? Should victim aid service providers facilitate the contact between their clients and the media? How to ensure that media appearances and/or reporting do not jeopardize victims' wellbeing and recovery?

These questions were brought up in all the interviews conducted with AT professionals and journalists from Serbia. Their views were completely opposing. On the one hand journalists found that genuine stories of trafficking survivors are essential for good quality journalism on THB. One journalist even claimed that easier access to interviewing victims was the very reason trafficking was more frequently reported on (AS29). Justifying their position, they used arguments about how it is rewarding and empowering for the victim to share her experience and help prevent others like her falling victim to human trafficking. Nonetheless, analysis of the articles based on victims' stories shows that little attention is paid to awareness raising, and much more on sensationalistic, shocking depictions of violent acts they survived while trafficked.

In contrast, anti-trafficking professionals spoke of their poor experiences with journalists, as well as the little satisfaction victims get from collaborating with the media. For the victim, according to them, this often means re-living traumatic events and not understanding what the possible consequences might be (e.g. psychological hardships of recounting the traumatic events, being recognised by the public, being misrepresented in the media, being recognised by the trafficker, and the impact media reporting might have on the court proceedings). While some organisations do not facilitate contact between media and their clients, others claim they inform trafficked

individuals of possible implications, right to withdraw from the interview at any given moment, etc. They then pass their clients' contacts to the media if they agree to speak to them. Interviews also reveal that the police sometimes intervenes to prevent media from publishing harmful information:

When we have criminal charges raised in one city, media immediately call us. They want to know who the victim is and demand to speak to her. When they still manage to find their sources we then call local PR of the Ministry of Interior and tell them to call the media, to tell them they must not do that.

RM21

While it appears paternalistic to guard the victims from the media and essential to allow trafficking survivors to exercise their agency and decide whether or not to share their stories publicly, the concern remains that victims who speak to the media are not ready for that kind of exposure or are not able to predict how will it affect their lives until they are fully recovered. There are at least two major obstacles to having these conditions met. First, the system in Serbia has been proved flawed when it comes to supporting trafficking survivors and providing necessary assistance that would enable them to fully recover and decide whether or not they want to engage with the media. Second, victim recovery is a very lengthy process and the media want current stories. A day old story is hardly news, and one that happened years ago is considerably less likely to make it through topic selection. What analysis of articles presenting victims' stories between 2011 and 2015 suggests is that victims have little to gain from such portrayals. They are fixed in the role of the victim, their ability to recover and regain control of their lives is denied, and their suffering is used to better sell the news. On top of that, little attention is paid to victims' protection and rights in these articles. Most of the texts do not offer any solution which further accentuates the gravity of the human trafficking issue. Harsher policing, arrests and prosecutions are most commonly mentioned remedies, whereas strategies that involve helping victims are only mentioned 6 times. What this suggests is that in producing these articles keeping the best interest of the victim was hardly a priority. Interviews with experts from the Netherlands and Britain show that the question of whether or not victims should be interviewed is pertinent there as well.

The genuineness of human interest stories is also somewhat questionable. At least one of the stories represented as an authentic victim testimony is likely to be made up ('My mother sold me for 500 euros', (Talović, V, 2012, June 6)). The story (included in the sample) was published while I was working in anti-trafficking in Serbia. As the quote below illustrates, it is based on a trafficking scenario that combines elements of several known trafficking themed films: a girl was sold to a trafficker by her mother; rich clients come to the sex club with 'special requests' after which a girl

was found in a pool of blood; two sisters that were also exploited by same people tried to escape



Picture 6 – Source *novosti.rs*

and one of them was suffering from Stockholm syndrome and became the trafficker's right hand⁷⁸; the girl ending up re-trafficked to a place where girls were locked up in cages and allowed out only to eat and provide sexual services; she managed to escape from such a place hidden in the trunk of a truck driven by a client who falls in love with her. This article caused controversy in anti-trafficking

circles because no one involved was familiar with such a case and it was suspected that the story was made up by the journalist.

It is interesting that the anti-trafficking community was not alone in doubting the story's authenticity. People who read the article left comments in which they expressed their disbelief the story was authentic, recognizing the similarity with the film 'Sisters' and too many incredible twists. The same article uses stock images (see print screen above) that are not labelled as illustrations. Instead, it has the caption 'Refuge in the Safe House'. In such a way the reader is lead to believe that the woman photographed is in fact the victim that was interviewed. Her hiding her face, neutral location, as well as the fact that two different photographs of the same girl are included in the article all further reinforce the illusion.

Compared to other frames, the number of images used within the violence frame that are more neutral (e.g. images of locations and photographs of people interviewed) is somewhat greater (16 out of 50 images). The dichotomous representation of trafficked women as whores and victims is proportionate with 12 and 10 portrayals respectively. Having the visual trope of a whore in articles that portray innocent victims is contradictory and might send a confusing message, or further reinforce the stereotype that trafficked women are of loose morality and are to be blamed for the situation they find themselves in.

⁷⁸ This is the plot of the most famous film on THB in Serbia, called 'Sisters'

Studies that measure the impact of multimedia content on online news readers suggest visual materials are particularly powerful psychological cues that positively affect readers' ability to memorise the information presented in the news (see for example Sundar, 2000). Culturally-embedded fears of women's liberation, female sexuality, moral purity, and erotic obsessions play a role in both selection and interpretation of these images. On the other hand, texts that include visual illustrations matching the victim trope further reinforce ideas of a world that is dangerous for women, female 'natural' susceptibility to (sexual) violence by men, and a consequential need for their protection. Stereotypical visualisation of women who have been trafficked strengthens cultural attitudes about behaviour that women should not engage in if they wish to remain safe: work in prostitution, leave home, go abroad for work, travel alone, etc.

Research into the effects of photographs on selective news reading shows people are more likely to choose to read stories with victimization depictions and threatening images, as well as to spend more time on reading those news stories compared to others (e.g. Knobloch et al, 2003 and Zillmann et al, 2001). The victim trope strips women of their agency and immobilizes them in a position of helplessness. When depicted like victims, women are either shown alone (crying, hiding, sitting in foetal position) or as they are attacked by a male figure. The latter group of images is interesting because it sometimes invites the reader to participate in the violent spectacle as a witness – the frightened victim stares straight at the camera so that it appears that her gaze is directed at the reader. Thereby, the spectator becomes complicit. Yet, this does not necessarily mean the

reader will develop compassion for the victim. Susan Sontag (1977:15) warned that images of other people's suffering do not necessarily strengthen viewers' ability to be compassionate, and that constant repetition of such imagery could actually cancel out the shock effect and numb feelings of empathy.

14. 03. 2013.

Silovao maloletnicu 90 puta za dva dana!

Britanski centar za socijalnu pravdu otkrio je zastrašujući slučaj maloletne devojke koja je silovana čak 90 puta tokom jednog vikenda



Picture 7 – Source pressonline.rs

5.3.4. Migration

The migration frame was not that common in the Serbian online media during the observed period. Over the course of five years, trafficking for sexual exploitation was framed as a migration issue in 4% of articles (12 pieces). Interviews with anti-trafficking professionals in the country reveal that there might be a political reason to avoid framing the issue as a migration-related one. Namely, non-state actors interviewed for this study testify that the political will to suppress human trafficking varied over the last two decades, and was directly related with migration control efforts. The most recent peak of the will to tackle trafficking happened in 2009, when there was pressure from the EU to demonstrate that Serbia can control its borders and fight cross-border crime. Success of the visa liberalisation process was dependant on this performance, so the government introduced stricter legislation (see 5.1.) and adopted the National Action Plan for Combating Human Trafficking (Official Gazette of RS, 35/09) in April 2009.

Ever since then, the political will to tackle human trafficking has been decreasing. In the wake of the refugee crisis, the EU now expects an adequate response to unprecedented flows of irregular migration from Serbia as an accession candidate country. However, whereas the government is trying hard to keep a semblance of protecting the migrants and facilitating their safe movement through the country, local practitioners record little action directed towards addressing migrants' needs and their vulnerability to human trafficking.

I think human trafficking is not a hot topic any more. It's been receiving some attention recently, but it is being brought up in relation to migration crisis and vulnerability of migrants to exploitation in trafficking rings. Even though we have not seen a single migrant who became a victim of human trafficking so far, that's how they talk about it. Not so much representatives of our government. It is rather Europe that insists that migration gets controlled in all the countries and that fighting human trafficking has to be among state political priorities. But, I do not see our government dealing with this issue or treating it as a priority. I think human trafficking is really politically irrelevant here and thus also irrelevant for the media.

AK1

This was confirmed by the findings of content analysis that show that articles that deal with migrants' vulnerability to human trafficking are in fact agency news from Western European countries that were translated and published on Serbian news websites.

There are two topics that articles that fit the migration frame focus on. The first concerns specific countries that are being affected by routes of human trafficking. Five articles that talk about such topics are identified in the sample – three focus on Serbia, whereas the other two deal with

trafficking from Mexico City to the United States and from Syria to Arab countries respectively. Texts that focus on the local area position Serbia as transit (2), source (2), and destination country (1) for victims of human trafficking⁷⁹. The language used to describe the situation is rather sensationalistic, with the role of Serbia typically overemphasized. For instance, a guess that a sex trafficking victim from Nigeria that was murdered in Italy could have passed through the territory of Serbia on route from Nigeria to Italy lead to an article titled 'Serbia in the epicentre of world's prostitution' (Vlahović, A., 2012, March 13) being written. The responsibility for tackling the issue of human trafficking in these articles is solely placed on the state actors, mainly the police. On the other hand, the responsibility for causing the problem is assigned to individual traffickers and criminal networks. Critical texts that would link trafficking occurrence with the systemic failures in protecting citizens and migrants from human trafficking, addressing poverty, discrimination, armed conflicts, and other root-causes of trafficking are missing from the sample. Solutions to the problems thematised that were suggested in some of the articles suggest the emphasis should be placed on prosecuting traffickers and imposing stricter migration control. Involvement of the local and international community was also mentioned as a way to compensate for inadequacies of state responses.



Titles from two articles: 'Shocking discovery in Italy: Serbia in the epicentre of world's prostitution' (left) and 'Alarming: They are taking slaves to West through Serbia' (right).

The other group of articles is focused on stories that claim current migration flows spark human trafficking. In total there were 7 articles sending this message. Four focused on migration control measures introduced in foreign countries to prevent trafficking of migrants in the sex industry. Banning visas for foreign/non-EU strippers was in focus in articles on Canada (2) and Switzerland (1) respectively, whereas an article on Denmark called for alternative measures that would discourage involvement of foreign sex workers in prostitution in the country⁸⁰. Trafficking for

⁷⁹ The first article represents Serbia as a transit country for victims exploited in the sex industry in Western Europe. The second does the same, but highlights that the country is also a source of victims. The third article talks about Serbia being a source and destination country for victims of human trafficking.

⁸⁰ Danish men were invited not to visit foreign sex workers and thus contribute to human trafficking combating efforts. No customers would mean no money for people who sell sex, which could potentially motivate foreigners involved in the industry to leave Denmark and act as deterrence to migrant sex workers who gravitate towards the North of Europe.

sexual exploitation is represented in these articles as a problem that is caused by presence of the ethnic other in the sex industry. Choucri (2002) evaluates on migrants being perceived as a source of social trouble. All four articles explicitly mention the category of Eastern European women as being particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation in human trafficking rings, reiterating thus the myth of white slavery that was successfully used to justify migration control ever since the 19th century (see De Villiers, 2016, Attwood, 2016, O'Connell Davidson, 2010, Weitzer, 2007, Hallgrimsdottir et al, 2006).

These articles see naïve migrants and evil traffickers as the ones responsible for the problem, and position the state as the one responsible for handling it. Banking on the moral imperative of helping people in affliction, these articles offer migration control as a measure intended to protect migrants from exploitation. None of the texts offer a critical insight into the potential impact of such measures on migrants' lives, nor do they question whether such solutions would drive more human trafficking, abuse, and exploitation by making all foreign sex workers and entertainers illegal and thus dependent on job opportunities in the black market that is harder to control. Sources used in these articles are government officials who promote the policy, and only half of the articles consider opinions of people close to the sex industry. When mentioned, their opinions do not have a prominent position, but rather come down to one or two lines at the end of the text.

The remaining three articles in the group that see the problem in migration sparking human trafficking rates are describing how migrants and refugees are vulnerable to trafficking for sexual exploitation. Whereas problem solving remains represented as the responsibility of the state, these articles blame only traffickers and criminal networks for the existence of the problem. Unlike women exploited in the sex industry, refugees are not blamed for their naivety, greediness or any other trait that could have contributed to their misfortune in the said articles. However, they are dehumanized and silenced, represented as passive objects of great calamity. Photographs that portray refugees and migrants play an important part in this dehumanisation, as they present people cramped in tight spaces like animals, or show shadows rather than people, thereby accentuating their ghost-like nature.

Solutions offered in the two text are rather vague and suggest migration should be better managed, anti-trafficking efforts should be increased, together with attempts to assist and protect migrant population. By using the vulnerability of migrants to re-establish the need for strict migration management in the midst of a humanitarian crisis, these texts contribute to the grouping of all types of migrants into a single repressive policing scheme. An attempt to

demonstrate this will be made in Chapter 6 that deals with media framing of trafficking in the UK, because the greater number of texts in the British sample allows for a better illustration.

Visual illustrations included in articles show little difference to those discussed in previous sub-chapters. Images of provocatively dressed women working in the sex industry, soliciting customers in the street, stripping and dancing on the pole, or lined up for selection dominate the articles (9 out of 18 images). Four images represent women and girls as victims, one of which is sexualised and objectified, a second subjected to violence in the image, and the remaining two show victims in despair. There are also three photographs that portray refugees. They are always dehumanised in the portrayals, photographed from behind or in the shadows, in worn-out clothes, filthy surroundings, and cramped spaces. These anonymised characters are fixed in the category of the 'other' – an unwanted intruder into our space who introduces filth, backwardness, and problems in our otherwise ideal world. Similar can be said about the images of sex workers, who are also photographed from behind, or framed in such a way that their heads are not visible in the shots.

As with all the photos that illustrate stories on human trafficking for sexual exploitation, one can argue that these techniques are only employed to anonymise the people portrayed (be they models or actual refugees/victims of human trafficking) and prevent them being recognised as victims by the members of the public. Nonetheless, that seems unlikely for a number of reasons. Firstly, the media literacy of people consuming the news online should be sufficiently high to



recognise stock images are staged, and if not, the caption 'illustration' is suggestive enough. If anonymisation was the only goal, less stigmatising alternatives are available in the stock; yet, the graphic editors typically go for either hypersexualised or hyper-victimised representations of trafficking people.

No articles that expand on confusion of human

Picture 8 - Source srbijadanas.com

trafficking and human smuggling and consequences thereof were identified in the Serbian sample. Even though the confusion between the terms did not emerge as a subject of the articles, it was evident in journalistic writing. In this regard, the article that portrays trafficking of Syrian women in Arab countries is interesting for analysis. It demonstrates that the journalist who produced the piece did not understand the difference between human trafficking for sexual exploitation and different strategies migrants engage in to escape wars, improve their chances in life, and reach desired destinations. Furthermore, it displays a strong paternalistic tone, leaving no space for cultural relativism and morally condemning non-Western cultural practices. The article 'Brutal Exchange: A Girl for Humanitarian Aid' deals with short-term arranged marriages between young Syrian women and Arab men that used to be organised even before the conflicts in the area emerged. The author recognises the arranged marriages as a choice and a survival strategy, yet labels the practice as 'disgusting trafficking in the most beautiful national possession – women'. Here, the choice of words testifies not only to the author's subjective views and misunderstanding of the concept of human trafficking, but also of patriarchal understandings that equate women with possessions and define their behaviour as a matter of national honour. Further in the text, the author quotes UNHCR representative Andrew Harper saying that the majority of refugees are women and children, many of whom are not used to working, which is why they opt for 'sex for survival' (M.Z.R., 2013, May 10). Once again, the author shows readiness to judge the ethnic other, making it seem like the exploitation of refugees is a consequence of their laziness and refusal to work, and not structural pressures that make people expose themselves to various risks of abuse and exploitation in the attempt to survive and improve their livelihood. Media failure to differentiate between human trafficking and human smuggling is manifested in visual illustrations that accompany analysed articles, where images of predominantly male smuggled migrants illustrate pieces that focus on vulnerability of migrant women to sexual exploitation.

The misunderstanding of trafficking that was illustrated in the analysis confirms concerns about the lack of expertise of media professionals that was voiced in the conducted interviews as well.

I was recently contacted through email by a journalist to provide a comment on a migrant smuggling case that potentially involved human trafficking. When it was proved that there was no exploitation involved, the journalist called and asked if I can simply change the word trafficking for smuggling in the questions she sent and forward the answers to her. There was no understanding on her part that we as an organisation have human trafficking expertise and are not dealing with human smuggling; there was no understanding that these are two completely different phenomena. And that is very

common with journalists today – they don't differentiate, everything is the same to them. Even serious, analytical media sometimes make the mistake.

AK1

The small number of the migration-framed articles in the analysed sample should be taken with caution. That is because the migration frame manifests itself in some of the articles that are



Picture 9 - Source *novosti.rs*

predominantly framed as prostitution, criminal justice, violence or human rights-related issues. Portrayal of victims' nationality is one of the indicators of such manifestations. In the case of Serbia, victims portrayed in the analysed articles are foreign nationals in 43% of cases. As demonstrated under sections 4.5

and 5.3.1, this percentage is much higher than the official statistics on victims identified in the country which suggest an average of 8% of foreign victims was recognised by the authorities⁸¹. This variation is too great to be explained by articles that cover cases of trafficking that occurred outside of the country, as 89% of texts published thematise local cases.

The migration frame was frequently manifested in articles that report on cases involving foreign victims. For instance, criminal justice articles that deal with the judicial aftermath of old cases that involve foreign victims show trafficking as a migration related phenomenon even though the trend has changed in recent years and most of the trafficking that occurs in Serbia involves domestic citizens (92% of identified victims in the observed period). Similarly, articles that frame trafficking as a prostitution-related phenomenon and state that victims are usually Russian, Ukrainian and Moldovan reiterate old stereotypes and reinforce the idea that trafficking occurs when one leaves the safety of her home country. Another example of frame overlaps is an article that deals with vulnerability of migrants to human trafficking, but also covers the problem of inadequate protection of their rights. Critics of the systemic violations of their rights by receiving states and lack of support available resemble human rights-framed articles in content.

⁸¹ This calculation is made based on the available statistics on the nationality of sexually exploited victims of human trafficking that were identified in the country.

5.3.5. Human Rights

As outlined in the introductory and theoretical chapters of this thesis, the human rights discourse was prevalent in public talk on human trafficking throughout the 1990s. Since the Palermo Protocol negotiations onwards, the human rights approach slowly started shifting towards a human security approach, with increased efforts aimed at migration control, policing and criminalisation, all in order to address international organised crime believed to be the major cause of the problem. Kreig (2009) focused on scrutinising the European approach in fighting human trafficking and the extent to which it relies on border control, law enforcement and human rights. She concludes that anti-immigration measures are prioritised over humanitarian measures focused on victim protection. In such an environment talk about innocent people whose rights need to be protected becomes a discussion on guilty immigrants that need to be disposed of. Media discourse on human trafficking reflects this shift in focus: the most frequent dominant frame in the media is the criminal justice one (129 articles, i.e. 46%), and the least frequent one is the human rights frame (11 articles, i.e. 4%).

This research shows an interesting contradiction in opinions between media and anti-trafficking professionals when it comes to the human rights frame. While several Serbian journalists interviewed for this study claim that the rights of victims are an important topic for them, and an angle they prefer to cover, anti-trafficking pundits argue that media show no interest in covering stories from the human rights perspective. The quantitative data obtained in this research project seems to support the latter. This disagreement can be explained in part by the fact that journalist approached in this study have extended experience in covering the topic and a deep understanding of the human trafficking phenomenon. Usually, though, stories on trafficking published in daily media are handled by journalist who are not equally familiar with the topic. Yet, it is symptomatic that both sides recognize there are obstacles that might be discouraging human rights framing in the media. On the one hand, members of the anti-trafficking community recognise issues that arise within the human rights perspective are sometimes too abstract and difficult to pack in a newsy story. On the other, media professionals testify to twofold problems. First, the non-confrontational politics in the sector make people reluctant to criticise people they closely collaborate with publicly. Second, finding sources who will be open and critical is not impossible, but can have negative consequence for journalists because of the political pressures and government-imposed media control. With this in mind, the fact that only 11 articles in the course of 5 years discuss human trafficking for sexual exploitation from a human rights perspective becomes clearer.

Although not numerous, articles that fit this frame address a myriad of issues. Problems that are identified within this frame include inadequate assistance to victims of human trafficking and

systemic violations of their rights (7), limited access to justice and inefficacy of the judicial system (4), and stigmatisation and difficulties in the reintegration process (2). Typically, human rights-framed articles tend to expand on more than one problem faced by trafficking survivors after they escape the trafficking ring. However, the common thread in articles that are framed as a human rights issue are the systemic oversights when it comes to securing of victims of trafficking and giving them access to adequate assistance. The state, and judicial system in particular, are seen as major problem-causers. When it comes to securing assistance for victims, most texts focus on the failure to accommodate trafficked individuals in shelters. Other needs of victims and the failure to address them were not that commonly mentioned – only one text refers to inaccessibility of legal services and the need to protect victims’ rights to non-punishment, and another one mentions the importance of providing psychological support in the reintegration process. Tabloid media also report on the human rights perspective, but they do so in a problematic way that taps into the news value of sexual violence, raises moral panics, and fixates trafficking survivors in the roles of helpless victims who have little chance of recovery. This is best illustrated in the lead paragraph of one of the articles that is translated below.

Even if they manage to escape from the scum who used to pimp them, victims of human trafficking in Serbia, most frequently women who were systemically raped through prostitution on daily basis, don’t have much to hope for when rescued. The society which they come back to after the imprisonment is full of prejudices. The most common one is that they not only deserve but also ask for the abuse and battering. On the other hand, judiciary finds the most incredible mitigating circumstances to make guilt of the criminals relative and practically declares victims are the guilty ones.

Bednar, B. (2011, July 15)

While the author tries to raise awareness of victims’ rights and violations thereof, such as their secondary victimisation in court, he reiterates stereotypes that make the victim’s recovery process more difficult. Anti-trafficking professionals in the country report that such reporting style based on sensationalism is in direct conflict with what they are trying to accomplish through collaborating with the media, i.e. to draw attention to the problem, not individual victims and their suffering, and advocate for systemic solutions and policies that will protect rights of trafficking survivors.

Quite unanimously, these articles see the state as the one responsible for both causing the problems and solving them. Whereas some of the texts stick to more general formulations such as ‘the state does not do enough to assist victims of human trafficking’ or ‘Serbia needs to do a better job in protecting victims’, others specifically name the judiciary and policy makers as the

weakest links in the system. When it comes to judicial practice, two major issues arise – secondary victimisation of victims in courts (multiple testimonies, facing traffickers, discrimination by the court, judges involved in victim blaming, etc.) and an inadequate system of compensation for damages⁸². Texts that deal with poor judicial practice offer only solutions pertaining to compensation of damages. Seizure of assets from traffickers, establishment of a compensation fund, and adoption of a legal act that would enable victims to get compensation in criminal proceedings are listed as solutions to the problem that need to be implemented in the country. Interestingly, though, no solutions are offered in articles that criticise the judiciary for being slow and ineffective, having low rates of successful prosecutions against traffickers, and stigmatizing, victimising and not protecting victims who take part in criminal proceedings as witnesses. This could be due to the normalisation of slow, corrupt and ineffective court work that the country has struggled with for decades. In contrast, compensation for damages is a new topic, and articles in the sample appeared around the time when the first ever compensation was awarded to a trafficking survivor in the country. At that time a local NGO ASTRA started implementing a campaign to lobby for the establishment of a more effective system and worked to engage the media in their advocacy efforts. Within the context of journalistic writing on access to justice, it is important to note that one of the articles deals with the question of whether or not a convicted human trafficker had a fair trial and was rightfully convicted⁸³, whereas the rest of the texts talk about the numerous obstacles that victims face when trying to access justice.

As many communications scholars have warned, political pressures on the media in Serbia are strong which makes them very reluctant to monitor the work of state organs and be critical (see for instance Banjac et al. 2016, Matić, 2013, 2012, Milojević & Ugrinić, 2011). That can potentially explain why a focus on victims' rights is not that common in the media as the human rights approach requires addressing the flows of the system and critically assessing whether the state is doing enough to ensure that these rights are respected. Another factor is the political focus on criminalisation that was previously addressed in this chapter. In any case, inert media pose a great problem to fighting human trafficking, not only because of their poor awareness-raising potential, but also the greater inclination to stereotype reproduction and hesitancy in condemning the flaws

⁸² At the moment, Serbia does not have a specialised fund for compensation of damages of trafficking victims, nor is there a legal framework in place that would ensure that victims get awarded with reparations during the criminal proceedings. Instead, victims are referred to litigation, a long and costly process most victims cannot afford.

⁸³ The article was written within the EU financed project 'Is justice available to citizens' intended to enhance freedom of the media in Serbia. The article is based on an interview with the woman convicted of trafficking and court files demonstrating that only one of the girls involved in prostitution testified against the accused, whereas all the others said they were involved in prostitution voluntarily. The accused also did not deny involvement in mediating prostitution, but maintained her innocence with regards to recruitment for human trafficking for sexual exploitation. See Blic (2014, November 7).

of the system and calling for its improvement. Serbian media professionals who were interviewed for this research unanimously testify to political and economic pressures, auto-censorship, and fear (mainly for their jobs and livelihoods, but some also mention safety) that they experience in their daily work. The current situation regarding press freedom is compared to the notorious censorship imposed by Milošević in the 1990s. A journalist who has been dealing with the topic of human trafficking for almost two decades and runs a show focused on social injustices, human rights, and criticism of the state experienced problems in relation to her work then, and is having similar experiences now. Just one year before we spoke (the interview took place in summer 2015), the journalist who works for the Serbian public broadcaster received a call from politically active editorial board and was threatened with the show's cancellation because topics she chose are 'too difficult'. The reaction, she confirms, comes from the fact that the human rights approach was always married to criticising the state for not protecting and violating human rights of its citizens and others who find themselves in Serbia.

Whereas the majority of texts are focused on human rights issues pertaining to human trafficking in Serbia, two of the texts focused on the failure to protect victims in the neighbouring Bosnia, one dealt with the same issue in the US, and one dealt with systemic exploitation in programs for 'recovery from prostitution' that victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation had to undergo in Cambodia. To escape human trafficking, they had to agree to take part in these governmental programs that were supposedly designed to develop other skills and help them exit the world of prostitution. However, this education was just a façade for exploitative, poorly paid labour in local sweetshops. The moral base of the articles, regardless of the region covered, was that of helping people in affliction and ensuring that human rights are protected. Yet, the two articles in the sample that rely on the State Department's TIP report⁸⁴ for information and copy its rhetoric, also stress crime fighting and addressing the immoral behaviour (crime) as an obligation.

Improving the situation regarding the respect of human rights depends largely on the financial aspect. This is visible from the solutions offered within this dominant frame – 6 of the 11 articles mention allocating funds for victim assistance as a necessary step, and an additional 2 talk about specific funds being made available to trafficking survivors to provide compensation for damages. In addition to that, 2 articles propose confiscation of assets from human traffickers and using the money to support victims as a solution. Improvement of legislative measures is mentioned in

⁸⁴ Every year the US State Department issues The Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report that measures progress in suppressing human trafficking made by countries around the globe. The report is considered to be the principal diplomatic tool used by the US to influence foreign governments and encourage their involvement in prosecution, victim protection and prevention of human trafficking.

relation to compensation (3), harsher punishments of traffickers (2) – even though it was not explained how this would lead to better protection of victims' rights, and as general requirement to harmonise legislation at state level that would lead towards better protection of victims (1). Amelioration of the court practice that involves both eradication of all practices that lead to secondary victimisation and establishing an enhanced judicial efficacy is an implied solution to some of the problems mentioned, but as previously stated, concrete steps that could bring about this change are not listed.

Compared to other dominant frames, there might be a slightly greater inclination towards using non-stereotypical images in illustrating articles on human trafficking, but as the number of articles in this dominant frame is much smaller than others, it is hard to claim with certainty. These illustrations include photographs of people interviewed for the piece (e.g. an NGO representative, speakers at anti-trafficking conference, and a woman teaching a class) or materials that were used as information sources for the article (front page of the report published on trafficking and anonymised court case files). However, stock images used to illustrate the stories are equally susceptible to stereotypical representation of trafficking survivors that come down either to the victim trope or the prostitute one.

The analysis of online news on human trafficking showed that media rarely deal with their own role in suppressing human trafficking and shaping the environment in which victims of human trafficking go through the process of recovery. One such example, nevertheless, is found among the human rights articles:

Cannibalism that victims of human trafficking face in the media is not too different to the one they experienced while captured. In a manic pursuit for exclusivity, journalist of RTS called the Shelter for victims of human trafficking and asked to be put in contact with victims who would appear in his show. The girls from the shelter were promised their identity was to be protected and to receive a payment for their participation in the show. One of the girls agreed, and shared her horrifying experience in the show. She, of course, never received money for that was promised to her. Yet, what is worse is that (...) she was filmed up close and her face and figure were visibly shown. As no one in her family knew what she went through and that she was a victim of human trafficking, the victim went through some deeply traumatising experience with her family after the show that did not hide her identity well enough was broadcasted.

Bednar, B. (2011, July 15)

Whilst critical reflection on media reporting in the above-mentioned article is commendable, the same text exudes sensationalism and deceives the reader by manipulating the facts about the case. This is all visible once the text is compared to the source of information the journalist used to write the article.⁸⁵ This, as author puts it, “NGO ASTRA report” is a publication titled ‘Human Trafficking in Serbia – Report for the Period 2000 - 2010’ by Anđelković, et al. (2011) and published by the NGO ASTRA. Indeed, it includes a case study about a victim who agreed to be filmed for a TV show, whose identity was not hidden sufficiently well and who faced numerous difficulties following the broadcast of the show (Anđelković, 2011: 190-191). The below image shows the case representation as it is in the report. I have highlighted the text to show the information that was misrepresented in the article.

Case study from ASTRA’s report is represented in the text box below (highlights added).

In 2003, a journalist preparing a story about human trafficking for Serbian national television RTS contacted the Coordinator of the Shelter for Trafficking Victims in Belgrade, asking her to provide him contact with the victims and their appearance in the story. The girls who lived in the Shelter were informed about the details pertaining to the shooting, including that their identity would be protected and that their participation would be paid. One of the girls agreed and told to the camera how she had ended up in the trafficking chain, about her staying in one Western European country and how she had managed to run away from the traffickers. **She received promised amount of money for participating in the show.** However, what was not explained to the girl are negative consequences that appearance in the media could bring in the context of serious trauma experience. It is important to stress that none of the members of her family knew what happened to her during her staying aboard. **In the show, she was shot from close distance, so that although her face could not be seen, her figure was clearly visible.** The final version of the broadcast was cleared by Shelter’s Coordinator and by not the girl. The girl’s grandmother watched this show and recognized her by her coat and by the way she walked. What came about was very difficult and unpleasant and certainly traumatizing for the girl, especially bearing in mind that a short time before that she had managed to run away from exploitation and that at the time of airing the story she was a witness in the proceedings against the trafficker. In a very poor psychological shape, she contacted ASTRA, asking for support in this situation. ASTRA intervened with the director of this documentary, asking him to put right this overlook, which was subsequently done for future broadcasting.

ASTRA Database, ID no. 471

Comparison of the two texts is indicative of sensationalism of the press that not only pertains to the language used (e.g. ‘cannibalism’, ‘manic pursuit for exclusivity’), but also leaving out details (such as the fact that the authors had sent the broadcast for clearance to the coordinator of the Shelter who granted it, making this omission one for which the media share the responsibility with the system), and intentionally changing the information to make the story more compelling (saying that the victim ‘of course’ never received the money, when in fact she did; or emphasizing

⁸⁵ ASTRA’s report is indicated as the source of information in the article itself.

that both the face and the figure of the victim were shown in the broadcast, whereas only the latter was in fact visible).

5.4. Chapter Summary

Journalists reporting on human trafficking in Serbia seem to adhere to the same stereotypes, emphasizing the trope of an innocent victim, over-representing foreign victims and foreign traffickers, resorting to sensationalism and creating misleading spectacles of violence that sell well. This situation is largely conditioned by the poor conditions media outlets face – scarcity of money and resources and an abundance of political and economic pressures and censorship. Much of the reporting is case driven and based on agency news and police press releases. In general, there was a lack of media interest in the topic in the observed period, and trafficking was also treated as a low priority issue on the government's agenda.

The sample is characterised by a severe lack of analytical pieces and articles that critically respond to anti-trafficking measures and mechanism of victim support in the country. The criminal justice and prostitution frame dominate the sample. Compared to the other two countries, Serbian media reports are more frequently focused on violence. The presence of victim blaming and tolerance for violence against women (especially women judged as immoral) in the sample is alarming. This is linked to patriarchal cultural patterns that are deeply rooted in the society. A worrying variety of malpractices was discovered – from fabricated news stories, to journalistic practices that jeopardise victims' safety, and corrupt officials leaking information to the press to influence outcomes of court proceedings.

CHAPTER 6 - MEDIA FRAMING OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

6.1. Trafficking in Human Beings in the United Kingdom

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is one of the wealthiest and most developed countries in Europe. As such, it has traditionally been perceived as a destination country for victims of human trafficking. Research into trafficking routes and official reports issued by the state authorities suggest a high number of victims from Africa, China and South-East Asia, and Central and Eastern Europe (Marsh et al. 2012). It also suggests victims exploited in the United Kingdom often transit through other Western European countries, such as France, Belgium, and the Netherlands (ibid). Increasingly, however, the authorities in the UK have also started recognizing domestic minor citizens as a group vulnerable to trafficking for sexual exploitation. Apart from the sex industry, identified victims have been mainly exploited through forced labour, forced criminality, and domestic servitude (NRM, 2012).

For a long time, there was no unique law against human trafficking in the UK and related crimes were prosecuted under a wider assortment of legislation. The law that first recognised the criminal act of traffic in prostitution was the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act of 2002 (Chapter 41, Section 145), that was replaced a year later, by the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Chapter 42, Section 57-59) in England and Wales, and the Criminal Justice Act 2003 (Section 22) in Scotland. Other forms of trafficking were recognized in 2004, with the adoption of The Asylum and Immigration Act (Chapter 19, Section 4-5) that introduced the offence of trafficking of persons for non-sexual exploitation (Muraszkiewicz et al. 2014). The next legal development occurred in 2009, when the government passed the Coroners and Justice Act that criminalised holding a person in slavery or servitude or requiring a person to perform forced or compulsory labour (Section 71). This Act was enforced in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The initial legislative acts were criticized for reducing the complexities of human trafficking to the crime of illegal border crossing, providing an excuse for ever-growing securitisation of public and private life, fostering selectivity when it comes to victims' protection, and preserving the neoliberal system that exploits labour of gendered and racialized trafficked 'others' (Sharapov, 2017).

Finally, at the end of summer of 2013, the government announced plans to introduce the Modern Slavery Bill with the aim of consolidating all the offences into one Act and improving the legal response to human trafficking and modern slavery. In 2015 the Modern Slavery Act was enacted in England and Wales. In the same year, the Human Trafficking and Exploitation Bill was passed in Scotland and the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act was introduced to the legislation in the Northern Ireland. All three legislative acts regulate

slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour offences and human trafficking. In all three countries it is now possible to serve a sentence of life imprisonment for the offence of human trafficking.⁸⁶

Even though legal acts that regulate human trafficking now exist in all three UK jurisdictions, there are differences in the way the offence of human trafficking is treated by the law across the country, which may have an impact on differing prosecution rates and sentencing policies in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Beddoe and Brotherton (2016) compared the three acts in detail. Here, the chapter focuses on illustrating the new legislative conceptualisation of human trafficking and summarising the thus far identified advantages and disadvantages of the legislation.

Section 2 of the Modern Slavery Act defines human trafficking as follows:

Human trafficking

- (1) A person commits an offence if the person arranges or facilitates the travel of another person (“V”) with a view to V being exploited.
 - (2) It is irrelevant whether V consents to the travel (whether V is an adult or a child).
 - (3) A person may in particular arrange or facilitate V’s travel by recruiting V, transporting or transferring V, harbouring or receiving V, or transferring or exchanging control over V.
 - (4) A person arranges or facilitates V’s travel with a view to V being exploited only if-
 - (a) the person intends to exploit V (in any part of the world) during or after the travel, or
 - (b) the person knows or ought to know that another person is likely to exploit V (in any part of the world) during or after the travel.
 - (5) “Travel” means -
 - (a) arriving in, or entering, any country,
 - (b) departing from any country,
 - (c) travelling within any country.
 - (6) A person who is a UK national commits an offence under this section regardless of-
 - (a) where the arranging or facilitating takes place, or
 - (b) where the travel takes place.
 - (7) A person who is not a UK national commits an offence under this section if -
 - (a) any part of the arranging or facilitating takes place in the United Kingdom, or
-

⁸⁶ In England and Wales life imprisonment is possible only if victims were kidnapped or falsely imprisoned. If not, the maximum sentence is 10 years imprisonment. In Scotland and Northern Ireland, there are no such limitations and the court may sentence a person to life imprisonment regardless of the method of recruitment.

(b) the travel consists of arrival in or entry into, departure from, or travel within, the United Kingdom.

Next to trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, the Modern Slavery Act (2015, Section 3) recognizes exploitation through removal of organs, securing services by force, threats and deception, and securing services from children and vulnerable persons.

The definition of human trafficking included in English and Welsh and Northern Irish law moves away from the internationally recognized definition in the Palermo Protocol, and puts additional emphasis on 'travel' as a central element of the offence of human trafficking. For that reason, the new definition could potentially present a challenge in effectively prosecuting cases where the movement of a victim is difficult to prove (Beddoe & Brotherton, 2016). The new legislative developments in the UK were welcomed by anti-trafficking professionals and praised for consolidating the existing slavery and trafficking offences into a single Act, its comprehensive approach against human trafficking, broadening the role of anti-slavery commissioner, addressing the role of businesses and taking measures to eradicate use of slave labour in the supply chains of UK-based companies, recognizing victims' right to non-punishment, establishing the role of child trafficking advocates in order to better protect trafficked children, increasing penalties, and introducing civil penalties designed to prevent future offences. Nonetheless, many concerns were raised within the anti-trafficking community as well.

The legal terminological shift from human trafficking to modern slavery was contested. For instance, in her book 'Modern Slavery: The Margins of Freedom', Julia O'Connell Davidson (2015) identified several problems linked to the term 'modern slavery', including merging disparate phenomena into one umbrella term, the term having an emotive and moral charge, and the emotive potential of the term being used to justify policy responses that overlook inequalities, and the political and economic conditions that anti-trafficking efforts need to address. Dottridge (2017) contested the term for having imperialist and racist undertones, trivialising historical slavery and reducing responsibility for it on the one hand, and encouraging the divide between the 'civilised' countries and the 'uncivilised' countries that 'tolerate' slavery. This term, as others have noticed before (Kempadoo, 2015, Quirk & Richardson, 2009) is deeply rooted in the notion of superiority of nations that are reputed as leaders in suppressing modern slavery (UK and US mainly), nations that have historically pushed for imperialist and racist agendas to protect their own political interests.

On a more practical note, legal experts interviewed for this study warned that the term modern slavery can be misleading and shift the focus towards the most extreme cases that resemble historical slavery, which is not true for the majority of human trafficking cases encountered in the legal practice in Great Britain (YK45). Scholars who studied UK law in particular, have pointed out

that the law is not adequately protecting victims' rights (e.g. the Act did not provide overseas domestic workers with the right to change their employers, making them more dependent on potentially exploitative employers (see Fudge and Strauss, 2017)). Finally, the new laws adopted in the United Kingdom have not introduced effective data collection on human trafficking or a robust monitoring framework that would help keep track of the implementation and impact of the legislation (Beddoe & Brotherton, 2016).

When it comes to international treaties on human trafficking, the United Kingdom has signed and ratified the UN Convention against Transnational Crime and the Palermo Protocol in 2006, and the CoE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings in 2008 (entered into force a year later). In addition, the European Parliament Directive 2011/36/EU on prevention and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA applies to the UK since 2011.

In accordance with the UK's obligations under the CoE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, the government established the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) in 2009. Identification of victims of human trafficking through the NRM has two phases – the preliminary one when 'reasonable grounds' are found that an individual was likely trafficked for exploitation, and the final decision based on 'conclusive grounds' that triggers victim protection measures. NRM enables relevant actors, including the police, Border Force, Home Office, local authorities, and NGOs to share information on potential victims of human trafficking and secure access to assistance for survivors of human trafficking and modern slavery (Home Office, 2016). The mechanism serves for data collection about the victims, and warrants a 45 day reflection and recovery period for identified victims. Following the adoption of the Modern Slavery Act, two pilot programs are underway in the police force areas of West Yorkshire and the South West⁸⁷, introducing changes to the operational functioning of the NRM outlined in the Home Office NRM Pilots: SSL Guidance (2015). The current NRM has been criticized for failing to apply the trafficking definition correctly and understand what trafficking entails, lack of training, lack of coordination between agencies, unfamiliarity with victim identification techniques, and management issues (ATMG Report, 2010). Additional concerns were raised about adequacy of victims' protection:

'...the research suggests that the NRM put too much emphasis on issues concerning immigration status rather than the fact that the individuals whose cases were the subject of referrals were potentially victims of crime. There is a general concern that the NRM is

⁸⁷ Avon and Somerset, Devon and Cornwall, Dorset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire

simply an extension of the UKBA's activities, rather than a procedure to improve protection and assistance for individuals who have been abused and exploited.'

(ibid, p. 53)

While it remains to be seen if NRM pilot programmes are more effective, people in the system have already expressed apprehensiveness (LP44). Legislation on protection of victims of human trafficking and modern slavery is being reformed and the Parliament is discussing the Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill at the time this thesis is being written. However, some indications that the government does not prioritise the wellbeing of victims are already visible. For instance, The Home Office recently cut the daily allowance awarded to trafficking survivors by half. It was explained that the move was designed to align the allowance given to victims of slavery with the support extended to asylum seekers (Kelly, 2018, March 2). However, just £37.75 of daily allowance that victims are entitled to for only 45 days following confirmation that they were subjected to modern slavery in Britain is limiting their chances of recovery by exposing them to risks of homelessness and re-trafficking.

As for the victim protection in practice, researchers have found issues regarding failure to identify victims, delays in determining victim status, absence of long-term support for full recovery, as well as bias in trafficking identification decisions and reason to doubt the findings of the Competent Authority based on which the decisions were made (Annison, 2013). In 2012 for instance, 80% of EU/EEA citizens received a positive trafficking identification decision, compared to less than 20% of nationals from other countries; reasons to doubt findings of the competent authorities were found in 90% of analysed rejection letters (ibid: 8).

Figures collected through the NRM show that the number of identified presumed victims of human trafficking varied in the observed period (2011-2015), the lowest being 1,746 in 2013, and the highest 3,266 two years later. Trafficking for labour exploitation and trafficking for sexual exploitation were taking turns in being the most prominent form of human trafficking in the country. Victims were predominantly foreign citizens. Among identified victims, there was a high prevalence of Albanian, Romanian, Vietnamese and Nigerian victims, followed by British and Polish nationals. British citizens accounted for 4 to 6% of identified trafficking survivors in the period under scrutiny in this thesis.

The Percentage of children exploited over the years was gradually raising, but stayed in the range between 24% and 30% of identified potential victims. From 2013, the NRM started recording numbers of British and non-British children identified as victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. This is important to keep in mind because it indicates that trafficking for sexual exploitation is framed by the government as a different (and greater) issue if British children are

involved. The percentage of children of British nationality among this population seems to be significantly higher (ranging from 52% to 61%) than the percentage of British citizens in the general victim population. Yet, for the majority of recorded cases of trafficking of minors within the UK, data on the type of exploitation is missing. Therefore, more thorough data collection and further research into the vulnerability of domestic youth would need to be carried out for reliable conclusion to be drawn. In addition to that, it would be necessary to ensure that all children who are subjected to exploitation in human trafficking receive adequate help regardless of their nationality and legal status in the country. According to the statistics, women were more frequently exploited than men, and a small percentage of transgender (0.1%) victims was identified in 2014 and 2015. The same trends were recorded in 2016 as well.

A Crown Prosecution Service report (CPS, 2017) shows a low number of cases that are referred for prosecution, especially when compared to the number of presumed victims that are identified annually by the NRM. In addition to that, the number of convictions for the criminal act of human trafficking is decreasing (181 conviction, i.e. 61%). Concerns about the low number of convictions were also raised in the report on the effectiveness of the response of the UK justice system to trafficking in Human Beings (Annison & Sobik, 2013).

Table 10 - Statistics on Human Trafficking in the United Kingdom in the period 2011-2016⁸⁸

	2011 ⁸⁹	2012 ⁹⁰	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of potential victims	1998	2255	1746	2340	3266	3805
Female victims	57% (1,069)	55% (1,246)	64% (1,122)	61.2% (1,432)	53.4% (1,744)	50.9% (1,936)
Male victims	43% (800)	40% (910)	36% (624)	38.7% (906)	46.5% (1,518)	49% (1,864)
Transgender victims	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0.1% (2)	0.1% (2)	0.1% (5)

⁸⁸ The number of victims, their gender, citizenship, and percentage of children shown in the table are pertaining to official statistics on all forms of human trafficking collected through the UK NRM. The two bottom rows show the representation of sexual exploitation in comparison to other forms of human trafficking according to the official data.

⁸⁹ In 2011 gender was unknown for 129 victims and age was unknown for 687 victims. The percentages on gender and age shown in this table pertain to the number of victims for which this data was available.

⁹⁰ In 2012 gender was unknown for 95 victims and age was unknown for 95 victims. The percentages on gender and age shown in this table pertain to the number of victims for which this data was available. For 333 victims, country of origin was unknown, and for 360 data on the type of exploitation was not recorded.

Victims with British citizenship	Unknown	4% (86)	5% (90)	6% (131)	6% (191)	9% (326)
Victims with foreign citizenship	Unknown	81% (1,836)	95% (1,656)	94% (2,209)	94% (3,075)	91% (3,479)
% of children	25% (328)	24% (549)	26% (450)	29% (671)	30% (982)	34% (1,278)
Sexual exploitation	30% (604)	36% (803)	42% (725)	35% (830)	33% (1,080)	35% (1,313)
Other forms of exploitation	70% (1,394)	48% (1,092)	47% ⁹¹ (820)	47% ⁹² (1,095)	49% ⁹³ (1,610)	53% ⁹⁴ (2,005)

The UK continues to introduce new laws and mechanisms in order to suppress human trafficking. The implications of the new policies remain to be seen. Another factor to take into account when assessing the human trafficking situation and responses to it within Great Britain is the country's decision to leave European Union. As a member state, the UK has relied on EU resources in combating human trafficking (e.g. Europol and Eurojust). These bodies and mechanisms facilitated cooperation between member states in international cases and helped identify, capture, and prosecute trafficking offenders. In a recent report, the Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group has identified Brexit-related risks, including limited or abolished access to EU bodies, measures and funds that play an important role in trafficking suppression. The Group also warned that the intention not to remain under the jurisdiction of the Court of Justice of the European Union can have detrimental effects to future collaboration between the UK and EU on matters of police and security, including suppressing human trafficking (ATMG, 2017).

⁹¹ In the remaining cases the type of exploitation is unknown.

⁹² In the remaining cases the type of exploitation is unknown.

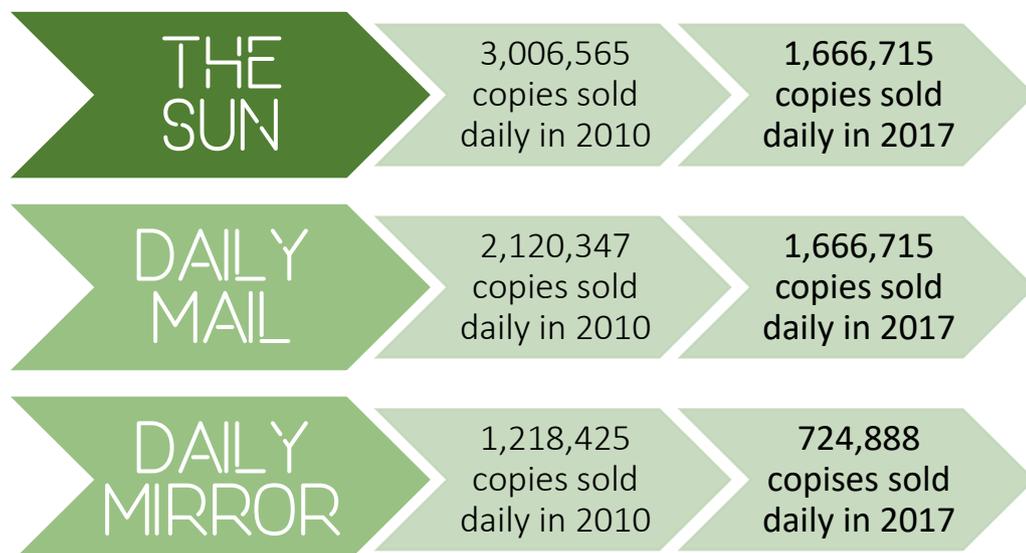
⁹³ In the remaining cases the type of exploitation is unknown.

⁹⁴ In the remaining cases the type of exploitation is unknown

6.2. Mediascape in the United Kingdom

The history of newspapers in the UK now spans more than five centuries (Lake, 1984). Over time, the media market and media landscape in Britain became highly developed. Next to the United States, the country was among the first ones to introduce new media forms and communication technologies. Although complex and mature, the contemporary mediascape in Britain is an ever-changing dynamic environment, affected by the global journalism crisis and highly dependent on market conditions. For four decades now, the neoliberal ideology and politics have been shaping the way media operate and change. Therefore, understanding the UK media sector requires consideration of deregulation processes, competition-driven changes and adaptations related to alterations in consumer behaviour as well.

The media scene in the UK includes a wide range of newspapers, television and radio channels, and an increasing range of diverse digital media. Different political positions are taken by media in the country – left, right, centre and neutral, and certain media are specialised in catering to religious, environmental, health, and other specific interests (Bromley, 2009). Both national and local media are present in both the regular and digital markets. As analysis in Chapter 4 has shown, digital editions of national newspapers are a quite prominent source of news on human trafficking. This is not surprising, as national papers have traditionally played an important role in informing the UK population. Ten years ago, there were 9 national newspapers spread throughout Britain and 2 more Scottish papers that were selling 75 million copies and being read by around 70% of the adult Britons (Bromley, 2009). However, pursuant to the trend of reduced popularity of print media, these numbers have dropped. As an illustration, take a look at circulation of the three most read dailies in 2009 (ABC, 2010) and compare it with circulation figures from 2016 (ABC, 2017):



The British press is also known for high levels of media ownership concentration, with major owners controlling the market share almost entirely (see Iosifidis, 2010 and Bromley, 2009). This was enabled by the passing of the Communications Act (2003) that eliminated most of the previous legal regulations of media ownership in order to enable companies to expand globally.

At the expense of print press popularity, British readership is increasingly diverting to digital media. According to most recent report of the Office for National Statistics, in the first quarter of 2017, 89% of the UK population was using the internet, and only 9% of Brits have never used it (ONS, 2017). The online presence of British media is, therefore, very significant, and the number of outlets that exist only online is increasing. Easy accessibility and additional features, such as audio, video, blogs, social media shareability, etc. contributed to the increasing popularity of digital media. The BBC dominates the world of digital news in Britain: it generates almost a third of the overall market share and has had close to 19 billion combined desktop and mobile page views in 2015 (Schwartz, 2015). According to the same study, the ten biggest digital publishers are responsible for 65% of online news consumption in the country. Among the most popular digital news sources are the web editions of The Guardian, The Daily Mail, The Telegraph, and The Independent. Some digital newspapers started implementing paywalls in the attempt to increase their revenues.

Though it can be claimed that there are both quality and tabloid press, sensationalistic and objective media, as one of the informants vividly illustrates, the division between them is not that straight forward.

I think that there is increasingly a contrast being drawn between sensationalist, revenue driven journalism and quality comment journalism analysis. That's quite a reductive distinction, because there is a lot of quality journalism that is subsidised by advertising, and there is a lot of crap that is produced for free.

WA42

While global reports rank the UK as an open press environment and British media as free (Freedom of the Press, 2017, World Press Freedom Index, 2017), concerns have been raised about factors limiting media autonomy. In the past five years, the UK has fallen down for 12 places in the World Press Freedom Index ranking (World Press Freedom Index 2017, 2012). The recorded trend of reduced press freedom in the country placed the UK higher than Serbia, but lower than the Netherlands on this spectrum. The erosion of media freedom can be linked to several different causes. On the one hand, press surveillance and new government regulation started posing a problem. On the other, structural pressures within contemporary newsdesks began limiting the media's endeavours to report accurately and journalists' efforts to do independent

work. The above-mentioned reports link the erosion of media freedom to the adoption of The Investigatory Powers Act (2016) that allows generalised surveillance and the proposal of the so-called Espionage Act that could potentially enable criminalisation of journalists and whistleblowers as spies. Parallel to these unfavourable legal developments, other constraints to freedom of the media stem from financial constraints, increased workload, and dependence on PR-generated content. A study conducted at Cardiff University has shown that journalists in the country have to produce three times as much material as their colleagues 20 years ago (Lewis, et al. 2008). According to the authors of the study, that made local journalists more reliant on ready-made materials, such as wire and PR contents and reduced their capacity to engage in independent journalistic work.

Negative findings on the UK media scene have also been found upon examination of media content in Britain. Whereas the introduction of broadcasting media, and the BBC in particular, brought greater emphasis to the concepts of impartiality and objectivity, and attracted more quality newspapers (Madge, 1986), the more recent evolution of the media industry had an adverse impact on the quality of media products. The deregulation process that was unfolding under both Conservative and Labour governments since the late 1970s, and became particularly prominent after 1990, played a pivotal role. The state made great profits by selling its monopoly on frequencies. Yet, it also forced media companies who invested large sums of money to commercialise the programmes and adapt to the taste of the majority of audience members in order to attract major advertisers (Radojković and Stojković, 2009:80, Bromley, 2009). Today, the United Kingdom has one of the largest media markets in the world, with annual revenue of 103.9 billion US dollars (PwC, 2017). As a consequence, the industry was hit by an increasing trend of commerce over culture and entertainment/infotainment over education/information. Digitalisation and the decline in consumption of traditional media further adversely affected the media quality in the UK (Bromley, 2009). My respondents who work in the media confirm this:

‘I think that the thing that dominates everything now, in all the media – however well-established they are, is overwhelmed with trying to establish how to get stuff read online. Which is based largely on the choice of headlines and choice of pictures and the writing of tweets is really paramount to that. Now that really can drive really serious sensationalism.’

WA42

The relationship between politics and press reporting is more complex, however, and often times it is the media who have the power to influence the government and not vice versa. So much so, that media reporting on crime had a direct influence on crime suppression measures devised in

Britain in 2005, as recorded in an interview Sir Stephen Lander, the then director of Serious and Organised Crime Agency gave to The Independent:

‘The priorities that are adopted by Britain’s elite crime fighting force will be partly based upon the number of column inches newspapers give to different types of organised criminality.’

Sir Stephen Lander, interview with The Guardian⁹⁵, 10.01.2005

Similarly to what Muraszkievicz et al. (2014) found, this research showed that the press in Britain is in a position to influence governmental decisions and policy developments to a certain extent. Analysis of interviews with UK professionals showed that they observed that there was a connection between both (a) increased reporting on human trafficking in response to new policy being drafted and adopted in the country and (b) politicians reacting to what is high on the media agenda and becoming involved in issues such as trafficking, modern slavery, child sexual exploitation and abuse. On top of the general conclusion that media reporting and human trafficking policy and response fit the ‘two way street’ metaphor, views on whether this is a good or a bad thing were divided. Instances of media negatively affecting work of anti-trafficking professionals, including the police, were recorded in some of the interviews. In one instance, an interviewee who was working on human trafficking and prostitution policy reported that stereotyping in the media obstructed policy change that specialists were lobbying for (AT48). In another, a police force representative disclosed how presence of the media during police raids or visits to potential locations of interest would limit their chances of establishing a relationship of trust with potential victims of human trafficking, which is why the practice was abandoned by the unit (LP44). Yet, other participants in the research found that certain media initiatives have had a positive impact, from brining the attention of relevant state actors to human trafficking and some specific issues in the field, to parliamentary debate being organised as a direct result of media reports, and journalistic findings serving as a source for official guidance issued by a relevant international organisation (EM43).

We are seeing that the media can play an incredibly positive role in not only raising awareness of the public, but also shifting the political approach to an issue.

EK47

⁹⁵ Bennetto, 2005, January 10 cf. Muraszkievicz et al. (2014).

Just one informant from the UK thought media are not affecting responses to anti-trafficking or that there is not enough evidence to suggest likewise.

Since the announcement of the introduction of the Modern Slavery Bill, the media in Britain started paying more attention to the issue of human trafficking. While many problems with press representation of trafficking phenomenon are identified in the studied sample, an increasing number of awareness projects are contributing to a better recognition of trafficking as a problem. The Guardian and Thomson Reuters Foundation have been regularly reporting on human trafficking for years now. The Evening Standard and The Independent recently launched a media campaign together with the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, producing 1-3 news pieces a week as a product of special investigation into trafficking and modern slavery for a period of 6 months. In addition to that, critical blogs are inviting scholars, anti-trafficking pundits and other authors to produce content on human trafficking. The role of such collaborations and articles that are created as a result is proven to be important in this research. It is often these texts that are offering critical analysis of the anti-trafficking mechanism and related developments in the UK.

6.3. Frame Analysis

6.3.1. Criminal Justice

Articles focusing on law enforcement and judicial response to individual cases of human trafficking for sexual exploitation dominated reporting on this issue in the British online media in the observed period (57% of the collected articles). Over the course of 5 years, 882 articles on arrests, prosecutions, and conviction of offenders of trafficking were published, which is more than the total number of articles on trafficking for sexual exploitation in the Netherlands, and almost 3 times more than the number of texts in Serbian media. Despite the difference in the volume of reporting, the characteristics of articles framed as a criminal justice issue are not that different.

The main problem identified in the articles is the presence of the crime of human trafficking in a given country, i.e. the fact that criminals exploit people (mostly women and girls) through prostitution. The prevalence of trafficking, however, is not problematized and no underlying causes of trafficking (e.g. poverty, gender discrimination, political unrest, etc.) are addressed by the media. Around one sixth of the analysed texts treated the topic of inadequate response to human trafficking as a problem. Nonetheless, there were notable differences in texts that look at

anti-trafficking mechanisms in Britain and those that examine capacity to respond to human trafficking for sexual exploitation in other regions. Texts that mention shortcomings of the national response to trafficking in the United Kingdom are doing so as part of the campaign to announce and promote the new legislation on human trafficking, i.e. the Modern Slavery Bill in England and Wales and corresponding acts in Scotland and Northern Ireland. By recognising the problem (inadequate legal response) as part of the efforts to promote its solution (a new law on human trafficking), the attitude towards the government's actions to tackle human trafficking therefore remains positive, and the country is represented as a world-leader in combating trafficking and modern slavery. A number of reports on police action and court proceedings contains comments from various official sources - including representatives of the police, courts, Home Office, and National Crime Agency - that praise the new law and anticipate its positive impact on prosecuting human trafficking cases in the future. It is important to note that these comments seem out of place for twofold reasons. Firstly, the new legislation was not enacted yet and hence was not applied in cases that these officials were commenting on. Secondly, these sources offered no indication that the cases in question would have unfolded differently in court had the legislation changed. All this confirms claims made by interviewed experts who testified of links between policy change and media reporting.

When scrutinising response to human trafficking in foreign countries, however, British journalists were more critical and they identified a number of issues that deserve more attention: lack of accountability for allowing trafficking to happen, no access to justice for human trafficking survivors, inadequate legislation and poor implementation of laws in place, lack of political will to eradicate human trafficking, no anti-trafficking mechanism in place, corrupt officials facilitating trafficking operations, etc. The relative silence of the British press when it comes to criticizing the response of the UK to human trafficking is a particularly interesting finding, because it is contradictory to what local anti-trafficking experts said in interviews conducted within this research project. Namely, people working in anti-trafficking in the UK mentioned shortcomings of the National Referral Mechanism, and a lack of resources to adequately address human trafficking and attend to victims' needs. Some of them also spoke of inadequacy of the new legislation. Explaining why these issues are not being mentioned in the media, an interviewee said:

We know where the shortcomings are in relations to the NRM, we know that our median towards the long-term care is just not in place. But, I think there is sometimes fear that if we start talking about that or we start being critical, then it will cause us some pain further down the line in relation to our management or government. So we actually

abstain from over-criticizing what is already in place, and stick to the fact of what's happened in a particular case.

LP44

The reluctance of system-employed people to speak critically of the UK response to human trafficking, high reliance of the media on official sources, and lack of investigative and analytical journalistic pieces pose a serious problem. In the introductory chapter, the model of six domains of media influence and possible impacts on anti-trafficking I developed is presented. Media inertness paired with self-censorship of media sources can be expected to negatively reflect on at least three of those domains: monitoring (potential of the media to be used as a monitoring tool not being utilised), policy change (policy promoted in the media despite shortcomings that experts are aware of), and shaping the environment in which victims recover (not addressing issues in the NRM and victim support mechanism). Additionally, it can be argued that such conditions contribute to problems in awareness raising and lack of public support to tackle trafficking, as media reporting suggests that the system in place works well and no additional attention to it is required.

Responsibility for causing the problem of human trafficking in criminal justice-framed articles is assigned to single criminals and small groups that operate as a trafficking enterprise. Accountability that individual states and international organisations have for allowing trafficking to happen is barely mentioned. As a solution to the identified problems (deviant people exploiting women in the sex industry and trafficking affecting the country in question), all articles suggest arresting and prosecuting human traffickers, whereas a small percentage (between 2% and 5%) also call for helping victims, educating professionals to recognise human trafficking, and creating a safe environment for victims to come forward about their experiences and report the abuse. It comes as no surprise, then, that responsibility for solving identified issues is assigned to the police in 9 out of 10 analysed articles and courts in 7 out of 10 texts in the sample. Fewer texts mention responsibility of the governments and policy makers, and even fewer stress the role of international organisations and professionals who are not involved in law enforcement and judiciary (e.g. medical practitioners, social workers, and community members). Disregard for trafficking survivors in these stories is visible not only in the focus on capturing and prosecuting offenders, but also in the moral base in the criminal justice-framed texts. Namely, the value of punishing crime and bringing criminals to justice is referred to in all the texts, whereas just 15% of news items also stress the importance of helping people in affliction and securing access to justice for trafficking survivors. Visual illustrations are also focused on policing the traffickers. More than a half of the images used in the articles represent traffickers, and a great majority of

these photographs are mugshots and shots taken in front of the court, thus further accentuating the crime-context of the images. Additionally, 20% of photographs show the location of the crime scene, and another 12% portray the police and evidence from police investigations (12%). In contrast, victims are represented in a mere 7% of images used in criminal justice-framed texts.

Because the police has been portrayed as the most important actor in fighting human trafficking, the representation of law enforcement in this part of the sample requires special attention. Parallel with the shift in legal perspective that came with the announcement of the Modern Slavery Act, police in Britain started highlighting that they will fight human trafficking ruthlessly and that their priority will be to help victims of the criminal act. The quotes of press statements⁹⁶ made by a police representatives involved in analysed cases exemplify this:

We are working to ensure that all victims we identify during our investigation receive the care and support that they need. Our priority is always the safety and wellbeing of the victim. I urge any other victims of this type of crime to report it to police so that they can receive the help they need.

This should send out a clear message to other offenders that we will never stop in our pursuit of justice. We are willing and able to work with overseas authorities in order to detain those who attempt to escape the consequences of their actions and to bring them back before the courts.

I want to assure people living in Bolton, and the wider communities of Manchester, that there is nothing we won't do to bring human traffickers to justice. "There is no stone we won't overturn and no country we won't go to expose these people for who they are: shameless cowards who profit by selling women into sex against their will.

The British police is represented as a proactive actor, dedicated to fighting crime and protecting victims of human trafficking. Yet, police attitudes towards sex workers recorded in the media also reveal that some officers view exploited prostitutes as offenders rather than victims.

When it comes to terminology and tone of writing, in general British media are more prone to using sensitive language and avoiding sensationalism. This, however, is not the case with tabloids such as the Daily Mail and the Sun that frame trafficking stories as shocking crime spectacles. In doing so, facts are frequently manipulated, terms confused, and the most disturbing aspects accentuated. For example, reporting on a trafficking case involving a Czech woman forced into prostitution in Gloucester, the Daily Mail links the case with crimes of serial killers who lived in the same house in the 1970s, creating the horror-story sentiment over a haunted location and perpetual misery that befalls the inhabitants of the place (Allen, 2012, June 29). Another fault of the British digital journalism is concerned with ethnic bias, which abounds in representations of

⁹⁶ Left to right: The Guardian (2012, December 13), Dimmer Cov (2014, August 28), and Bainbridge (2015, February 16).

trafficking cases. Qualitative analysis of the collected articles shows that some of the offenders represented as foreign are actually British citizens, mostly second and third generation migrants. This was discovered after reporting on the same cases by different media outlets was compared, and in some cases, additional research on traffickers' nationality was conducted by examining other online sources. While this will be further elaborated on under section 6.3.3. CSE, below I provide the most common examples of inaccurate reporting on trafficker ethnicity that were identified in the criminal justice frame.

Several mechanisms were employed by the press in order to manipulate information on traffickers' nationality. When traffickers were British nationals of foreign origin, the fact that they had UK citizenship was frequently undisclosed. This was done either by selectively disclosing only nationality of foreign traffickers involved in the case (e.g. 'The gang, which included members from Poland and Czech Republic...'), using vague terms (e.g. 'Hungarian-based criminals'), or omitting information of offenders' nationality altogether, but using their names and places of residence⁹⁷ together with information on victims' origin as indicators of their otherness (e.g. a trafficker involved in exploiting Nigerian girls whose name is Omoruyi, but has British citizenship). Not only was nationality information misrepresented, but also many stereotypes were attached to foreign cultures. Asian and specifically Muslim Asian communities were represented as particularly disrespectful of women's rights, aggressive and exploitative (see section 6.3.3. for more detailed analysis). In accordance with the white slavery myth, stereotypical mediated representation of these trafficking cases banks on the idea that foreign men come to the UK where they corrupt local (white) girls and force them into prostitution. These foreign evil traffickers are, according to the analysed articles, the source of the social trouble. Journalists did not embark on a quest to explore whether men originating from certain countries are indeed more likely to exploit young women, and if so, for what reasons. Lack of such media investigations leaves the reader with a one-sided, oversimplified, perfunctory, stereotypical representation. As a consequence, biased representation of human trafficking and the traffickers involved can create more grounds for further discrimination, racism and other underlying factors that may push minority communities to commit crime in the first place, and law enforcement agencies to focus on policing these groups and neglecting others.

Another frequently encountered example of racial bias and stereotyping is visible in cases that involve Nigerian women who were trafficked and sexually exploited in the UK. Depictions of juju

⁹⁷ Places of residence are a strong indicator of someone's nationality or ethnic origin in Britain, as different communities tend to live in separate areas with which the local readership is familiar.

rituals⁹⁸ and interpretations thereof are used to paint the picture of primitive cultures and to other the naïve victims who take part in the oath-taking and juju practices. The oath-taking ceremonies are described in a mystical, yet repulsive tone, involving ‘extraction of victim’s blood samples’ (menstrual and vein), ‘taking nail clippings’, cutting hair from their ‘head and intimate parts’, and ‘eating live snakes and snails’. Cultural inferiority is thus linked to Nigerian trafficking survivors who believe in the power of the aforementioned rituals extends beyond the trafficking situation, because these women are frequently described as unable to understand the bogus nature of such practices even after being rescued and educated by their assistance providers in the host country. In failing to understand that and accept values of the local culture, these women stay trapped in the grip of their traffickers who then cannot be brought to the justice. Thus, victims are not only labelled as naïve, but also indirectly blamed for the failure to prove and prosecute trafficking. This removes the responsibility from the state and competent authorities.

Scholars have already explored the role of juju rituals in relation to human trafficking (see van der Watt & Kruger, 2017 and Ikoera, 2016), and this thesis does not intend to assess that topic any further. However, it is important to be aware of the media’s tendency to oversimplify these cases and neglect other factors that could influence victims’ reluctance to take part in the criminal proceedings against the people who exploited them. Similarly to victims that come from any other country, these women have been highly traumatized and it is normal for them to feel unwilling to relive the experience of trafficking while testifying in court and facing their abusers. Furthermore, judicial practice shows victims of trafficking rarely get benefits from doing so (e.g. financial compensation, right to stay in the destination country, or access to long term assistance programs, and, given the low prosecution rates, even the satisfaction of seeing traffickers jailed for what they have done to them).

Another aspect of narratives presented in these reports is the positioning of the domestic as superior in contrast to the menial foreign. As the below quote illustrates, this is not related solely to a difference in culture and system of beliefs, but also the efficacy of the anti-trafficking system in place (which is contradictory as that system has obviously failed the victims and allowed for their exploitation to occur in Britain):

Their experience of authorities in their home country often leaves them lacking confidence in the justice system but British officials said the girls were courageous in giving evidence.

⁹⁸ Juju rituals are part of African Traditional Religion (Ikeora, 2016), particularly common in the spiritual belief system in West African countries.

Concerns about prejudice and ignorance of the press when it comes to topics like this were also raised in interviews with anti-trafficking professionals from Britain. As ethnic and racial biases were prominent in other frames as well, additional attention will be paid to this subject in the continuation of the chapter.

6.3.2. Prostitution

Prostitution – like drugs – is an emotive issue. While some demand tougher laws and others the opposite, trying to chart a middle course looks a fool’s errand.

The Independent, 2014 March 2

Similarly to their colleagues in Serbia and the Netherlands, UK journalists also frequently framed human trafficking as a prostitution related issue. In total, 243 articles (16% of the sample) were identified to fit the frame. A majority of articles dealt with the need or efforts to enhance the legal response to human trafficking by tackling prostitution. This topic was particularly prominent in relation to Northern Ireland and Scotland, where attempts to regulate prostitution were pushed through anti-trafficking legislation proposals. In fact, the vast majority of texts within the frame dealt with UK-related stories – 37% Northern Ireland, 26% England, 13% Scotland, and 2% Wales. Such high representation of Northern Irish and Scottish angles is a distinct characteristic of the prostitution frame. In other frames authors typically focus on England or maintain a UK wide approach.

Media reporting on discussions over and the adoption of Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (2015) in Northern Ireland and Human Trafficking and Exploitation Act (2015) in Scotland revolved around whether criminalisation of purchase of sex would have a positive impact on suppressing human trafficking and whether it should be included in the Acts. An increased number of reports was recorded in 2013 and 2014 when contents of the two legislative acts were debated in the respective Parliaments. In the end, the client criminalisation clause remained in the Northern Irish Trafficking Act, but it was omitted from the law in Scotland, where there was a strong tradition of division between abolitionist currents in Glasgow and liberal ones in Edinburgh. To a lesser extent texts also thematised exploitation of foreign women in prostitution in the United Kingdom, prostitution driving human trafficking, and the actions of policing prostitution (e.g. raiding brothels) that were promoted as the adequate response to the criminal act of human trafficking.

Because the prostitution regulation debate remained central in the reports within this frame, it shaped the way problems were defined within the articles, as well as who was identified as responsible for causing them, what solutions could be applied, and who should be the responsible solution provider. In the analysed articles, attitudes towards prostitution were mainly negative (55% of texts), followed by the neutral articles - representing argumentation for both prostitution-suppressing measures and reasoning for legalisation/decriminalisation (28%). Positive attitudes that represented prostitution as sex work, i.e. equal to any other occupation were the

rarest, accounting for only 17% of the analysed sub-sample. This proportion also applies to problems and solutions identified: more than half of the texts claim prostitution sparks trafficking, or in some cases that all prostitution is exploitative and hence should be regarded as human trafficking for sexual exploitation. The solution, thereby, lies in addressing the demand for and criminalising the purchase of sexual services, harsher policing of prostitution, criminalisation of prostitution, banning prostitution advertising, etc. On the other hand, some reports see criminalisation of clients as problematic for making people more vulnerable to

exploitation and abuse, and criticize anti-trafficking efforts for violating rights of sex workers. While all of these articles highlight the need to drop the clause on criminalisation of purchase of sex from anti-trafficking legislation, they are divided when it comes to the question whether prostitution needs to be legalised or decriminalised. Neutral texts represent both sides of the argument, identify the need for more research and call for adoption of research informed policy.

Arguments for and against criminalisation of the purchase of sexual services and arguments for and against legalisation/decriminalisation of prostitution that were promoted in the analysed media reports are summarised below. Both tend to group around three major points – adequate steps to tackle human trafficking, adequate steps to protect women (exploited) in prostitution, and the moralisation of prostitution.



Northern Ireland prostitution ban divides opinion

Sex workers fear new law will put them in more danger, while advocates of 'Swedish model' claim it will eradicate trafficking



Picture 10 - Source theguardian.com/uk



FOR CRIMINALISATION

- Demand for prostitution is the main driver of human trafficking (HT)
- Tackling demand reduces market and discourages HT
- Effectiveness of Swedish model in suppressing HT and prostitution
- Failure in suppressing HT and fatalities in countries where prostitution is legalised (Germany and The Netherlands)
- Council of Europe calling for criminalisation of purchase of sexual services
- Focus on the real perpetrators - punters and pimps rather than the exploited women
- Women protected from inherently violent prostitution
- Protecting prostitutes from being re-victimised by the criminal justice system
- Clients not aware of HT in sex industry to learn about the issue
- Clients easily swayed not to buy sex when there are consequences
- Prostitution is not a choice
- Prostitution cannot be made safe
- Prostitution evil in itself / abolitionism good in itself
- Christian values



FOR LEGALISATION/DECRIMINALISATION

- Prostitution is not driving HT; in fact, HT is rare in the UK
- HT ≠ prostitution; tackling prostitution demand will not eradicate HT
- Effectiveness of decriminalisation (New Zealand) and legalisation (Germany) in reducing exploitation of sex workers (SW)
- Failure of the Swedish model
- Amnesty international calling for legalisation; UN and WHO data suggesting criminalisation is not good
- Sex workers (SW) work in safe and controlled environment
- SW more likely to seek protection from the police
- Greater health protection of SW
- No stigmatisation of SW
- Policy in line with SW voices
- Equal working rights for all professions
- Clients more likely to help SW and report trafficking and abuse
- Taxing prostitution cashing in money for NHS
- Prostitution is a choice
- Prostitution cannot be eradicated; it can only be made safer through legalisation
- SW rights violated and their livelihood endangered
- Anti HT efforts are moralistic and aim at suppressing prostitution, not exploitation

Articles that frame human trafficking as a prostitution-related issue also hold traffickers as the main culprits responsible for problems addressed in the reports. Yet, unlike in criminal justice frame, prostitution-centred articles do assign some responsibility to authorities for not having adequate policies in place and for not responding to trafficking adequately. Policy makers are represented as the essential solution providers. The police and courts are also recognised for playing a role mainly in those texts that promote criminalisation of sex buyers. Charities involved in helping trafficking survivors are also mentioned in a small number of texts.

Media experts interviewed for the study recognised the newsworthy potential of the prostitution debate in relation to human trafficking. While polarised in their opinions on the matter, media experts specialised in the topic of trafficking also recognise a similar trend among the audience:

We get two kinds of people reading these types of texts. We have people who agree with it, and we have a handful of people who have made their careers disagreeing with it. And we don't get a lot of people in the middle or slightly to the one side of the debate. These are the people who everybody is trying to get to side with them. Those are the kind of people I am hoping we could access. The problem is the media are so invasive with information that the audience members have to filter out the information they don't agree with, because they are exhausted and overwhelmed with information.

WA42

Prostitution is traditionally linked to questions pertaining to morality and social order (Persak & Vermeulen, 2014). As the opening quote of this section suggests, people tend to feel strongly about prostitution related issues and changing their opinions is not an easy mission. The contents of the UK press on human trafficking for sexual exploitation seem to promote negative attitudes towards prostitution more than the positive ones. The moral base in the said articles is twofold – helping people in affliction (i.e. victims of trafficking) and eradicating crime (crime standing for both human trafficking and prostitution). Contrary to that, articles that argue for more liberal regulation of prostitution call for eradication of trafficking only, and helping people in affliction (here pertaining to protection of both victims of human trafficking and sex workers).

As in the other frames, visual illustrations used in the UK media were more neutral than those used in Serbian and Dutch news on human trafficking. Images of locations and experts interviewed for the pieces were more common than stock images representing victims. In the later images, both tropes of the unworthy prostitute and innocent victim were present. However, in these articles women exploited in prostitution were more than six times more likely to be represented as oversexualised prostituted bodies than victims of crime. Images of genuine

victims of trafficking were also published in several articles, always dealing with trafficking cases from abroad. Even though precautionary measures were taken to protect their identity (e.g. pictures taken from behind, images blurred, or only certain body parts photographed), some



Picture 11 - Source dailymail.co.uk

features that could reveal who the victim is were shown in the photographs (e.g. tattoos). Even though it might seem that publishing photographs like this in a faraway England is not putting victims in danger, it must be taken into account that these photographs are published online and could be accessed from all over the planet.

6.3.3. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

In the methodology section I explain how and why child sexual exploitation was introduced as an

BRIEFING

Sex abuse trafficking: number of UK child victims doubles

Government hopes new anti-slavery bill will help target trafficking gangs, but is it enough?

FACEBOOK TWITTER GOOGLE+

LAST UPDATED AT 10:00 ON TUE 18 FEB 2014

Picture 12 - Source theweek.co.uk

addition frame in coding the UK sample. However, before proceeding to analysis, it is necessary to draw a distinction between what this term might mean in general and what media in the analysed texts denoted by it. The phenomenon of child sexual exploitation is broader than trafficking of minors for sexual exploitation as it can involve sexual abuse of minors that happens without them being moved from one place to another, as well as the abuse of children that does not happen for financial or some other kind of compensation. However, what is

considered as CSE in the analysed articles fits the Palermo Protocol definition of human trafficking, but exclusively pertains to the sexual exploitation of young British nationals by organised crime gangs of (mostly) Asian men. This crime is treated as different to trafficking of children who are foreign nationals by the media, and as the subsequent analysis shows, different problems and related solutions are promoted in the press for each category. With this in mind, it is interesting that NRM statisticians started distinguishing between foreign and domestic victims

of trafficking for sexual exploitation if they are underage. This distinction started being made in 2013 and is only made for victims of sexual exploitation. What is evident from this categorisation is that the number British citizens who are identified as victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation is much higher within the category of minors (NRM 2013, 2014, 2015). It is unclear, however, if these numbers correspond with the trafficking reality in the country or if minors are more likely to be recognized by competent authorities and therefore be included in the official statistics.

Many different explanations are offered for the term CSE by the press: organised child trafficking, domestic trafficking of children for money, a form of child sexual abuse, street grooming, a sexual act with a minor for which he/she or someone else receives a payment, etc. The UK media, however, do not offer a clear, unanimous definition, nor a justification as to why trafficking of British children needs to be treated differently to trafficking of non-British born minors. Despite the vague notion about what CSE is, every tenth article (151 texts) in the UK sample fitted the frame. As a rule, these articles dealt with major cases of CSE, such as those happening in Rotherham, Oxford, Rochdale, Telford, and Peterborough.

The focus of the articles was mostly on the involvement of organised crime gangs (around 60% of texts) or systemic failures in responding to these cases (around 35%). Problems identified include an increase in the number of CSE cases across the country, as well as scarce capacities, fear of racism and other factors that caused the failure of the police, social services and local governments to address the matter in a timely and effective fashion. Thereby, the responsibility for causing the problem of human trafficking in the CSE-framed texts is most frequently assigned to evil traffickers and organised crime gangs (96% and 76% of articles respectively), but some also blame the police (33%), social services (22%), and local councils and other governmental authorities (27%). The last three are also most frequently identified as being in charge of solving CSE-related issues – four fifths of articles mentioned the responsibility of the police, two thirds saw the UK and local governments as accountable, and one fifth of articles were holding the social services as accountable. The same number of texts was labelling the judiciary as being responsible for addressing the crime of CSE.

The moral base referred to in these articles is linked to helping and protecting vulnerable children (96% of articles) and punishing crime (65%). What stood out in the analysis is the firm connection between the two, where helping children and protecting their rights was inextricably linked to prosecuting criminal gangs involved in their exploitation. While this connection makes sense when it comes to prevention, and perhaps victims' achieving some sense of justice after the legal proceedings, it overlooks the fact that systemic and comprehensive support to victims of

trafficking needs to exist irrespective of the country's crackdown on criminals. Many failures of the system in the UK to provide such support are overlooked in that way, and the public's scrutiny is directed solely at criminalisation. Therefore, it is not surprising that less than one third of the analysed texts deal with the topic of accountability of state institutions that needed to protect the abused children. Additionally, reports showed that a victim-centred approach would contribute to better results in investigating cases and prosecuting traffickers and other child abusers (Virtue, 2015, June 24). Another point about the moralistic language that needs to be made is concerned with the links made between traffickers' different religious and ethnic background and their immorality. Namely, articles frequently claim Muslim men do not respect or value women, which is why they do not see exploitation of women (especially non-Muslim women) as problematic.

When it comes to necessary actions to be taken to solve CSE-related problems, half of the articles in this frame promote different measures to strengthen the institutional response to CSE. These measures include training of CSE responders (in the police, social services, education, and health sector) and a multi-sectoral approach to identification, suppression, and relevant rectification action, together with more specific solutions such as giving a specific minister formal responsibility for the issue, appointing child guardians to minors who have faced CSE, improving record keeping, and developing an offender database. A considerable number of journalistic pieces advocates for improving victims support, raising awareness of the issue, harsher policing of CSE, investigation of failed institutional responses in order to prevent future failures, and improvements of the law. It is interesting to compare this rather extensive list of proposed measures to eradicate exploitation of British-born children and measures being proposed in articles that deal with trafficking of foreign citizens. As detailed elsewhere in this chapter, articles that deal with sexual exploitation of foreigners tend to focus on criminal justice measures against traffickers and anti-migration measures that are supposed to prevent future trafficking instances. Very few to none deal with questions of adequate victim assistance, investigations of institutional failures, recovery and reintegration of victims, and including a wide range of actors to achieve better results in anti-trafficking.

A legal expert interviewed for this study expressed concerns over treating CSE as a separate phenomenon, as from the legal perspective said cases meet the definition of human trafficking. In fact, a closer look into the most reported cases reveals that at least one of the prosecuted gang members in each case was sentenced for trafficking offences. Separating the two issues and paying more attention to exploitation of domestic minor citizens is problematic with regards to securing equal rights and adequate assistance to all trafficking survivors, uprooting systemic biases, and securing access to justice. Hence, such differentiation is likely to have negative impact

on eradicating human trafficking. Furthermore, it once more indicates the inclination to represent human trafficking as a non-UK issue: it is a crime committed by foreigners, it happens to foreigners, and the presence of human trafficking in the UK is directly linked to activities of foreign people living in the UK.

I think there is a genuine desire to try to separate that and frame human trafficking as something that happens only to people from the outside.

YK45

Another UK expert working for an anti-trafficking organisation noticed how the cases they worked on were treated differently by the media depending on the nationality of child victim involved. For British children their age and nationality was always stressed, but their race and ethnic background frequently concealed if they were not white. For children who came from outside the UK some media would omit mentioning the fact that victims were minors, whilst stressing their ethnic-otherness (NR40). UK practitioners also noticed biases of media professionals towards older children, where teenager victims who were 16 or 17 years of age were likely to be blamed for being lascivious, licentious, misbehaved, and problematic and held responsible for finding themselves in exploitative situations. Yet in this study, analysis of CSE-framed articles did not show victim blaming by the media. Reports did cover, however, the problem of discrimination against victims by the British police. A wide range of mistakes were identified in the reporting, such as police refusing to take action, considering victims as ‘child prostitutes’, deeming that a child ‘seemed happy’ with her abusers, holding victims accountable if they consumed alcohol, or concluding that a 14 years old child ‘consented’ to sex even though they were below the legal age to do so. While it is encouraging to see media that framed trafficking as child sexual exploitation did not engage in victim blaming, it is very worrisome that UK outlets tend to do that when the victims are foreign (see section 6.3.5.).

Unnecessary, detailed and sensationalised depictions of what children went through whilst exploited in human trafficking are also encountered in the tabloid media. Interviews showed that a major frustration of practitioners working with the media on raising awareness on this issue is to communicate that the abuse is taking place, but avoid having media focus on the physical and sexual manifestation of that abuse. In the eyes of the anti-trafficking community the journalistic practice of detailing child sexual abuse in the reports is perceived as ‘perverse’ and ‘voyeuristic’, and criticized for dehumanising victims. The following two excerpts exemplify this point.

The girls were raped, gang-raped, put to work as prostitutes, rented out for sadistic torture sessions. The girls were harmed with knives, cleavers and baseball bats. They were given illegal amateur abortions. The children would lie, drugged and drunk, in

squalid guesthouses and filthy flats as queues of local paedophiles and opportunistic punters queued up to have sex with them.

Dent, G. (2013, May 15)

This is the sickening moment a brutal paedophile puts the finishing touches to grooming a vulnerable 13-year-old girl. The bewildered runaway has already been picked up off the street by three other cunning perverts who passed her from one to the other. Now the youngster is in the hands of evil Shakeal Rehman who kisses and hugs her at a hotel reception desk before leading her willingly away to a room.

Retter (2014, November 8)

Almost one third of articles that frame trafficking as child sexual exploitation explicitly represent CSE as a racial issue. Both articles that discuss proneness of Asian men in Britain to sexually exploit children and those that are critical of such stances are found in the sample. For instance, Telegraph published:

All the men were of Asian background; all the victims were white. Yet we are asked to believe this:

Commenting on the case, Greater Manchester Police Assistant Chief Constable Steve Heywood denied that it was about race. He said: "It is not a racial issue. This is about adults preying on vulnerable young children. It just happens that in this particular area and time the demographics were that these were Asian men."

Perhaps Mr Heywood would like to explain why some spokesmen for the Asian community don't agree with him.

Thompson (2012, May 8)

Similar percentage of articles are more ambiguous about the role race plays in these cases. While no explicit claims are being made in these texts about the potential racial aspect of the crime, closer inspection of these articles reveals cues that may suggest to readers that it does play a role. Here it is worth taking another look at victims' and traffickers' demographics in CSE-framed articles. When it comes to traffickers, all articles speak exclusively of adult and male abusers who work in groups. When disclosed, information on their ethnicity, race and nationality suggests traffickers are foreign men in 87% of cases (mostly labelled as Asian – 42%, Pakistani – 24%, and Muslim – 8%). Contrary to that, the possibility of traffickers being white or British is recognised

only in 5% of analysed texts⁹⁹. What is more, comparison of reporting of different outlets on the same cases reveals media often conceal that traffickers are British nationals. This finding is collaborated by the testimonies of the interviewed anti-trafficking specialists. In this sense, there is a similarity between CSE and migration-framed articles in representing the migrant as the sole source of criminality and social trouble. The moral panics induced through amplifying the extent of CSE should therefore be understood as a manifestation of fears linked to border anxiety and national identity crisis.

On the other hand, victim demographics suggest young British females are being targeted (only one text deals with CSE of British boys). Victims are referred to as British children, white girls, and UK-born children. Just six articles mention that, together with white British children, ethnic minority British minors (4 articles) and foreign children (2 articles) are victimised too. Racial representation of victims and perpetrators is equally homogenous in visual aspects of the analysed articles. All children portraying victims in stock images selected to illustrate the articles are white. Furthermore, the innocence of victims was accentuated in the photographs – many show children considerably younger than those involved in the cases, holding stuffed animals, crying or assuming a foetal position. In my analysis of images used in Serbian media to illustrate trafficking for sexual exploitation, I explain that the foetal position, known to be a typical response to fear, evokes feelings of empathy and desire to offer support. I use that to problematize the hierarchical vision of agency between the viewer who is in a position to help and the portrayed desperate victim devoid of all agency (Krsmanović, 2016:146). A similar model of depicting victim is at play in the CSE framed articles in the UK.

Contrary to that, all images representing traffickers are mugshots and images of Asian men taken in front of the courtroom. These images dominated the sample, with a few exceptions where interviewed officials were portrayed, or locations of exploitation shown. Representing the whole community as criminal can have a negative impact on their position in society and cause their unfair treatment by law enforcement, prosecution and judiciary (Killias, 1989). Furthermore, discrimination against immigrants results in greater



Picture 13 - Source telegraph.co.uk

⁹⁹ It is important to note that these texts do not deal with cases that involve white or British traffickers, but just list statistics on offenders issued in police reports.

alienation that can possibly lead to an increase in crime rates (Tonry, 1997). Therefore, overall neglect by the media of alternative portrayals of Asian/Pakistani communities, as well as very trivial attention to condemning reactions towards men involved in CSE that are British must be changed.

6.3.4. Violence

In the observed period, 5% (80 articles) of the articles in the UK sample fitted the violence frame. Most such publications appeared in tabloid media. While a majority of outlets had just a few publications focusing on describing the violence victims of human trafficking endure while exploited, the Daily Mail was responsible for publishing more than a quarter of violence-framed texts. As in section 5.3.3, most stories were prompted by victims' media testimonies (46%) and trafficking court cases (24%) where victim's court statements were used as material for producing the story. Detailing accounts of daily battering, rapes, humiliation, fear, degradation, shame, and hopelessness is justified in the text for 'empowering the victims' and contributing to human trafficking prevention by 'raising awareness' of the phenomenon.

Experts interviewed for the study, however, do not see media confessions as beneficial to victims of human trafficking. Firstly, they had experienced case studies from research publications backfiring in the media, either through data being misinterpreted or the enclosed case studies being published in the media without victims consent (YK45 and HB41). While it can be argued that there is nothing wrong with the later practice as research findings were publicly available anyhow, the question of ethics still remains. Sharing these stories with (1) a wider public than the professionals interested in specialised anti-trafficking reports and (2) in a form of victims' media confession even though affected trafficking survivors never spoke to the media is something victims have not consented to. This can adversely affect the recovery of trafficked people in a number of ways. They can be recognized and cast-off for being involved in selling sex; traffickers may decide to retaliate; trust could be broken between victims and assistance-providing agencies; and recounting traumatic events could reverse progress in recovery and reintegration. Therefore, both media and anti-trafficking stakeholders need to pay more attention to protecting victims' identities and prioritising their best interest and wellbeing over personal/organisational goals and objectives. In addition, this practice involves deception of media consumers who believe the interview did happen and that no information was altered (whereas, in such reports details are frequently changed or combined with those from different cases in order to avoid recognition of individual trafficking survivors and protect their privacy, but at the same time reflect on genuine trafficking patterns and trends).

Secondly, as interviewees pointed out, and analysis confirmed, the media pay disproportionate attention to the most violent and brutal cases. The distorted mediated representation of human trafficking becomes troublesome for those cases involving subtle mechanisms of abuse and control employed by traffickers. As a consequence, victims who do not fit the ideal victim prototype (see 5.3.3.) are not perceived as genuine or worthy of compassion. As stressed earlier in relation to violence-framed articles published in Serbian media, proving victimhood is an essential element of these articles. While the cruelty of exploitation and the inability to escape the condition remain a *conditio sine qua non* of genuine victimhood, two more elements are prominent in the British press. The first element they emphasize is the shame victims feel for having worked in the sex industry.

At the time of the abuse, I tried to take my life, and I genuinely wanted to die. I thought that was my only escape (...) I felt ashamed and like I was all the things they would call me to put me down. I felt worthless, and it's taken me 10 years to start rebuilding my life.

Shropshire Star (2014, September 2)

Another argument that stood out in the analysis is the age of trafficked individuals at the time they got recruited into trafficking. For instance, in a piece published by The Independent (Rawlinson, 2013, January 21), the author mentions the victim's age six times, stressing each time she was 'only 14' and 'still only 14' when certain violent happenings occurred, as if some justification can be linked to raping a 15 or 16 year old child. This emphasis of the innocent young age is in contrast with the victim-blaming trend reserved for older teenagers that was also recognised by interviewed experts in the UK (see 6.3.3.).

A third tool the tabloid media framing human trafficking in accordance with the violence frame tend to use to prove victimhood of the portrayed characters is the pathetic tone used to describe them and their fates:

In a fetid shack swarming with flies, an old woman with a ravaged face is weeping so uncontrollably she struggles to speak. When she does form words they are jerky and awkward, a string of incomprehensible denials. No, she does not remember. It was a long time ago. She does not understand how it happened.

Hazelton (2011, September 22)

Children being raped, tortured, beaten, prostituted, forced to have crude abortions, burned branded and sold sounds like the script for an unbelievable horror film. But tragically it sums up the daily lives of these vulnerable girls, barely out of primary school,

who were looking for love but instead found themselves enmeshed in a dark and horrifying world with little hope of escape.

Brown (2013, May 16)

Focused on exploring gruesome details of trafficking-related abuse, these articles do not raise concrete problems, such as failures of the anti-trafficking mechanism or particular legislative oversights. Rather, the problems identified pertain to vulnerability of women and girls to trafficking for sexual exploitation (three quarters of the sample), as well as specific trends that involve violent acts inflicted on victims (e.g. barbaric trade in women undertaken by ISIS and alleged forced tattooing of victims in the UK and US). Solutions offered in the articles are equally general, suggesting that punishing perpetrators (56%), assisting victims through recovery (25%), increasing anti-trafficking efforts (22%), and raising awareness (13%) would alleviate the situation. Responsibility for causing these problems is assigned to human traffickers, and very rarely to corrupt and ineffective police too. Those who are expected to solve the issues identified are mostly the police (60%) and the judiciary (44%). Individual texts mention policy makers, charities, members of the community (e.g. tattoo artists). As was the case in Serbia, the international community is called upon to respond to trafficking operations undertaken by ISIS. When it comes to the moral base applied in the analysed articles, articles referred to both helping the affected people (80%) and punishing crime (62%).

Victims are portrayed in a half of the images used to illustrate violence-framed articles. While



Picture 14 - Source independent.co.uk

stereotypical representation of the victim trope described in an earlier chapter does occur in the UK media as well, documentary photographs portraying real victims or personal photographs of victims are more commonly used. The problem of protecting victims' identity in the later photographs remains unsolved, as images reveal their faces, tattoos, parents, and dependent children. It is, however, worth noticing that British media are more careful when it comes to hiding the identity of domestic victims. Revealing identity of the victim in her home country might be deemed more

dangerous to her immediate safety and wellbeing. It is also possible outlets are more apprehensive about potential legal action for endangering the victim when covering domestic cases. Regardless, it is still important to abandon this practice in relation to all victims, no matter

where they come from, where their cases are processed, and where they reside after trafficking. At a minimum, journalists need to distinguish between victims who turned into activists after recovery and chose to be in the media and those still recovering and opting to speak to a foreign journalist out of desperation.¹⁰⁰ Apart from images of victims, mugshots of traffickers are also frequently used (18%). Neutral images of experts interviewed and affected locations were also recorded (12%), as were the images portraying victims of trafficking as unworthy prostitutes (7%).

6.3.5. Migration

The analysis so far has shown manifestations of migration frame in criminal justice stories and news on child sexual exploitation. Here, through accentuating or fabricating ‘otherness’ of traffickers and their victims, foreigners are represented as the sole source of the human trafficking-related crime. In other words, trafficking for sexual exploitation is framed as an issue imported by the foreign other from their (morally inferior) cultures (see chapters 6.3.1, 6.3.3.). In this section we turn to the set of articles that predominantly framed human trafficking as a migration issue. In total, there were 36 articles that were focused on the migration aspect of the issue. Three different topics emerged in these pieces – (1) the UK being affected by trafficking routes, (2) migration causing human trafficking, and to a lesser extent (3) the confusion between the phenomena of irregular migration and human trafficking. Problems identified in these texts also fit in into three categories – ethnic others being trafficked into the UK (37% texts), ethnic other being trafficked elsewhere (28% of texts), and the link between human trafficking and anti-migration measures. The latter category includes both articles that represent migration as the cause of human trafficking and texts that argue anti-human trafficking endeavours are masking efforts of western countries to suppress migration. Overall, migration is largely seen as a factor contributing to people being vulnerable to human trafficking and the solution to human trafficking is presented as stopping or controlling migration, introducing harsher border controls, increased policing and securitisation. Every other article mentions the need to improve identification and protection of trafficking survivors as a prerequisite for eradication of the crime.

The first set of articles positioned the UK as a destination country where migrant women are being exploited in the sex industry. Analysed articles tend to focus on specific trafficking routes – texts thematised trafficking of Nigerian and Romanian women to Britain. This is congruent with the high representation of these nationalities among victims identified through NRM in the observed period. However, it does not explain why did media focus on these two countries and

¹⁰⁰ I am not giving free interpretation of victims’ motives to speak to foreign press. Rather, I am referring here to a number of articles in the sample where victims from Asian countries spoke to British media and were quoted in the text asking for the journalist’s help.

disregarded other equally common trafficking routes that led to the UK at the time, such as Hungary and Albania. For instance, in 2015 alone, the number of identified potential victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation from Albania was double that of Nigerian and Romanian nationals together (NRM, 2015). However, the UK's newly appointed anti-slavery commissioner, Kevin Hyland, announced in the media in 2015 that tackling trafficking of Nigerians into the sex industry in UK is a priority, and labelled the 'flow of people from the west African country a major concern' (Batchelor, 2015, June 17). This, together with the newsworthy element of shocking witchcraft rituals (see 6.3.1.) resulted in a number of biased reports, rich in stereotypical representation of Nigerian victims and traffickers that evince cultural prejudices, racism, and concerns reminiscent of the colonial past. Nigerian and Romanian traffickers were moulded into the character of foreign evil trafficker from the White Slavery myth, a violent, merciless criminal who shows no remorse for his actions and little pity for his victims. As other scholars have shown before (Attwood, 2016, De Villiers, 2016, Augustín, 2007, Doezema, 1999), such trafficking representation often masks anxiety over migrants arriving to the host country, and justifies measures to discourage or inhibit their settlement. This is the case with analysed articles too. The language used in articles focused on trafficking from Romania to the UK, for instance, reveals the sentiment of resentment towards the liberal movement policy between EU countries. Not only are Romanian males represented as ruthless criminals and culprits of human trafficking, they are also blamed for abusing the system of student aid and scamming British taxpayers.

Romanian authorities say they have uncovered a scam on British taxpayers, who unwittingly fund thugs and pimps to come here posing as students. The pimps then use the same racket to bring in women who are coerced into becoming prostitutes.

Clark (2014, December 2)

In another article, based on an interview with a Romanian trafficker who was trying to sell and arrange transport of two local girls to the team of undercover British reporters, the criminal is quoted saying:

'There are no problems with them going, because in England they have opened the gate. They can't do nothing to you. Romania is in Europe now.'

Drake (2014, February 23)

As the two excerpts above illustrate, writing of the British papers, tabloids in particular, is fostering migration anxiety and negative sentiment towards the ethnic other. In fact, more than 80% of the analysed texts blame trafficking on foreign criminals, with an additional 14% blaming the victim for taking the risk of migration. In the latter articles, the negative sentiment is

transferred from traffickers to their victims, who are blamed for being too naïve and blinded by their wish to migrate. Challenging the integrity of victims of sexual violence is not inherent only to patriarchal cultures. In relation to Britain, content analysis and interviews conducted with relevant experts suggest this victim blaming occurs more often if the victim is a migrant woman who is not perceived to be a righteous member of society (for example, for being an irregular/‘economic’ migrant, a sex worker, or a drug addict). Experts interviewed affirm that they had troubles explaining to the media that women who do not conform to the victim stereotype were indeed trafficked, and was hence difficult to reassure them of their victimhood.

The experience of trafficking survivors recorded in the articles testifies to such attitudes being prevalent among police officers too, especially if victims came from non-EU countries. Victim testimony recorded in one of the articles in the sample states:

They were asking each other: ‘Did she come here legally or illegally?’ The way they were talking was very intimidating. They didn’t ask about the attack. They were more interested in why I was staying in the country without a visa.

Gentleman (2014, November 3)

The race and gender of victims are, according to the analysed texts, a key for predicting victimization or the intention to illegally migrate for work. Interviews with anti-trafficking experts suggest another important factor is the behaviour women display – the more vulnerable, shattered and broken they appear, the more likely they are to be recognised as survivors of trafficking. These biases are very consequential and harmful to those who do not fit the stereotype of a sexual exploitation victim, be it because of their behaviour, race, ethnicity, gender or age. As a result, they might be deprived of their rights and access to assistance, deported back to their home countries, or even prosecuted for crimes committed whilst under coercion. While some mention of such rights violations and discrimination is present in the British sample, this issue is side-lined and more needs to be done to have awareness raised and changes incited. It is, therefore, crucial for critical scholars to keep scrutinising the discourse of sex trafficking and how it is linked to labour mobility and the hierarchical organisation of European citizenship.

Several articles assign responsibility for the issue of human trafficking to states and governments, criticizing their response to the crime. Here, however, there is a clear division between the tabloid media that reiterate trafficking stereotypes and blame the ethnic other, and more serious outlets that approach the topic of human trafficking analytically. The Guardian was the most frequent

source of such pieces, under its 'Modern-day slavery in focus' series¹⁰¹ that problematized the undue focus on sexual exploitation on trafficking routes from South-East Asia to UK and UAE, and the anti-immigration response of UK to trafficking cases involving citizens of African and Eastern European countries. The remainder of the articles in this category came from another two online sources that have themed sections committed to writing on human trafficking. The Beyond Trafficking and Slavery of the critical global media platform, Open Democracy provided a historical overview of anti-trafficking practice being used for surveillance and criminalisation of migrant women in the United States of America. The Thomson Reuters Foundation News on trafficking provided analysis of similar practices in contemporary Australia, arguing that immigration officers have a biased approach to non-EU citizens causing many victims of human trafficking to pass through the system undetected and without access to adequate assistance, while simultaneously using suspicion of vulnerability to trafficking to prevent migrant women from entering the country.

Very few British media platforms were ready to criticise the government and the way the issue of human trafficking was addressed. While responsibility for allowing trafficking in human beings to happen is uncharted, the reports show governments are seen as the most prominent actor in stopping exploitation of people in trafficking. Namely, three quarters of migration-framed articles see the state as the one responsible for solving trafficking-related problems, and the remaining quarter specifies the police is the very actor to put an end on crime of trafficking. The proposed solutions of increased migration control, securitisation and policing are therefore in line with envisaged problem solvers. What remains underreported in all but one article are push factors that are making people migrate and exposing themselves to risks of being trafficked. Circumstances such as poverty, unemployment, gender discrimination, gender-based violence, political unrest and the role of the West in creating or maintaining some of these conditions remains a taboo in the mediated and wider trafficking discourse.

The second theme migration-framed articles focused on is the causal relationship between migration and trafficking phenomena. Most articles within the frame are dealing with this topic. Typically, the pieces are arguing that (irregular) migrants and refugees are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking, promoting migration control measures that aim to suppress human trafficking, and discussing specific routes of migration that are particularly dangerous in relation to human trafficking. The tropes of the foreign evil trafficker and culpable victim are reoccurring

¹⁰¹ Supported by Humanity United, the Guardian launched a series of articles on human trafficking and modern slavery in order to investigate its root causes and analyse potential solutions.

in these texts too. What is interesting, however, is the manifestation of a hierarchy of pity of some sort that emerges in articles referring to exploitation of both refugees and other migrants.

The Nigerian women trafficked as sex slaves are not like the refugees who have fled the battlefields of Syria or years of conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq. Nor are they escaping repressive regimes such as that of Eritrea, in the Horn of Africa. Though they are not running from war or dictatorship, they flee because of something else: a lack of hope in the future at home in Africa's biggest economy and most populous nation, where only a tiny elite has benefited from the wealth of the country's vast oil exports.

Polity & Fick (2015, December 3)

While I am not arguing that all articles have the intention of showing that some trafficking victims are culpable for their own affliction, and that others are more deserving of our compassion because they had no choice but to leave their countries, many do offer space for such an interpretation. The lack of articles that explain the root causes of human trafficking, migration push and pull factors, historical and economic factors that have contributed to some of these conditions and the role of the West within them, and the complexity of the consent issue in the context of human trafficking is, therefore, deeply troubling. By stressing the links between migration and human trafficking and having only a small section of trafficking survivors positioned as deserving of their victim status, migration is associated with criminality and all migrants are represented as the unwanted others. Consequently, measures intended to keep them away are justified, and conditions met for preserving the world order in which the wealth and benefits of living in the West are available only to the selected few.

In addition to being reported as undesired migrants deserving of their misfortune, it is very clearly designated that these victims can be happy and safe only if they go back home. This is reflected in the articles quoting the victims saying they are happy to be back home in their own country, they wish they had never left, or they wished they were stopped from entering the UK by border control upon their arrival. Also, there are mentions of British officials travelling to trafficking victims' origin countries and warning people of the dangers of migration. The idea that it is in the migrant-victim's best interest to return to her home country is easily internalised because it is linked to the much older idea popular in public discourse on anti-trafficking, that staying home guarantees safety, especially for women (see Andrijasevic, 2007). Of all the articles in the sample there is only one, published in The Guardian series on human trafficking, that questions the effectiveness of discouraging migration as a trafficking prevention measure, and making a point that such an approach only makes women migrants more dependent on smugglers and human traffickers.

This research confirms findings of other scholars who have found that the UK and other EU countries are using human trafficking to justify harsher border controls and anti-migration measures in order to hinder the arrival of all unwanted migrants, including sex workers, trafficking victims, but also asylum seekers (see also Milivojevic, 2015, Pajnik, 2010, Aradau, 2008, Berman, 2003). Yet, to fully understand the links between migration and human trafficking being made in articles by the British press, it is important to consider given historical and political frameworks that influenced both the reporting and understanding of the issues portrayed. Many anxieties linked to the flow of migrants emerged and were spread through migration-framed articles on human trafficking. In the wake of this humanitarian issue, the political interest of European governments in demonstrating that they have the problem under control is great. With this in mind, it seems that bringing human trafficking and migration issues together and arguing that eradication of the former depends on curbing the latter helps the authorities in re-establishing the threatened sovereignty of the state.

Those who have studied media reporting on the migration crisis reported that journalists tend to stress the inability of European governments to control the influx of people (Müller, 2017, Lazaridis, 2015) or respond adequately to a humanitarian crisis (Müller, 2017, Komornik, 2017). Furthermore, terminology used in texts on migration is indicative of the great extent of the issue and its negative implications for the European nations. Such terms are encountered in this research as well (e.g. illegal migrants ‘flooding Europe’, countries being ‘overwhelmed by the influx of migrants’, or the very fact that the issue is referred to as ‘unprecedented crisis’). To add to that, the sentiment towards migrants in Britain has worsened since Brexit, and reports are showing increase in hate crimes against migrants, as well as greater risks of exploitation, abuse, and rights violations of foreign workers (O’Neill, 2017, FLEX, 2017). Migrants coming to Europe are perceived as a potential threat to state sovereignty, national interests, and national identity. Closing borders, criminalising migration, and having authorities decide on who is worthy of victim status and eligible to claim asylum should therefore be regarded as measures of exercising statecraft, and media as one of the platforms that allows such practice to happen.

Finally, the third set of articles in this frame deals with the conflation of trafficking and migration. Two texts from the Guardian series were discussing the problem of human trafficking cases being treated as immigration issues in Britain and the consequent failure to suppress trafficking and help the survivors. Another piece published by the Thomson Reuters News Foundation did the opposite by writing on alleged cases of Albanian women posing as victims of human trafficking in order to get asylum in the UK. These articles are an indication of a strong political will in the UK to represent human trafficking as an immigration issue. Interviewed British anti-trafficking and media experts highlighted this issue saying that trafficking is being used politically, rather than

being addressed, and that the goal is to attack immigration rather than help people who have been abused in trafficking. The battle anti-trafficking is losing to anti-immigration is, according to experts, very worrisome and results in decreased solidarity with the victims of human trafficking who are being equated with 'false' asylum seekers and greedy economic migrants.

Over the last 10 years, in most countries the response to human trafficking was to either heavy on the immigration or the law enforcement. And in the UK there has always been a political agenda, and the media have annoyingly perpetuated that human trafficking is about immigration. And that is where it sits politically. It's about migrants.

YK45

The moral base behind the approach to trafficking that is promoted in said articles is also indicative of anti-immigration and anti-crime attitudes – articles were more likely to endorse punishing crime and stopping illegal migration, than HT prevention and helping its victims.

While not that many outlets recognised and analysed the fine nuances between the two phenomena, the migration frame abounds in articles that confuse them. People smuggling and human trafficking are used interchangeably, traffickers labelled as 'migrant gangs' (Powell, 2015, October 8) and 'evil human smugglers' (Greenwood, 2014, July 11), and refer to smuggled individuals as victims of human trafficking even when there is no clear indication of them being exploited. Imagery used in these articles also proves that the two phenomena are being equated, as pictures of crowded refugee camps, large groups of people (all visibly matching the 'ethnic other' category), migrants boarding a trailer truck, etc. Such images are sometimes mixed with the typical visual illustrations of victims, traffickers, and relevant locations. All of the interviewed anti-trafficking experts from the UK, and some journalists as well, expressed their concern with this terminological conflation. In addition, analysis of interviews exposed that the migration crisis has increased the interest of the media in covering the topic of human trafficking. To get a better understanding of this upsurge of interest, however, in addition to exploring the media framing of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, researchers would need to explore coverage of other forms of trafficking and the migration crisis itself.

While my personal experience with providing information on human trafficking to the media is mainly connected to my work in the civil sector in the Western Balkans, I was interviewed by an English local weekly as an expert on human trafficking. In the textbox below, this section concludes with a short presentation of how my statement was manipulated to fit the migration-scare frame of the article. As I have limited experience with the British press in this domain, it is impossible for me to assess how frequent or widespread this practice is. However, I did ask my

respondents in the UK if they had bad experience with the press in terms of having their quotes misinterpreted or fabricated. Many reported on having some statements placed out of context or misunderstood by journalists they worked with. Others spoke of introducing authorisation procedures in their dealing with the press to prevent this from happening, but they gave vague explanations as to how the information was manipulated and whether that was done purposefully.

I was asked by a Faculty member to speak to a journalist on human trafficking and I agreed to a phone interview. She explained the focus of the text was going to be vulnerability of illegal migrants to human trafficking and enquired about that and my experiences with this issue whilst working in anti-trafficking in Serbia. As the interview was done via phone, I requested a copy of the text to be sent to me for authorisation. However, I only got the text once it was published. On the right is the section of the article containing my statements as they appeared in print.

Every sentence was edited by the author of the text. By adding words such as 'of course', 'much', 'many', and whole phrases like 'no matter how dehumanising it might be' a more sensationalistic effect was accomplished. In the section that is highlighted, the manipulation of the quotes went

even further, changing the meaning of what I said to make it fit the chosen angle. I did not say irregular migrants cannot say no to a job, but rather that their status allows them only to seek jobs in the black market where exploitation is more likely to take place and less likely to be detected. I also did not assert that 'there have been many cases of people working in the illegal sector until they get asylum'. My comment was that the issue was that we did not know what happens to them because the authorities in charge lack the capacities to do proper identification. In fact, in three years I was working there, we did not have a single case that involved an asylum seeker working illegally in the country and falling victim to human trafficking.

University of Kent PHD student Elena Krsmanovic has expressed similar worries about the vulnerability of refugees and asylum seekers after witnessing migrants arriving in Serbia whilst working for an anti-trafficking charity.

"Of course people travelling through dangerous routes trying to get to countries are under much greater risk," she told KoS.

"Whilst they are travelling, many who are desperate to escape their origins will have to pay off debts to their smugglers.

"They're not in a position to say no to work; no matter how dehumanising it might be.

"When they've reached their destination, there have been many cases of people working in the illegal sector until they get asylum.

"When someone doesn't have proper documentation it leaves them much more likely to be exploited underhand."

After helping survivors for the Serbian charity ASTRA, the 27-year-old criminology researcher is keen that people understand what trafficking involves so victims can be identified and receive the support they need.

12 Week ending August 28, 2016

The title of this article, 'As Migrant Numbers Rise Fears Grow over Human Trafficking', made it to the front page of the last August 2016 edition of Kent on Sunday (KoS)¹⁰². I sent an email to the journalist, pointing out the incorrect quotations and stressed how, as an academic, I would never make claims that are not supported by credible research or my own professional experience in the field. However, I never received a reply and no corrections followed either.

6.3.6. Human Rights

The human rights frame was the least common in the UK sample, accounting for less than 2% (29 out of 1,544) of texts published in the analysed period. The three major groups of problems the articles thematised were inadequate protection of victims' rights, inadequate legislation, and mixing up of trafficking, illegal migration and prostitution that results in the absence of protection. Half of the human rights-framed texts problematized inadequate protection of human trafficking survivors. The most prominent problems in the UK context when it comes to failures to adequately assist victims of human trafficking are related to inadequate identification of victims (particularly those who are not EU citizens) and their consequent deportation to their country of origin. Namely, in the UK a victim who gets a positive decision on the claim of trafficking could also be granted a leave to remain in the country. In the period under scrutiny in this thesis these decisions were made by the UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) within the National Crime Agency and the Home Office (HO). Therefore, critical reports emerged in the media that highlighted the conflict of having an immigration gatekeeper (HO) decide on whether someone is a victim of human trafficking or not. Under-representation of non-EU victims among those who have been granted a positive decision and firm reasons to doubt competent authorities' grounds for rejection (Annison, 2013) only gave further support to such criticism. Human rights-framed articles reported on the culture of disbelief against victims who are not EU nationals and disapproved of the government's decision to treat trafficking as an immigration control issue. In her OpenDemocracy piece illustratively titled 'Just how badly does UK protect victims of trafficking', McCall J. (2015, March 26) quotes former Detective Inspector Watkins on raising the question:

How can you have an organisation making decisions on a victim of trafficking when they have a performance indicator that marks them on how many people they get to leave the country?

¹⁰² see Appendix I for the front page and the whole article.

It is unlikely the situation has changed for the better in the wake of migration crisis or Brexit and its immediate aftermath. Articles also show how inadequate terminology and confusion between human trafficking and illegal migration and human trafficking and prostitution are further contributing to issues linked to deportation and 'crimmigration' of individuals trafficked into Great Britain.

Reoccurring topics also include the rights of victims to non-punishment if the crimes they have committed are a consequence of them being exploited in a trafficking ring (also pertaining to foreign victims), insufficient funds to secure adequate assistance for survivors and the lack of shelters in which they can seek refuge. Few of the articles in this sample praise the Modern Slavery Act as the necessary legal tool that will lead towards better protection of people affected by trafficking. However, toughening laws seems as a politically easy step to take. There is no apparent political will or allocation of funds that would suggest victim assistance and protection is prioritised in Britain, and many indicators suggesting preventing immigration is the goal behind numerous anti-trafficking efforts of the government. In addition to the Modern Slavery Act that is positively represented in the media, two other legislative acts are mentioned in the context of being harmful to rights of trafficked individuals. These are the bill on serious crimes (adopted as Serious Criminal Act 2015) that in the previous version contained the term 'child prostitution' and the Immigration Act (2014) that was criticized for inciting deportation of human trafficking victims.

Unlike the articles in all other frames that predominately blame individual human traffickers and organised crime gangs, human rights-framed pieces focus on the problems for which the usual culprit is the state (the government, border and immigration control agencies, criminal justice system, and the Parliament). The same agencies are seen as the ones responsible for solving the problems and contributing to better protection of trafficked individuals. In addition to state actors, a smaller portion of texts also points out the role of charities, NGOs and well-intended individuals. The moral base for their reparative actions is to help and protect people in affliction in all the texts. The solutions leading to better protection of human rights offered in these texts could also be grouped into three different categories. The most common ones (two thirds of the proposed solutions) had to do with calling for improvement of assistance programs and better protection of victims' rights – opening shelters, securing funds for victim support, securing non-deportation and right to stay, improving identification, and protecting the right to non-punishment. The remaining articles called either for systemic improvements of the response to human trafficking that would lead to more adequate care of trafficking survivors or legal improvements designed with the same intention. In particular, the need to train professionals to recognise victims of human trafficking, provide adequate care and be victim-sensitive in their

daily work was pronounced. Multi-sectoral victim-centred collaboration between anti-trafficking stakeholders was identified as potentially beneficial, and so was the uprooting of discrimination against victims that come from non-EU countries.

A positive aspect of the human rights-framed articles is that greater sensitivity and less sensationalism that was reflected both in the language of the texts and the visual illustrations that accompanied it. Only a quarter of images used stereotypically represented trafficked individuals fixed in their victim identity in a position of utter desperation (in filthy surroundings, crying, hiding their faces, or working in the streets). A majority of pictures portrayed the experts interviewed in the articles. Alternative ways of showing victims were also employed and photographs selected that show victims as recovering freed individuals in normal surroundings. For instance, the image below shows a trafficking survivor being hugged by a care worker. Symbolic representations (graffiti art, drawings, and symbolic objects) were also used to visualise processed topics.

While articles that frame human trafficking as a human rights-related issue address some important problems, the diminutive volume of human rights-framed articles in the sample testifies to the marginalisation of those matters. The British press largely neglects issues pertaining to protection of rights of human trafficking



Picture 15 – Source [dailymail.co.uk](https://www.dailymail.co.uk)

survivors, victim-centred approach of law enforcement and other agencies involved in responding to the crime of trafficking, and human rights violations that make people more vulnerable to becoming victims of this crime. The analysis of interviews shows this proved to be a problem for all the local anti-trafficking organisations trying to publicly communicate about the need for better protection of their clients' rights. Only one interviewed media expert touched upon framing trafficking as a human rights issue, but only to express his view that from the media perspective this would be too obvious and unnecessary to stress:

I think it's taken as read, obviously. If someone has been a victim of crime, their human rights have obviously been abused. I think it won't be framed in that way necessarily. If

somebody has been forced to having sex, by definition, we don't need to spill out that's human rights abuse.

NM46

I enquired about writing about protecting rights of trafficking victims after they have been rescued to which my respondent said that they are entitled to that, but little attention is being paid to that problem because of the lack of finances. The way trafficking is perceived in the UK implies that everything is solved once the victim is freed and the trafficker arrested, and this view is one promoted by the media in the UK. The perpetual success of law enforcement in the numerous criminal justice-framed articles is largely contributing to this. By marginalising victims' rights and protection on the one hand and promoting a strictly criminalisation-based approach on the other, the media create the impression that the system of NRM in Britain is functioning adequately. This story of success, however, is not the reality faced by many trafficked individuals who face deportation, criminalisation, secondary victimisation, systemic discrimination based on their race, ethnicity, and occupation, and many other rights violations that are recorded in practice (see for instance reports of UK anti-trafficking monitoring group).

While human rights stories seem to be the ones most difficult to push in the media, an encouraging factor is revealed when outlets that published such stories are examined. The greatest number of texts were published in the media that have projects focused on regular reporting on human trafficking, or critical platforms that also pay special attention to raising awareness of human trafficking and deeper analysis of related problems. These outlets are The Guardian, the Thomson Reuters Foundation, OpenDemocracy, and The Independent. At the same time, however, one should be aware that some of these news platforms have limited readership and that the challenge of expanding their reach remains. In September 2017 further partnerships with the media have been established when the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner launched a media campaign in partnership with the Evening Standard and The Independent. Within the campaign the media will be supported to conduct special investigations into the crime of trafficking for the period of 6 months, with 1 to 3 news pieces to be published in print and online editions of the two outlets each week. Through this and similar initiatives gaps in victim protection can be addressed in a public debate. However, it remains to be seen if these texts will be impartial, critical of the state and other actors in anti-trafficking or simply further endorse the current tendency to represent trafficking as an issue solvable by suppression of illegal migration, which has proven to have detrimental effects on the human rights of trafficking survivors and other vulnerable groups.

6.4. Chapter Summary

Much like the media in Serbia and the Netherlands, British online outlets were focused on the criminal justice and prostitution aspects of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. With regards to both frames, harsher policing measures were promoted as the solution to human trafficking. The same can be said of the CSE frame, where moralistic discourse was used to convince the readership that helping children is achieved only through punishing traffickers. This focus on prosecution of criminals helps overlook the systemic oversights in anti-trafficking and victim protection mechanisms.

In general, there was little recognition of the need to address the root causes of trafficking or the necessity for improving protection of victims in the analysed articles. British efforts to tackle problems pertaining to human trafficking, and in particular introduction of the Modern Slavery Act, were praised for being pioneering and most advanced. Criticism was reserved for the ways other countries are dealing with the problem. Articles criticising the anti-trafficking endeavours of foreign governments are indicative of a widespread legacy of colonialist thinking. Such reasoning is also manifested in those texts that comment on cultural beliefs that make foreign women susceptible to traffickers, or religious values that are interpreted as conditioning Muslim men to disrespect women. Analysis also showed that migration is largely seen as a factor contributing to people being vulnerable to human trafficking and that anti-migration measures can help in eradicating it.

Even though, generally speaking, British media show less proneness to sensationalism than media in Serbia for instance, and greater sensitivity in selecting photographic illustrations, problematic terminology is still not uprooted. Furthermore, proving victimhood, hierarchies of pity, and victim blaming occur on regular bases. The latter is mostly reserved for foreign and older victims, including older children. Victim blaming and credibility checking practice shows that the integrity of victims is not only challenged in patriarchal societies, but elsewhere as well. Scarcity of analytical pieces is pronounced, but less severely than in the other two countries. An encouraging development in media reporting on human trafficking is an increasing number of media platforms/projects that specialise in analytical, quality reporting on trafficking. The collaboration between Anti-trafficking Commissionaire and several media outlets also have potential of raising awareness and supporting anti-trafficking efforts. Nevertheless, it remains to be seen if reporting produced within this cooperation will be unbiased and independent.

CHAPTER 7 - MEDIA FRAMING OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

7.1. Trafficking in Human Beings in the Netherlands

The Kingdom of the Netherlands is a country in Western Europe with a stable parliamentary democracy. Though stable, the political situation is fragmented, with 28 different political parties taking part in the 2017 general elections (Paapst and Mulder, 2017). With its 17.2 million inhabitants (CBS, 2018) the Netherlands is one of the most densely populated countries in Europe. According to Statistics Netherlands, the population of the country is growing, mostly due to the foreign migration flows (ibid). Nearly a quarter of the inhabitants of the Netherlands are originating from another country, large numbers of whom have roots in Morocco, Turkey, (former) Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, and Surinam (CBS, 2017a, 2017b). Similarly to the UK, due to its wealth, development, and steadily growing economy, the country attracts a great number of work migrants and is predominantly perceived as a human trafficking destination country. Together with Belgium, the Netherlands is also found to be the North West criminal hub for trafficking in human beings (OCTA, 2011). This means that victims from EU member states and from outside of the union are transiting through the Netherlands and being transferred further to other trafficking destination countries. The main flow of human trafficking to the Netherlands comes from the Central and Eastern Europe and Africa. In addition to that, an increase in internal trafficking has been recorded (see summarised human trafficking statistics based on reports of the National Rapporteur at the end of the section).

Efforts to curb human trafficking in the country have been intrinsically linked with regulation of prostitution in the country. While voluntary prostitution was never illegal in the Netherlands (DMFA, 2005), up until 2000 it was illegal to own and manage brothels. Despite that, the sale of sex went on in certain areas thanks to the policy of tolerance on brothels and windows. This regulated tolerance (Brants, 1998) of prostitution in the Netherlands reflected the pragmatic attitude of Dutch authorities when it comes to regulating prostitution, as well as the fact that prostitution was socially common and accepted in the country (Wagenaar et al, 2013). From the early 1980s however, attitudes towards prostitution began to change further. A more liberal policy came into being as a result of belief in harm reduction and consultation with organisations representing sex workers, brothel owners, and social services. Dutch authorities removed the ban on brothels on October 1st 2000, making the Netherlands the first country in Europe to abolish brothel prohibition. The purpose of this decision was to transform prostitution into a regular business sector subject to taxation, labour and administrative laws, and health and safety regulations. It was also expected that the change in the system would help eradicate human trafficking and abuse from the sex industry and secure better working conditions for people

involved in selling sexual services. Although The Netherlands is a unitary state, municipalities occupy a strong position in the Dutch political system, which is why the implementation of the legalization of prostitution was devolved to the municipalities that devised their own sex facilities licencing systems (Wagenaar et al, 2013, p. 50).

Next to those changes, in the year 2000, the Dutch criminal code was introduced with article 250a prohibiting sexual exploitation of human beings. This article was later replaced by Article 273f¹⁰³ thereby expanding criminalisation of trafficking in human beings to all forms of the criminal act, including those that were beyond the realm of sexual exploitation. According to the first paragraph of the article, any person shall be guilty of trafficking in human beings:

who by force, violence or other act, by the threat of violence or other act, by extortion, fraud, deception or the misuse of authority arising from the actual state of affairs, by the misuse of a vulnerable position or by giving or receiving remuneration or benefits in order to obtain the consent of a person who has control over this other person recruits, transports, moves, accommodates or shelters another person, with the intention of exploiting this other person or removing his or her organs shall be guilty of trafficking in human beings and as such liable to a term of imprisonment not exceeding twelve years and a fifth category fine.

Dutch Criminal Code, Art.273f, para 1.

Traffickers could be imprisoned for up to 12 years. Sentences can be higher (up to 15 years) if traffickers exploited a minor, acted in a group, or committed acts of violence. Finally, for aggravated human trafficking, one can serve 18 years to life imprisonment.

However, the legal changes of 2000 were met by sustained criticism coming from two opposing factions. On the one hand, those sympathetic to sex workers rights argued that lifting the ban on brothels excluded sex workers who were not citizens of EU and EAA countries and shifted the Dutch prostitution policy towards a focus on migrants. Deprived of the possibility to work legally in the Netherlands, the majority of women working in Dutch brothels had to choose between leaving the country, abandoning the industry, or working illegally in prostitution and being exposed to greater risks of violence and exploitation (Siegel, 2009). Research also suggested that authorities in the Netherlands started prioritising suppression of illegal immigration and illegal prostitution over fighting human trafficking and protecting foreign sex workers working in the country illegally (Staring, 2012, Zaitch and Staring, 2009). Media portrayals of human trafficking

¹⁰³ Initially, the Article 250a was replaced by Article 273a in 2005. A year later, however, it was renumbered as Article 273f, without substantive amendment.

and illegal prostitution were supporting this agenda (see Siegel, 2009). The position of prostitutes who come from outside the EU and EAA countries was further aggravated by the criminalisation of illegal residence under the amendments of the Aliens Act (2000) in 2012. Available empirical data indicates that the criminalisation of the illegal stay is playing into the traffickers' hands not only by making undocumented immigrants more vulnerable to exploitation, but also by making them more reluctant to seek help and report abuse out of fear of arrest and deportation (Staring, 2012:69, Staring and Aarts, 2010).

On the other hand, the legislation was heavily criticised by the parties in favour of abolitionism. Just a few years after the ban was lifted, prominent politicians became involved in fighting forced prostitution within the legal sector and campaigning for alternative prostitution regulation. The Labour Party cadre, Lodewijk Asscher and Job Cohen, and Christian Union leader Gert-Jan Segers became particularly involved. At the same time, moral panic about loverboys¹⁰⁴ arose (see Bovenkerk et al. 2006), creating greater public anxiety over the vulnerability of young (white) girls to exploitation by criminal men of colour. As Outshoorn (2012) explained in detail, the public debate became characterised by the increasing talk of trafficking and abuse within the legal prostitution sector in reports by the Dutch police, the Centre for Scientific Research and Documentation (WODC) of the Ministry of Justice, and the media. As a result, the regulation of prostitution was revised and a new policy on regulating prostitution and prevention of abuse in the sex industry (Wetsvoorstel Regulering Prostitutie en Voorkomen Misstanden Seksbranche, short WRP) emerged on the horizon in 2009. With the aim of imposing uniform control over prostitution nationwide, the bill was aiming to licence all forms of prostitution, mandate uniform regulations across the whole country, raise the minimum age of prostitutes from 18 to 21, enforce registration of sex workers with the authorities, and fine clients who buy sex from unregistered prostitutes (Weitzer, 2017:375). The legislation passed the Dutch Lower Chamber several times but it is yet to pass the Upper Chamber. In the past, the law was defeated due to the controversial requirement for registration of sex workers that was in conflict with the privacy law. Also, parliamentarians were sceptical about enforcement of criminalisation of clients and other measures proposed by the law. The most recent revised version passed the Dutch Lower Chamber on 21st of June 2016, but it remains to be seen if the Upper Chamber will accept this version, enabling the law to come into force (Wagenaar et al, 2017). However, critics have warned already that its implementation might do further damage to the working conditions of sex

¹⁰⁴ Loverboy is term used in the Netherlands for pimps and traffickers who exploit women in prostitution by pretending to have romantic interest in them and posing as their boyfriends. See section 7.3.1. for more details.

workers, their stigmatisation, and vulnerability to intimidation, blackmail and abuse (Outshoorn, 2012).

Data from the interviews conducted showed that anti-trafficking professionals were divided: some were openly against the legalisation of prostitution, others claiming it was still the best possible solution. Expert opinions were particularly strong and conflicting when it came to the question of whether the Dutch model should be changed to involve criminalisation of clients. However, even those openly supportive of legalisation of prostitution were not content with the law of 2000 and the way it was implemented.

Both the national government and the local government have not done a good job in legalisation. They worked on it as if legalisation of the industry is going to make everything good, instead of realising it is going to be a long-term process to guide the industry that has been illegal for such a long time. They failed to take into account that it's a stigmatised and marginalised work, and that this stigmatisation needs to be eradicated for the law to work. And most of all, they failed to include sex workers into decision making and to make sure their experiences are acknowledged and they are involved in making the sex industry a place where working conditions are being protected. The government did very little of that. And here you see that the stigma and the taboos around sex work are much more difficult to change than the law.

EM6

As in other European countries, human trafficking policy in the Netherlands encouraged greater border and immigration control, heavier policing, and securitisation. Some of the interviewed professionals are happy with such an approach and argue that only an iron fist can be effective against the malice of human trafficking. Others, however, disagree and claim that the approach is not only ineffective, but also harmful to victims of human trafficking and other vulnerable groups. The disagreement in the Dutch anti-trafficking community is reflective of the wider conflict between the conservative and the progressive fractions. The shift in anti-trafficking towards an anti-migration/anti-prostitution approach should therefore be regarded as an integral part of a more general shift from liberal to more conservative values and efforts to give more power to the state and the police.

International treaties on human trafficking that are signed and ratified by the Netherlands include the UN Convention against Transnational Crime and the Palermo Protocol that was ratified in 2005. In the same year the country signed the CoE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, but the document was ratified and entered into force only in 2010. From 2011, as an EU Member State, Netherlands is obliged to abide by the European Parliament Directive

2011/36/EU on prevention and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA.

In practice, the fight against human trafficking in the Netherlands relies on effective police control of the licenced prostitution sector and suppression of illegal prostitution and the proactive programmatic approach based on the collaboration of the Dutch police with other criminal law and administrative enforcement partners. The aim of the latter is to get a grip on organised crime networks, including those of human trafficking (Staring, 2012: 61) and ensure that the conviction of culprits and success of criminal investigations is not dependent on testimonies of human trafficking victims. The government set up a Task Force on Human Trafficking that is responsible for implementing preventive anti-trafficking measures, detecting cases and imposing criminal penalties. The Task Force uses an integrative approach and fosters close collaboration in suppressing human trafficking between the National Police, the Public Prosecution Service, municipal authorities, border control, labour inspectorate, immigration service, the asylum seekers reception agency, NGOs, Chamber of Commerce, and relevant private parties. National anti-trafficking efforts are monitored by the National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children, as an independent monitoring mechanism established in 2000. The Rapporteur reports to the Dutch government on the nature and the scale of the problem. It cannot, however, receive human trafficking related complaints or exercise power of criminal investigation. According to the establishing act, National Rapporteur is meant to conduct research into developments into the scale and nature of trafficking, assess the effects of policy measures taken to tackle it, advice the government on policies to prevent and suppress trafficking in human beings and to periodically report to the government (Act establishing the National Rapporteur, 2000).

Victim identification is entrusted to the Coordination Centre for Human Trafficking (CoMensha), a government-sponsored NGO that is the focal point for initial support and registration of trafficked people. CoMensha receives reports from all police forces, border control, labour inspectorate, shelters, lawyers, NGOs, and other relevant first responders in order to perform victim registration and refer them to shelters and further assistance if necessary (EC, 2018). CoMensha also passes the human trafficking statistics to the National Rapporteur, who then uses it to report on the scope and trends in human trafficking in the country. The table below summarises the available figures pertaining to human trafficking situation in the Netherlands. The high proportion of adult female victims of foreign nationality exploited in the sex industry can explain why anti-trafficking efforts in the country are still mainly focused on tackling exploitation in prostitution. However, it is also probable that focus on the sex industry results in other forms of exploitation being under-detected. Recorded figures show that numbers of victims exploited

in other sectors are rising, and that internal trafficking is becoming more prominent. Foreigners still account for the majority of victims identified in the country. Victims predominantly come from Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Nigeria and Poland. Yet, a significant portion of trafficked people identified in the Netherlands are domestic citizens – between one quarter and one third of victims in the period between 2011 and 2015. The percentage of minors among identified victims has been steadily rising from 2012.

Table 11 - Statistics on Human Trafficking in the Netherlands in the period 2011-2016¹⁰⁵

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of victims	1,222	1,711	1,437	1,561	1,321	1,049 ¹⁰⁶
Female victims	81% (990)	88% (1,506)	88% (1,265)	84% (1,311)	82% (1,083)	76% (724)
Male victims	19% (232)	12% (205)	12% (172)	16% (250)	18% (238)	24% (228)
Victims with Dutch citizenship	28% (342)	25% (428)	32% (460)	30% (468)	33% (436)	30% (286)
Victims with foreign citizenship	72% (880)	75% (1,283)	68% (977)	70% (1,093)	67% (885)	70% (666)
% of children	16% ¹⁰⁷ (196)	13% (222)	18% (259)	19% (297)	23% (304)	24% ¹⁰⁸ (228)
Internal THB	unknown	33% (565)	41% (589)	37% (578)	38% (502)	30% (286)

¹⁰⁵ Data presented in the table was collected from various different reports of the Dutch National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children and the most recent Eurostat report on Human Trafficking as no unique report containing all the information necessary exists. As limited data was available for each of the years in different reports, minor inconsistencies in data presentation here were unavoidable (e.g. in 2011 there is no record of cross-border/internal trafficking in any of the reports). However, this combined sources method also allowed me to cross-check and verify data when multiple sources for the same variable and the same year were available. The resources used are: Nationaal Rapporteur Mensenhandel en Seksueel Geweld tegen Kinderen (2017), Nationaal Rapporteur Mensenhandel en Seksueel Geweld tegen Kinderen (2016), Eurostat (2015), and National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children (2014).

¹⁰⁶ Detailed victims' demographics are known for 952 identified individuals. Hence all the data in the column below pertains to these cases.

¹⁰⁷ The remaining 83% of victims are adults and for 1% of victims identified in 2011 age is unknown.

¹⁰⁸ The remaining 64% of victims are adults and for 15% of victims identified in 2016 age is unknown.

Cross-border THB	Unknown	66% ¹⁰⁹ (1,129)	58% ¹¹⁰ (833)	62% ¹¹¹ (968)	60% ¹¹² (793)	62% ¹¹³ (590)
Sexual exploitation	64% (782)	71% (1,215)	66% (948)	66% (1,030)	63% (832)	59% (562)
Other forms of exploitation	20% ¹¹⁴ (244)	15% ¹¹⁵ (257)	12% ¹¹⁶ (172)	17% ¹¹⁷ (265)	21% ¹¹⁸ (277)	25% ¹¹⁹ (238)

The National Referral Mechanism in operation in the Netherlands was designed to facilitate victim support. The purpose of the mechanism is to identify and protect trafficked people, map and coordinate support services, and ensure protection of victims' rights. In the Dutch system, local authorities are responsible for securing assistance and shelters for victims of human trafficking, and youth care centres are in charge of caring for trafficked children (the Government of the Netherlands, 2018¹²⁰). There are numerous specialised organisations supported by the government that provide services to victims of human trafficking, including accommodation, psychological care, legal assistance, and other forms of support during the recovery and reintegration phase. This can cause issues with impartiality and a conflict of interest, as explained by one of the interviewees in the context of criticizing the government in the media:

There is the money issue: you are paid by the local government, but at the same time you want to protect interest of your clients. (...) So if you talk about it the way people that give you money want you to talk about it, then your clients might run away. When you focus on the interest of your clients, which I prefer to do, then you may get into trouble with the donors. So that is complex.

EM16

¹⁰⁹ Whether exploitation was internal or cross-border in character is unknown in 1% of cases.

¹¹⁰ Whether exploitation was internal or cross-border in character is unknown in 1% of cases.

¹¹¹ Whether exploitation was internal or cross-border in character is unknown in 1% of cases.

¹¹² Whether exploitation was internal or cross-border in character is unknown in 2% of cases.

¹¹³ Whether exploitation was internal or cross-border in character is unknown in 8% of cases.

¹¹⁴ In the remaining cases the type of exploitation is unknown.

¹¹⁵ In the remaining cases the type of exploitation is unknown.

¹¹⁶ In the remaining cases the type of exploitation is unknown.

¹¹⁷ In the remaining cases the type of exploitation is unknown.

¹¹⁸ In the remaining cases the type of exploitation is unknown.

¹¹⁹ In the remaining cases the type of exploitation is unknown.

¹²⁰ <https://www.government.nl/topics/human-trafficking/combating-human-trafficking>.

Since 2015, the government also provides an online guide for professionals who work with trafficking survivors.¹²¹ The website includes an overview of victims' rights, relevant legislation, and information about four different phases of victim support: identification, protection, criminal justice proceedings, and compensation. The main limitation of victim support in the Netherlands is characterised by the lack of capacities (Dettmeijer-Vermeulen, 2012). Specific issues are related to providing adequate support to unaccompanied minors suspected of having been trafficked and securing temporary residence permits for victims from Central and Eastern Europe (National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children, 2014). Additionally, there are also some indications of inadequate protection of victims' right to non-punishment and pressures to decide whether to press charges too quickly (TIP report, 2017).

7.2. Mediascape in the Netherlands

As an ex-journalist and a public relations expert, I was used to both interviewing and being interviewed. Interviewing journalists for my thesis, however, was not an easy task. On the one hand, journalists are as a rule more comfortable asking questions than answering them. On the other hand, I often felt that my former colleagues were slightly apprehensive about speaking to me. As a few of them confirmed when I earned their trust, they were worried that I was trying to find out 'the wrongs of media reporting on trafficking' through speaking to them and then judge and question their professional integrity. To reassure them that this research had no pre-set agenda, I would often point out I have a media background myself and start the interview with the following question: How does it feel to be a journalist in your country? In Serbia, where most people knew me professionally, the trust was immediate and the question was like an invitation to start a confession, share all their concerns and troubles, and complain about pay that is both infrequent and miserable, no editorial support, worsening working conditions, political and economic pressures, fear of losing one's job, etc. In the UK, my respondents were more analytical – they would point out the pros and cons, sometimes linger over the frustrations over ever-growing commercialisation and workload, but conclude they were content working in the profession. In the Netherlands, interestingly, all of my respondents were slightly confused by the question. 'What do you mean?', they would usually ask, and I would proceed to explain that I ask this question to better understand the conditions they are working in and that it is important for me to collect this information since I am conducting research in three very different countries.

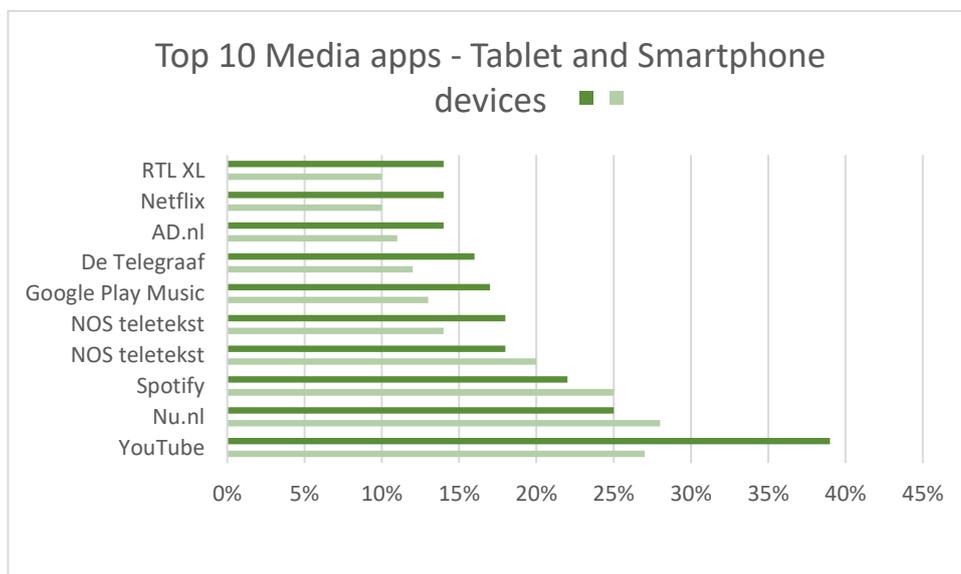
¹²¹ <https://www.wegwijzermensenhandel.nl/> retrieved on 22.01.2018.

'Pretty awesome', 'I am very lucky', 'This is a journalistic paradise', they would start elaborating on having freedom to cover topics of their choice, in a manner they seem fit, and with no pressures or constraints of any kind. However, research evidence (see below), indicates the situation regarding media independence is not that ideal.

The Dutch media landscape is dynamic with many national and regional newspapers, free sheets, radio and television channels, and online news platforms merging, evolving, and transforming to adjust to the market. The media industry had total revenues of \$8.8bn in 2015 and despite being in a slight decline, it is expected to recover (MarketLine, 2016). Print media are losing revenues due to online media growth and decline in print advertising (van Dreunen, 2016). To cope with this, more media outlets are gravitating online and most report sharp increases in digital readership. This is not surprising, considering the fact that the Netherlands is the leader in Europe when it comes to internet access and internet use. The Eurostat report (2017) shows that 97% of Dutch households had internet access in 2016. As the news consumption shifted from paper to screen, the numbers of people who read the news on their mobile phones and tablet devices continued increasing.

Another strategy employed by the struggling Dutch dailies is putting up paywalls on their websites and limiting content availability, partially or totally, to prescribed paying consumers. Yet, the greatest popularity is achieved by the free news sites and apps (StarcomNL, 2016). As the graph below illustrates, the most popular online media on both smartphones and tablets with the Dutch were YouTube, Nu.nl, and Spotify. Apart from NU.nl, popular apps include different news sources, such as the NOS, De Telegraaf, and AD.nl. Together with Volkskrant, the websites of these four platforms have the greatest number of online visits too.

Graph 22: Most widely downloaded media apps (StarcomNL, 2016)



In terms of newspapers, at the end of the observed period, the outlets with greatest circulation were the tabloid newspaper De Telegraaf and the free sheet Metro with 469,972 and 432,510 total annual circulation in 2015 respectively (StarcomNL, 2016). National dailies Algemeen Dagblad (AD), De Volkskrant, and NRC Handelsblad followed on the list of most sold print copies in the country. It should be noted that categorisation of tabloid media in the Netherlands should be taken with caution, as sensational tabloids are not typical of the Dutch media landscape (Bakker & Vasterman, 2010). Based on audience share, the largest electronic media outlets are NPO Nederland 1 and RTL 4 (television channels) and Radio 538 and NPO Radio 3FM (Paapst and Mulder, 2017). Television is very popular among the Dutch population who spend over 3 hours a day on average watching TV programmes (Wennekers et al. 2016, Bakker & Vasterman, 2008).

Both Freedom House and Reporters without Borders rank the Netherlands among the global leaders when it comes to freedom of the media (World Press Freedom Index, 2017, Freedom of the Press, 2017). Due to the pronounced regard for the freedom of the press, freedom of speech, plurality, self-regulation, and concern for ethical codes are associated with the local journalistic culture (Paapst and Mulder, 2017). Professionals working in the field do recognise that global developments in journalism have changed the dynamics in newsrooms, but still consider themselves extremely fortunate to be coping with those difficulties in the Netherlands, a country where media remain focused on the public interest. Less time and resources to work on investigative stories, popularity of shorter forms, expansion of PR, and digitalisation are all identified as taking a toll on the work in the industry.

There is of course a big change in the media landscape. Journalists used to be highly educated people and there were available jobs in investigative journalism. But, because of all things being digitalised, consumers became prosumers or producers of media themselves. Including NGOs. So there is a blend, a new breed of journalism of sorts. And sometimes it is hard to distinguish if it's journalism or if it's PR.

ET17

Interviewed media professionals from the Netherlands did not experience either political or economic pressures to change their reporting, but a few of them do find newspapers might be susceptible to these influences because of the financial struggles that print is going through. None are aware that such pressures actually occurred in their or other media outlets in the country. When it comes to other external troubles linked to the journalistic profession, one respondent was dealing with internet trolling and intimidating reactions to her opinion pieces. The woman received death threats from right-wing groups and explained it is very hard for female journalist to write opinion pieces on certain topics, including sex and female sexuality. These reactions,

however, did not change the way she feels about working in journalism nor did it affect her content with the work she has been doing (AA14).

Contrary to the experiences of my participants however, studies show compelling evidence that the Dutch media have been primarily driven by commercial interests in the past three decades. In his comprehensive analysis, Bergman (2013a) showed that both political and economic forces do influence media reporting in the Netherlands, prioritizing the elite's interests over those of the general population, and marginalizing the non-hegemonic views from the news. Like elsewhere in Europe, the quality of journalism in Holland was affected by increasing commercialization and ever-growing competition. The accelerated news cycle meant there is less time for news producers to engage in fact-checking. Berman (2013a:103) also suggests that the prominence of infotainment programs put pressure on more serious outlets to cover more commercial topics. Other reports on the crisis of Dutch journalism emerged too (Berman, 2013b, Ummelen, 2009), confirming that there are issues with institutional and pro-Western biases, susceptibility to political and economic influence, and reduced quality of the news. In addition to that, recent national security and antiterrorism legislative proposals have caused concerns about the undue surveillance of journalists and their sources (Freedom of the Press, 2016).

Additional problems that media in the Netherlands face are related to the high concentration of media ownership and the lack of transparency of media concentration (Paapst and Mulder, 2017, van Dreunen, 2016, Bakker & Vasterman, 2008). The largest companies own more than 90% of the paid market. In the observed period (2011-2015) those were De Persgroep, Telegraaf Media Groep and Mecom. In February 2015, the Dutch Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM) approved the acquisition of Mecom by the De Persgroep, causing the Dutch Media Authority to express concerns over the impact of increasing ownership concentration on the independence of the print sector (Freedom of the Press, 2016). A year later De Persgroep joined forces with Wegener media too. In addition to that, reduced budget has led to the consolidation of public-service broadcasting, with a number of television channels being merged together or closed. Legislation against concentration exists in the Netherlands, as well as a number of regulatory agencies, yet lack of law enforcement seems to be the biggest regulatory problem. In addition to that, Paapst and Mulder (2017) warn that stricter anti-concentration regulation would not be effective because the small market size could actually be the cause of the concentration.

Speaking specifically about reporting on human trafficking, Dutch media professionals were in agreement that this topic is not an easy one to cover. On a practical level, some of them find it hard to access the right information. Journalists who specialise in the topic of human trafficking are also very critical of the way media report on this topic, highlighting the problem of focusing

on sex and violence, and the tendency to engage in reactive case-reporting over analytical investigative work. Case reporting is more common around those instances of trafficking that involve a large number of victims, or victims that are underage and domestic nationals. This is why loverboy cases generate much broadcast coverage and many publications. In addition to that, Dutch media show bias towards ‘black and white’ cases, i.e. cases that fit the stereotypical idea of an innocent victim exploited by the foreign evil criminal. From an editorial perspective, there is a clash between supporting anti-trafficking efforts with continuous critical reporting and generating news:

In general, everybody in the media is against human trafficking, against domestic violence, against discrimination and all those things. In general. But that is not what news is about. News is something that is outstanding. It is not possible to use the media to keep shouting human trafficking is bad, bad, bad all the time. It is only possible to generate reporting that is problem focused. Therefore, if the story is bad enough and sexy enough, it will be in the media. If it is long-term, if it is proactive, if it is a positive story, if it is structural, if it is looking for a solution, or it's fitted in the language of law, or there are any other complicating factors, stories are swept under the rug.

ET17

Anti-trafficking experts interviewed for the study share these concerns and add that a major issue is the short span of media attention that dies out quickly after arrests in the big cases are made. One respondent describes it as ‘spilling a drop of water on a barbeque’ – there is an outburst of reaction: everyone is shocked and flabbergasted, but the response is short lived and there is little consequence to it (AL12).

Experts’ opinions on whether and to what extent journalists manipulate the data on stories on trafficking are divided. Some of them report that misinterpreting quotes is rare and that made-up stories are not being published in the country. As a rule, however, respondents said that they demand to see materials produced by the media prior to publication/broadcasting, which could explain why negative experiences are rare. Others share their own negative experiences with the press. Complaints about journalists being selective and not using the data that does not fit their angle or being biased and not devoting equal attention to both sides of the story also emerged in the interviews. This tendency was particularly pronounced in relation to the prostitution debate. In relation to legitimacy of news on human trafficking, it is important to mention a major scandal that broke out in the country in relation to one journalist who extensively wrote on human trafficking. Perdiep Ramesar was fired from the newspapers Trouw for using untraceable sources

in his stories. As a result of the controversy, a book that Ramesar co-authored with another journalist in 2011¹²² was taken out of stock.

The book was based on a lot of official reports, and all those reports were illustrated with cases. Some cases I did myself, some cases we did together, and some cases he did alone, like the case involving Chinese women. For the later, I don't know whether he made the stories up or not. (...) And he never opened up about it.

NM9

When all experiences are taken into account, it seems like the Dutch tend to value professionalism of the media highly and to believe that journalistic practice does not include fraudulent and harmful practices. A study of audience expectations by van der Wurff & Schönbach (2014) supports this claim. Still, a closer inspection reveals that the competitive and commercialised media sector in the Netherlands is far from the 'journalistic heaven' some perceive it to be. For sensitive topics such as human trafficking, it is critical to scrutinise it and point out the areas that need improving.

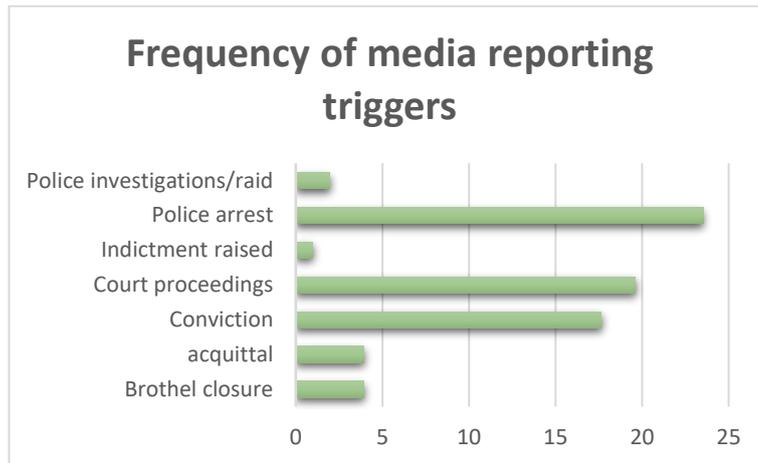
7.3. Frame Analysis

7.3.1. Criminal Justice

Hegemonic focus on the criminal justice approach to human trafficking is reflected in the media reporting on the issue in the Netherlands as well. In fact, this frame accounted for almost 70% of the sample (526 articles), which is the highest percentage of frame dominance in all three countries. News that fit the criminal justice frame is usually case-based and focused on reporting on different stages of the law enforcement process – from police investigations and raids, to actual arrests, court proceedings, and sentencing. The graph below shows how much media interest was generated in each of the stages.

¹²² A book on human trafficking based on investigative journalism titled *Slaven in de polder*, i.e. 'Slaves in the Polder' was written by Roessingh & Ramesar (2011).

Graph 23: Frequency of topics in case-based criminal justice-framed articles (in percentages)



As the graph demonstrates, there is more continuity in reporting throughout different stages of the law enforcement process in individual cases in the Netherlands. While reporting in Serbia is focused on arrests, and in the UK trafficking convictions seem to draw somewhat greater attention, media in the Netherlands are more consistent when it comes to informing their readers on the case processing developments. That said, in terms of contents, three quarters of Dutch reports on individual trafficking cases were congruent to those of the other two countries. Most of the news is presented in the hard news format and characterised by short form and few to no sources used in the stories. Criminal justice reports also serve as a vessel for proving that the state is in power and able to eradicate crime. That is evident in the reports that talk about successful collaboration between the Dutch authorities on local and international level and their success in combating human trafficking. Also, reports on police actions could also be read as an attempt to prove state power. Pieces on police raids often discuss harsher policing measures being implemented. In addition to that, the large number of police officers involved in individual police actions is emphasized: ‘three hundred police officers took part in the great action in Eindhoven’, ‘more than 500 people were involved in the action’, etc.

Conflation of terminology that occurs in the sample shows that many Dutch journalists also have a tendency to approach the topic superficially and not engage with nuances of particular trafficking cases. For instance, the word ‘whore’ was used to refer to victims of human trafficking, the word ‘girlfriend’ for victims of loverboys, and the word ‘pimp’ for traffickers. However, what is specific for the Dutch sample of criminal justice-framed articles is that about a quarter of case reports prompted journalist to raise questions about the adequacy of the national anti-trafficking response and interview additional sources to look for better solutions. These are the articles that went beyond summarising police-issued press releases and court statements. Instead, these publications were thematic, in-depth pieces linked to certain developments in current trafficking cases. Most attention in these articles was paid to following three issues: (1) the necessity to

prosecute clients of underage prostitutes¹²³, (2) improving the response to the loverboy phenomenon to prevent exploitation of women who get romantically seduced and then forcibly trafficked into prostitution, and (3) the need for harsher policing of legal prostitution to detect and prevent human trafficking. These topics are indicative of overlaps of the criminal justice frame with the prostitution frame and rising influence of the abolitionist discourse in the country (see section 4.3.2. for more details). It is also evident that political parties are aware of the increasing importance of the media and are proactively involved in commenting on the cases in the media to push for their trafficking or prostitution-related agendas. Dutch anti-trafficking experts testify of this in their interviews as well:

Because the discussion is so harsh - if you do anything that does not condemn prostitution then you promote HT. That makes it really hard to have a normal political discussion. And as media pick upon that, more and more politicians respond and become involved.

EM6

Another observation regarding this subsample of articles concerns the type of media these texts were published in. Namely, both serious and the more commercial news outlets published pieces that question institutional and legislative responses to human trafficking. This is a unique feature of the Dutch sample. It shows that political interest in the topic of human trafficking for sexual exploitation prompts quality coverage in the media. Therefore, it is the necessary condition for the abandonment of superficial reporting based on recycling of press releases. Yet, even though the critical aspect of media reporting displayed by the Dutch outlets is commendable, analysis suggest that reports usually portray one-sided argumentation. Additional efforts are needed to secure fair political dialogue and to ensure that all voices are heard in the debate.

The problem that the Dutch press most frequently wrote about (43% of articles) in the criminal justice framed articles is the presence of human trafficking in the prostitution sector in the country. These pieces are specifically talking about the presence of human trafficking within the legalised prostitution sector – i.e. in window and brothel prostitution. Exploitation of women and girls in illegal prostitution, such as street prostitution outside of designated areas and prostitution in unlicensed spaces (e.g. hotels, private apartments) is less commonly thematised (15% of articles in the sample). This can be due to the fact that exploitation is harder to detect in the black market. However, increased efforts to bring public attention to exploitation in the legalised sex industry and change the prostitution regulation played a role too. A counter narrative arguing

¹²³ Legally, underage prostitutes are considered to be victims of human trafficking even if they consent to work in prostitution because of the fact that they are minors.

that too much policing of the legal prostitution adversely affects the rights and safety of sex workers is barely present in the analysed media reports (4%).

Other problems raised within this frame that received considerable media attention pertain to inadequate response to the loverboy phenomenon (22%) and the issue of men paying for sex with underage prostitutes (13%). In the Dutch context, the loverboy phenomenon is used to refer to a particular kind of recruitment into sexual exploitation. It implies that the trafficker (usually of foreign origin) pretends to have a genuine romantic interest in the victim (usually white, Dutch and quite young). In this phase, he treats the victim nicely and showers her with gifts and attention. After the initial phase, however, the trafficker persuades or forces the victim to work in prostitution and takes her earnings. In the Netherlands, there is a prejudice that loverboys only come from Turkey and Morocco, even though many of them are actually white Dutch men. The latter are invisible in the press reporting. Bovenkerk et al. (2006) who studied loverboy phenomenon specifically have shown that loverboy cases are far less common than presumed and are much more complex than the simplistic mediated representation would suggest.

In this sense, reports on loverboys resemble the narrative of CSE stories in the British press in which the exploiter is also an immigrant Muslim man (in the case of the UK, usually Pakistani). The ethnic othering in the Dutch press is much more subtle, however, and it is usually the names of accused traffickers that reveal they probably originate from another country. The media showed great interest in loverboy cases in which the traffickers were Dutch and Belgian rappers. Their involvement in the crime of trafficking was linked in the texts to the hip-hop culture and so-called 'pimp raping'. This stereotype and the corresponding failure to report on cases that involve Caucasian loverboys is deeply problematic. On the one hand, it reinforces racism. On the other, it creates an illusion that only women dating men of colour are vulnerable to falling victim to loverboy traffickers. This misinformation might actually make people more vulnerable to exploitation. Dutch criminologists have suggested that framing of the loverboy phenomenon should be interpreted through the prism of 'the risk society, multicultural conflicts, media culture, and new forms of sexuality amongst Dutch youth' (Staring 2012:67, referring to study of Bovenkerk, 2006).

VALKENBURG CASE

When it comes to loverboy cases, one that attracted most media attention is worth considering in more detail. This case became known in the press as the Valkenburg case, after the town in which the exploitation took place. A 21 year old man Armin A. forced a 16 year old girl into

prostitution. Court records show the girl was madly in love with him. Armin took all the money she earned in prostitution and even charged the girl 100 euros when she wanted to see him. He used the money to gamble. Yet, he defended himself saying it was the girl herself who insisted on working in prostitution and he only agreed to take part for her safety after much insisting on her part. Armin was arrested in October 2014 and charged for trafficking in human beings and a number of other criminal offences, including sexual exploitation of a minor and taking a child away from her parents.

The case immediately drew a lot of media attention, not only for involving a missing teenager, but also because the police was able to secure plenty of evidence and pursue men who paid to have sex with the girl. The evidence gathered included a list of contacts in the trafficker's phone, phone records, as well as DNA material collected from the used condoms found in the room where the girl was abused. The ample evidence encouraged the prosecutor involved to give bold statements to the media, not only announcing relentless hunt of all the men who had sex with the girl, but also warning the public of the consequences these men and others who take part in sexual exploitation of children are to face. The following statement of a prosecution official was reported in most Dutch media that covered the case:

'Many wives will be surprised by police at the door and hearing why they are there. The women probably know nothing. But, for us, sexual exploitation is more serious.'

The idea of prosecuting clients gained momentum and support of the Dutch political parties ChristenUnie, PvdA and SP. The media responded with numerous reports covering debates between politicians who were pushing for stricter legislation and those convinced that the current law on trafficking already allows for clients of people forced into prostitution to be punished. In the midst of these developments, however, two of the men involved as clients in the Valkenburg case have committed suicide, one in February and the second in March of 2015. This caused public outrage, particularly in relation to imprudent statements to the media given by the Dutch PPO representative. Not long after news of the suicide of the second suspect in the case, the prosecution changed its rhetoric. New statements were made suggesting none of the suspects were visited by the police in their homes. The prosecution started convincing the public that all the suspects were rather called by the police and invited for an interrogation. Furthermore, they announced that suspects will be offered psychological counselling after the interrogation. The Public Prosecutor apologised for the harsh words used by its personnel at the beginning of the process, which enraged the victim's parents and part of the public who supporting the hard-shell approach against clients, no matter the consequence.

Another interesting development followed already in April when the Public prosecutor significantly reduced the charges against Armin A., the main suspect in the case. Trafficking charges were dropped. In the end, Armin was held accountable only for inciting a minor into prostitution, for which he got 2 years in prison. In separate cases against clients of the prostituted girl, most men were sentenced to 1 day in prison and community service; a few of them received more severe punishments of 5 and 6 months imprisonment.

Media reporting played an integral part in shaping the developments in this case. The heated public debate generated major attention about the role of clients in child trafficking for sexual exploitation. This topic was featured in 13% of the articles in this subsample, which is a particularly large percentage when taken into account that the Valkenburg case became topical only in the last year of the observed period. Imprudent media appearances of the Public Prosecutor's Office affected both the main case against the trafficker and other proceedings led against men who bought sex from the underage girl. This is an important lesson for institutions and organisations involved in fighting trafficking to learn. Being aware of the increasing importance of the media in social life is not only desirable, but imperative for ensuring no harm gets done to people affected by human trafficking and the criminal justice process itself.

Individual texts are writing about other problems, such as instances of child trafficking for sexual exploitation in other countries and the involvement of Dutch sex tourists in trafficking cases. All but four articles represent human traffickers as the subjects responsible for the problems described. Very sporadically, reports mention accountability of local governments, police, the criminal justice system, clients, and brothel owners. When it comes to responsibility for solving the problems thematised, courts and the police are equally held accountable (in more than 50% of analysed texts each). Journalists also write about governmental responsibility, particularly on the local level (13%).

Solutions that are suggested in criminal justice framed articles are similar to those proposed in the UK and Serbia. In total, 80% of articles in the sample call for arrests and prosecution of human traffickers. Similar measures against those who pay for sex with trafficked people are proposed in 13% of texts. In terms of measures that are recognised for their potential to improve the anti-trafficking response in the country, media mention closer collaboration between different actors involved in fighting human trafficking on the national and international level and greater involvement of local governments in combating trafficking. When it comes to improving identification of and assistance for trafficking survivors, Dutch media resorting to the criminal justice frame are almost entirely silent. This is also shown in the coded category of moral base,

where we see punishing of crime as moral reasoning in all but one article in the sample, and helping people in affliction referred to in a mere 11 texts.

The vast majority of articles in the frame were reporting on cases of human trafficking that occurred in the Netherlands (94%). In addition to that, several instances of trafficking for sexual exploitation in the neighbouring Belgium received some attention, as did individual cases from Thailand, China, Columbia, the United States, Germany, and Philippines. The Netherlands was also the most common country of origin of both trafficking offenders and victims in the analysed media reports. Newer EU states like Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria are also notably present as origin countries of traffickers and victims. In most cases victims and traffickers have the same nationality. The slightly higher number of victims than traffickers from the Eastern European region is related to the fact that Dutch traffickers are involved in both domestic and international trafficking and frequently gravitate towards exploiting victims from that part of the continent. When it comes to the nationality of traffickers, several are originating from former Dutch colonies and Turkey that has a large expat community in the country. The graph below shows countries that victims and traffickers most frequently come from.

Graph 24: Countries of origin of human trafficking offenders and victims as portrayed in criminal justice-framed articles (in percentages)



It is important to note that Dutch journalists are doing a much better job in protecting the identities of human trafficking victims than their colleagues from Serbia and United Kingdom. Namely, none of the articles reveal victims' names and more than 50% do not reveal their nationality. Those authors that do mention the country of victim's origin usually abstain from revealing the city or area the victim comes from, which was not the case in the other two countries. Most typically, articles reveal the nationality of traffickers but not their victims, as this example illustrates:

'Two Hungarian women must serve time in Dutch prison because they have exploited three young women in Amsterdam.'

Niews.nl (2015, May 19)

Media reports also show that judicial practitioners are concerned for victims' privacy protection:

'For privacy reasons, the Public Prosecutor does not want to disclose anything about the age of girls or where they come from.'

RTL.nl (2015, March 19)

This, together with greater sensitivity of the media, can potentially explain why reports on court hearings published in the Dutch media reveal less details on violence suffered by trafficked women.

In contrast with privacy protection of victims of trafficking, the nationality of their abusers is revealed in almost all of the articles. In loverboy cases, it is not clearly stated if men suspected of trafficking hold Dutch or some other nationality. Even though their names published in the reports reveal that they are of foreign origin (e.g. Abdel, Abderrahim, etc.), the rhetoric in the media is far less indicative of ethnic othering in comparison to CSE stories in the UK where journalists not only stress that traffickers come from certain Muslim countries, but often falsely present UK citizens as first generation migrants and reason that their involvement in crime is somehow linked to their ethnic otherness. However, interviewed Dutch experts say that that otherness is implied and was well established through public discourses and media reporting. In their words, a 'loverboy case' implies just that as the term became a synonym for domestic trafficking that involves Moroccan and Turkish traffickers who exploit white Dutch girls because they have different cultural values and little regard for women, especially women of different religion. Experts add that such cases are treated differently both in the media and in practice, 'because the victims are from our own soil, so we think it is more important or that it is worse' (ES7). Most of the experts agree that involvement of these two ethnic groups is exaggerated by the media. Yet, even within this group of experts there are those whose attitudes reveal hidden racism and prejudice. The highlighted words in the excerpt from one of the interviews shows how the respondent sees Dutch traffickers as intellectually superior to foreign criminals:

AL12: But here in the Netherlands it [loverboy exploitation] already existed for a very long time. In my days, it was just the Dutch guys. (...) There were many people in the criminal underworld involved in prostitution and they were all Dutch. So when the foreign people came here, they had nice teachers.

Me: And why don't we see that in the media? That there are Dutch girls exploited by Dutch men, and that this is not purely an ethnic problem of Turkish and Moroccan people causing problems here in the Netherlands?

S: Because what is **wrong** with **those guys** [Turkish and Moroccan] is that they take young girls. That is why they are in the media. And the Dutch guys I am talking about, they are really **clever, they know** not to take minors, or do things which can be easily detectable... **They are shrewd**, they do it in a **nice way**.

AL12

Photographic illustrations used in these articles fit the criminal justice frame as well. Images of trafficked victims were as frequently used as images of police and judiciary (one third of the sample each). Traffickers were also frequently portrayed (16%), as were the images of locations relevant to the case in

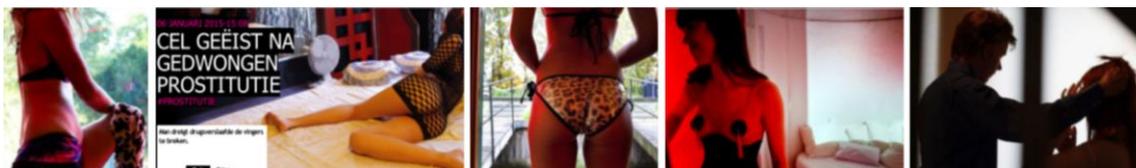


Picture 16 - Source omroepbrabant.nl

question (10%). Many articles were illustrated with images of the police and judicial symbols (e.g. blindfolded Justitia or a gavel). Representation of the police is uniform: photographs of police in action that symbolise the power of the state to fight crime.

When it comes to photographs representing victims of trafficking, eroticized images of sex workers in brothels, windows and in street prostitution are used four times more often than images fitting the victim trope. Colours that predominate in these pictures are different shades of red, a colour that is known to symbolise sin and sex in Judeo-Christian cultures. Women's faces are frequently in the shade or left out of the frame. In images that represent real sex workers of the Amsterdam's red light district this can be interpreted as an attempt to protect their anonymity. Nevertheless, the fact that stock images are also framed in this way suggests that intentional focus on body parts, in particular women's breasts, pelvic area, and legs is rather objectifying over-sexualisation. These are not portrayals of eroticized suffering bodies of trafficking victims, but portrayals of 'whores', women who are seducing the observer. The dominance of images that suggest portrayed women are willing sinners positions them as natural (perhaps even deserving) victims of male-inflicted violence. Several images correspond with the innocent victim trope (5%). It is interesting that all of these photographs were used in articles where victims were young and recruited into human trafficking through the loverboy method.

This is once again suggestive of the media's tendency to find minors to be more deserving of a victim status than adults who are sexually exploited in human trafficking.



Picture 17 - Four in five images represent victims as 'unworthy prostitutes'

The collage above is an important illustration of how convincing images are, and how unfitting for the topic of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. It is quite frightening to observe these images in the light of the fact that the average online news consumer hardly goes beyond reading the title and looking at the image. There is nothing sexy about human trafficking. Images used to illustrate articles on human trafficking should send the same message. In order to nourish an environment in which victims of human trafficking are not stigmatised and have all their rights protected, media need to abandon the practice of publishing titillating but harmful images of over-sexualised women in prostitution. Furthermore, images of staged violence in which women are fixed as natural victims of male violence need to be left in the past as well. Neither the pursuit of profit, alleged readers' preferences, nor the struggle to survive in a highly competitive market can justify this abominable practice.

7.3.2. Prostitution

More than a quarter of texts in the Dutch sample (203 articles) viewed human trafficking as a predominantly prostitution-related phenomenon. These articles were almost exclusively focused on the situation in the country (93%). Articles that were discussing the benefits of tighter prostitution regulation to fight against trafficking in human beings were the most numerous. The absolute domination of abolitionist voices in such texts led to the most significant finding of the analysis that showed what a drastic change in public attitudes on the issue of prostitution has occurred. Even though the Netherlands is known as a liberal country when it comes to sex work and its legalisation, media reports showed that prostitution abolitionists were much more vocal than their liberal opponents throughout the reported period. Every second article in the prostitution frame promotes different measures designed to suppress human trafficking through tightening the regulation of prostitution. In contrast to that, only 7% of articles openly argue against such measures. This is related to the general shift from liberal to more conservative values in the society, as well as the disappointment in the results of 2000's law that legalised

prostitution. As illustrated earlier, even the interviewees who were in favour of this model, reported on not being happy with the way the law was implemented.

Despite the obvious preponderance of anti-prostitution attitudes in the public sphere, not all interviewed specialists seem to be aware of it. Of 17 interviewed research participants from the Netherlands, 6 had strong abolitionist views, 7 strong liberal attitudes on prostitution legislation, and 4 had more moderate opinions. The majority of journalists interviewed were in favour of stricter prostitution regulation (4 out of 6), whereas in the anti-trafficking circles more were in favour of legalisation (6 out of 11). Interestingly, proponents of both sides felt strongly that media space is taken by their opponents and expressed a great deal of frustration over this:

I am just a tiny little voice in a sea of people who say that prostitution is really not a problem. ER8

The dominant idea is that all these women [in prostitution] are victims, because that is what is being repeated the most. That is also what politicians say and politicians who have used these issues in their careers – they are the most dominant voices.

AL19

And the most influential still is the sex workers lobby because they are telling the story that an average Dutch person wants to hear. It's very romantic. It's a profession you can choose for, it's very normal profession... And you have a smaller [abolitionist] lobby, one that I think is smaller and much less influential.

AE13

The abolitionists [are most heard in the media]. Media use anti-sex work feminists as sources instead of women who actually work in the sex industry. They use anti-sex work feminists as a proxy for sex workers, because, well, we all have vaginas so we must know how it is. AA14

As demonstrated by these quotes from the interviews, both sides use the blame game strategy, arguing that their opponents are dominating the media space and are hence responsible for the majority of problems with mediated image of human trafficking. This situation is alarming, because it leaves no space for true dialogue and finding a solution that will not harm rights of either trafficked people or sex workers.

Heated debate on prostitution regulation aiming to curb human trafficking was already visible in the analysis of the criminal justice frame that so frequently linked reported cases to topical prostitution-related issues. In fact, it is hard to draw a clear distinction between the criminal justice frame and the prostitution frame in the Dutch sample, because cases that gained great

media attention were used to change public sentiment and promote policies that were being developed at the time (see section 7.3.1.). The connection between human trafficking policy developments and media reporting on the topic is very strong. Political involvement with the issue depends on its publicity, and success of the concrete measures depends on media writing as well. Therefore, media campaigns behind certain anti-trafficking measures are very well thought-out, elaborate, and persistent.

NM5: The government would not start thinking about changing the prostitution law if the public was not of the opinion that this is necessary.

Me: Does that mean that the political importance of human trafficking and prostitution depends on the attention that these two issue get from the public?

NM5: Yes, always. It's always like that. Politicians start doing things once they are already in the media. Most politicians. Because if they start doing something about things that nobody is talking about, what can they show? They want to show that they are good rulers, so if there is a problem in the media, the politicians will want to do something about it. And if trafficking hasn't been so extensively in the media, nothing would be happening. It's always the media.

NM5

All Dutch institutions are well aware of the importance of the media and are putting significant efforts to have the press in their corner of the ring. Bodies independent of the Government also use their media connections to accomplish organisational goals. Bureau of the National Rapporteur is another example of that (ES7).

In the attempt to clarify the intricate connection between the media's attention to certain human trafficking cases and the abolitionist agenda of different political parties in the Netherlands, I am highlighting several cases/occurrences before I further engage with the prostitution frame analysis. It should be noted that this illustration is based on those events that generated the most public attention, as observed in the sample of this research.

SNEEP CASE (2007) AND CLOSURE OF BROTHELS

The Sneep Case is the name of a large international trafficking case that was discovered in 2007. The case is known for its large scale and brutal physical violence inflicted on victims¹²⁴ by a gang of Turkish-origin traffickers lead by Saban B. The Sneep case received unprecedented media attention. Even though it dates back to 2007, reporting on the case continued throughout the reported period. It was framed in the media as proof that the system of legalised prostitution does not work, that justice is hard to achieve in trafficking cases, and that stricter regulation (or even criminalisation) of prostitution is necessary to stop sexual exploitation in the country, as this quote from an article exemplifies:

In order to counteract coercion, exploitation and abuse of women, Segers comes with a law initiative that he wants to promote with other parties. 'There is nothing romantic about prostitution and pimping. It's a tough world, with extreme cases like that of Saban B., who battered the women with baseball bats.'

EO.nl (2015, January 20)

In the media, the case was referred to in articles justifying both stricter prostitution legislation and Project 1012¹²⁵. Through the continuous mentioning of the case, the media kept reminding people in the Netherlands of 'hundreds of victims' who were 'brutally beaten with baseball bats' even though such large-scale cases have not been detected since.

The whole Project 1012 could not have been sold to the public without the media and without these frames. In particular Asscher [former mayor of Amsterdam and current leader of Dutch Labour party] has been really good in choosing his words – 'modern slavery right under our noses', 'we should not tolerate this', 'we cannot stand by to do this'... It is really difficult to go against that, to go against saying [trafficking should not be tolerated].

AL19

By the same recipe, the media played a role in the closure of brothels in other regions of the country, such as the Zandpad area in the city of Utrecht. Sensationalised coverage was buzzing about an 8 months pregnant prostitute and another one working with a broken leg. The public

¹²⁴ The exploitation involved more than 100 victims exploited in multiple locations in the Netherlands and Germany (for more details on the case see Aronowitz, 2017).

¹²⁵ Project 1012, named after the post code of the Amsterdam's red light district, is aiming to clean up the area by buying out properties and giving them alternative purposes to prostitution. The intents of the project were received well by the mainstream media outlets. Yet, several authors published columns linking the project to gentrification of the Dutch capital and questioning whether it might actually result in greater vulnerability of sex workers who were pushed out of their working spaces.

was informed that prostitution licence was revoked from Wegra, the Zandpad windows operator, because the company failed to respond to these signs of human trafficking. Some articles questioned if these women were really forced into the prostitution, and one linked the story to earlier plans of the Municipality of Utrecht to turn the area into a residential complex. The voices of sex workers were largely marginalised in the reports. What was also lacking was a fair and research-informed debate on whether closure of brothels would contribute to suppression of abuse and human trafficking in the local sex industry. Academic findings suggest that the closure of brothels in Utrecht had adverse effects on the position and safety of sex workers (Siegel, 2015).

VALKENBURG CASE (2014) AND CRIMINALISATION OF CLIENTS

The topic of punishing clients of prostitutes, or at least those of them who paid to have sex with victims of human trafficking and could have known that they were exploited, predates the Valkenburg case that came into the public eye in 2014 (see 7.3.1. for details about the case). For instance, much attention was paid to criminalisation of clients when the media documented a visit of MPs Gert-Jan Segers (Christian Union - CU) and Myrthe Hilkens (Labour Party - PvdA) to Sweden where the two politicians explored if the Swedish model could be applicable in the Netherlands. After their visit both CU and PvdA continued lobbying for criminalisation of clients under the WRP law. In the midst of that campaign, the Valkenburg case was discovered and the infamous public statements of PPO were made. As mentioned before, PPO media appearances had a negative impact on sentencing and developments in this case. Despite that, Segers told the Dutch media that the Valkenburg case 'gave wind in the back' to his law proposal on criminalising clients and 'made people open their eyes' about the role that men buying sex play in the exploitation of trafficking victims. With regards to poor handling of the case and two consequent suicides, Segers said:

What you saw here was a battle for perception: who are you most sorry for, the customer or the girl? It seems clear to me that our primary loyalty must lie with the victim.

de Jong (2015, October 15)

At the first glance, it is hard to disagree with Segers. However, loyalty can stay with the victim even if procedures are in place that ensure a fair trial and fair treatment of the suspects and their families. Such emotional media statements are not only great quotes from the perspective of media – short, effective, easily comprehensible, evoking emotional reaction, etc. They also serve

as a perfect tool to manipulate reader's attention and get them to side with you. A journalist interviewed for this study reflects on this, arguing that the media are forcing people to opt for one of the two extremes, whereas naturally most people would gravitate towards the 'in-between' territory when forming their opinions:

[From the way media report on it] it seems like you have to pick a side - so you can either be pro Swedish model, or think that sex work is the best job in the world. If you do not agree with the Swedish model, then you do not care about human trafficking. It is extremely black and white. And it would not be so in reality.

ER8

The great attention the Valkenburg case received in the media was largely the product of well thought out political campaigns to gain public support and alter prostitution policy. In addition to that, the case met several other newsworthiness criteria that contributed to it becoming a high profile media case. As it included a young Dutch girl exploited by a man of foreign origin it immediately ticked the 'newsiness' boxes of child-related, sex-related, violence-related, simple and conventional stories that are of immediate concern to Dutch society. It provoked much controversy and moral debates around, and kept it on the news agenda for long time.

JOJANNEKE IN PROSTITUTION

Undercover Insight or a Staged Spectacle of Human Trafficking?

In 2015, the Dutch evangelical channel EO broadcast a series called Jojanneke in Prostitution¹²⁶ that featured a journalist, Jojanneke van den Berge, attempting an undercover investigation of the dark world of prostitution in the Netherlands. She visited brothels and other locations known for prostitution, interviewed sex workers, brothel owners, pimps and others involved in the sex industry. Jojanneke even pretended to be a sex worker herself, and secretly recorded her interviews with men who were interested in being her pimps. The interest of the media for Jojanneke's series was great and mainly positive. Various kinds of reports followed – politicians from conservative, anti-prostitution parties responded loudly, urging government to rethink prostitution policy in their consequent media appearances; Dutch citizens were interviewed for quitting their jobs and starting volunteering to raise money to end trafficking and prostitution; journalists themselves produced highly charged opinion pieces and columns supporting

¹²⁶ Jojanneke in de Prostitutie

Jojanneke. The programme that was labelled as investigative journalism, however, sparked great controversy in anti-trafficking circles and many in the country disagreed with the information presented as factual. Sex worker's organisations and activists fought for their voices to be heard and harshly criticized the programme on internet. And several opinion pieces with positive attitudes about sex work were published in more liberal media. Jojanneke was called out on quoting bogus statistics, such as her claim that 70% of sex workers in the Netherlands are being forced into prostitution. Responding to these accusations, she first stated the numbers came from the Public Prosecutor, but when the public further enquired about the source, Jojanneke was referring them to her documentary¹²⁷. This circular reasoning made people even more suspicious about the validity of data used in the documentary series. Critics also pointed out that Jojanneke continued lobbying against prostitution and spoke at college tour organised by the Christian Union party, a leading force behind abolitionist efforts in the country.

Dutch experts I spoke with about the programme agreed that it was 'exaggerated' and 'propagandistic' regardless of their attitudes on the prostitution debate. Some see it as totally orchestrated anti-prostitution propaganda, while others have more moderate opinions and argue it had both good and bad aspects. One media professional in particular had first-hand experience with Jojanneke and EO programme producers and refused to collaborate with them on this project because of their lack of objectivity.

There was this programme - Jojanneke in prostitution that was broadcasted last year. And I was asked to take part in it, so I had met with the journalist and asked what she was planning to do. She said 'I want to portray issues around prostitution in an objective way'. But I said 'I already know from googling you what is your opinion. How come you are trying to do the series on this issue now?' And we had a very strong discussion about this. Then I asked the editor working for the broadcaster if they were willing, hypothetically speaking, to let the outcome be against their own [anti-prostitution] politics. (...) And there were no clear answers to these two main questions I raised. So, I didn't work with them.

ET17

Criticisms against Jojanneke in Prostitution would not stand if the programme was a product of objective, factual, and verifiable reporting. Also, the journalist's affiliations with different political parties and activism for the causes she believes are right are not problematic per se. However, what does represent an issue is the fact that there are so many indications the programme was

¹²⁷ See for instance a blog post of a Romanian sex worker <http://behindtheredlightdistrict.blogspot.co.uk/2014/12/jojannekes-70-forced-prostitutes-is-lie.html>.

more of a fake documentary than a real one. This research confirms that. Since people involved in producing it had little interest in making an objective investigative story, question whether this was another mediated spin used to promote anti-prostitution policy remains a valid one.

The three cases above also show how public interest in the topic was kept alive. When the attention dies out, another case or issue emerges that keeps the discussion alive and continues spreading the message that another approach to tackling abuses in the sex industry is necessary. The centrality of this issue can also be observed from problems that were defined in this subsample, the actors labelled as responsible for causing them, solutions offered, and the actors identified to carry out those solutions. Over 70% of prostitution-framed articles talk about human trafficking being present in the sex industry, and 6 out of 10 of them directly link this problem with the fact the brothel ban was lifted in 2000. The message spread through this articles is that legalisation of prostitution is allowing trafficking to flourish and is playing into trafficker's hands. Also, 21% of texts define the lack of clients' accountability as a problem. Less than 10% of articles problematize the phenomenon of loverboys, adverse effects of harsher anti-trafficking and anti-prostitution measures, and treat the topic of vulnerability of different groups to human trafficking (e.g. sex workers, women with mental disabilities and Roma people).

While traffickers were held responsible for causing the above-mentioned problems in almost all the analysed articles, a few mentioned clients and policy makers as accountable too. Actors involved in changing the policy were the most widely recognised as those in a position to bring change: three quarters of articles identified policy makers, Parliament, politicians, governments, and local governments as solution bringers. The same proportion of texts promoted various anti-prostitution measures as the solution leading to the suppression of human trafficking. These included criminalisation of clients, criminalisation of pimping, revoking operating licences from brothels and criminalising brothel owning, complete criminalisation of prostitution, harsher policing of legal prostitution, raising the minimum age of prostitutes from 18 to 21, and allowing brothel owners only to rent windows to sex workers with whom they speak a common language. In contrast to that, only 9% of the analysed texts argued for applying existing laws against human trafficking and avoiding criminalisation, and 7% promoted taking action that would stop anti-prostitution measures that make sex workers even more vulnerable to exploitation. The majority of the later were published by the end of 2013. Sentiment against legalisation was growing over time. In total, exclusively negative views on liberal prostitution policy were presented in 46% of the prostitution-framed sample. Exclusively positive attitudes were professed in 6%. Articles that remained neutral with regards to this question accounted for 39%. Only the remaining 9% presented both arguments for and against legalisation. When it comes to the moral base behind journalistic writing, stopping crime and helping people in affliction were equally represented.

Visual representation of prostitution-framed articles differs to that of criminal justice in that no visual symbols emphasize the justice or law enforcement aspect of human trafficking. Even the images of traffickers were rarely used (3%). Instead, eroticized images of prostitutes (37%) and pictures of locations known for prostitution, such as windows of Amsterdam red light



Picture 18 - Source perool.nl

district and boats of the Zandpad are used to illustrate the stories (22%). This is another strong indication that the Dutch press is inclined to using attention-grabbing 'sexy' photographs that endorse stereotypes and send confusing messages to the media consumer. Another noticeable category were pictures of politicians who are vocal in the trafficking-prostitution debate (16%) and whose statements were included in the analysed publications. Among these, Gert-Jan Segers (CU) and then Minister of Justice, Ivo Opstelten were the most quoted and pictured persons. In the older articles in the sample, Lodewijk Asscher (PvdA) was another prominent actor. Dutch National Rapporteur, Corinne Dettmeijer-Vermeulen was also quoted, but often second to a politician and as a reinforcement of their attitudes. For instance, see the following two excerpts from the analysed articles:

Christian Union MP Gert-Jan Segers is working on a new law that prohibits sex with forced prostitutes. The Labour Party was supportive before, but the group has yet to discuss the latest research. National Rapporteur Corinne Dettmeijer called for the criminalisation of clients of forced prostitutes this fall.

Nu.nl (2014, October 17)

and

In 2008, then Justice Minister Hirsch Ballin also tried to replace the word loverboy with pimp-boy, but the term has not stopped. Corinne Dettmeijer, National Rapporteur on Human Trafficking and Sexual Violence against Children, also finds pimp-boy no good term. "Those are human traffickers," she tweeted in a comment.

NOS.nl (2015, October 7)

7.3.3. Human Rights

The human rights frame was the third most commonly used frame in the Netherlands. In spite of that, it accounted for only 3.5% of the overall sample. Three types of topics generated most reporting: actions of activists who were campaigning to raise funds and awareness (44%), developments that foster protection of rights of trafficking victims (44%), and failures in protecting victims' rights (11%). The first group of articles comes down to PR pieces covering different fund raising activities for victims of trafficking and anti-trafficking awareness-raising campaigns. Articles on fundraising activities represented traffickers as responsible for the problem and called upon members of society to get involved and support victims by donating money. There were no precise indications of how victims of human trafficking are going to benefit from the money collected, but fundraising for charities was framed as the remedy for the situation. The rhetoric of zero tolerance for trafficking was present and coloured by the imperialist idea that Western civilisations have to intervene and help the less civilised rid their societies off immoral practices that are widespread. The white saviour complex as the driving force was clearly visible in writing on the fundraiser that received the most significant coverage. This was action 'Lock me up, free a girl' in which local celebrities were locked up for 12 hours in small rooms in Dutch restaurants to gather money for little girls trafficked for prostitution in India.

The same can be said of articles that dealt with campaigns launched to raise awareness of the rise in human trafficking during major sporting events ahead of the 2014 FIFA World Cup. Here, it is the Dutch football fans, charities and government who are in a position to solve the problem caused by local trafficking gangs by raising awareness and reporting suspicious practices. In fact, not only were Dutch football fans positioned as the ones who can save poor Brazilian girls from prostitution, but the girls were also represented as morally inferior to them. The paradox is that the articles in question stress that these girls are victims of human trafficking and are often very young, even 12 years old. And then, the very same articles explain how the girls are 'looking for an opportunity to earn money of wealthy western men' and warn the fans travelling to Brazil that



Picture 19 and Picture 20 - Contrasting worlds of portrayed child victims (article on child prostitution in Brazil) and Dutch saviours (article on fundraising action for trafficking survivors in India). Sources AD.nl and alphensnieuwsblad.nl.

they are cunning and deceiving. For instance, the following is what a spokesperson of Plan Nederland, a humanitarian organisation specialising in child prostitution, had to say to football supporters planning a trip to South America:

‘They approach you with intention. Everything starts with one beer. Then comes another.’ She does not want to hear about football fans that think they are ‘not so naïve’. Child prostitutes are cunning, she says. ‘It is often difficult to recognise that the girl is a minor. Only when they ask you for money the next morning, the realisation strikes: holy shit, what have I done now?’

Algemeen Dagblad (2014, May 9)

Once again, imperialistic thinking and ideas about one’s own national superiority are encountered in the Dutch sample. Yet, outside of academia, there is little recognition that anti-trafficking efforts are shaped by the colonial past and prejudices about different races and cultures. Lack of understanding of these factors and the roles they play are particularly visible among the interviewed media professionals who even believe there is no racial bias involved in covering trafficking cases. One of the journalists I spoke with was knowledgeable about these issues but is not encouraged to address them in her work:

There is no awareness in general audience and big unwillingness to talk about this in the society. And when I raise this question at work in the newspapers, they act like I am crazy, they don’t want to hear about it.

AA14

The journalist explains that this is related to the culture of denial about Dutch involvement in colonial and slave-trading practices. According to the interview, the denial is widely embraced in the Netherlands. The common perception of the past involves romanticised ideas of the ‘tropical paradise’ of West Indies where ‘poor people were happy to serve white wealthy Dutch families’ (ibid).

A second group of articles covered improvements in the local response to human trafficking that secured better protection of victims of human trafficking. Topics covered were compensation of damages for trafficked people and openings of specialised shelters for trafficking survivors. Namely, in 2013 a court in Leeuwarden ordered a trafficker to pay 850,000 euros to his victim in compensation for the damages she suffered. For the most part, this was covered as an example of good practice and proof that justice is achievable for victims of human trafficking in the Netherlands. The judiciary system and the government were positioned as solution providers that

secure access to justice for victims of human trafficking. If the trafficker is unable to pay the ordered sum, the media explained that the government will pay the victim from a special fund and later recover the money from the trafficker. However, one report found the case was rather an exception than a rule. A legal expert commenting in this article said the sum was unprecedentedly high and that the practice of Dutch courts shows judges also often deny compensation claims because victims 'cannot provide conclusive records' of their exploitation in prostitution. The governmental fund that serves to ensure that the victim gets paid even if the trafficker fails to comply with the order of the court in time looks good on paper. But in practice, there are legal ways to limit the amount of the award that victim gets from the Fund, which have been employed in court practice before. In those cases, it is unknown if victims received the whole sum in compensation and how long they had to wait for it. There are some other issues that prevent victims from exercising their right to compensation that were not addressed in the media, in particular in relation to foreign victims who are deported back to their home countries.

Coverage of the sheltering issue was also positive. From 2013 until the end of the observed period, articles were being published to announce that new shelters are being opened and accommodation capacities for victims of human trafficking in the country are being improved. Special attention was paid to specialised shelters for victims of loverboys, which is another indication of the centrality of domestic trafficking issues in the country. In this set of articles, local governments and charities are praised for addressing the lack of accommodation capacities and ensuring victims of human trafficking get adequate care and assistance. Only three texts emerged that were critical of the victim identification and care system in Holland.

The moral base that articles in this subsample relied on was the need to help victims of human trafficking and secure their rights protection. 15% of articles emphasized access to justice in particular. Solutions proposed in said articles were revolving around improving victim assistance by providing shelters to trafficked people and securing compensation of damages. Raising money for victims of trafficking was another remedy proposed, as was awareness raising, but all in relation to trafficking in remote poor areas of the world. In the Netherlands, on the contrary, articles show that the government is more than capable of providing adequate support to trafficking survivors.



Picture 21 – Source telegraaf.nl

Compared to other frames, use of photographs representing victims was more frequent in the



Picture 22 - Source trouw.nl

human rights-framed stories. This does not exclude use of eroticised images as the picture of a hand tied up in a red cloth with barcode attached exemplifies (see page 231). Another interesting example is the image on the left. It portrays a victim in a shelter, pictured in an idealised scenery of a warm, modern living room decorated with colourful orange furniture and monumental tulip ornaments. She is sitting in front of a TV and watching a cooking show. This image serves as an

attestation to the power of the Dutch state to provide justice to victims of human trafficking and enable them to recover and lead a carefree life after escaping the grip of human traffickers. The contrast between selling sex and upgrading cookery skills brings forward the gender 'appropriate' behaviour dimension of the photograph. As in the now decade-old analysis of Andrijasevic (2007), the zone of safety is the domestic zone for (foreign) women.

7.3.4. Violence

As already stated, the Dutch media have shown greater sensitivity for protecting victims of human trafficking than media in the other two researched countries. Therefore, typical violence-framed stories that sensationalise suffering of trafficking survivors were extremely rare in this sample. Only 1.5% of articles fitted this frame. Three topics were reoccurring. First was the topic of increased use of violence in loverboy cases. It was covered thematically, without too much focus and thick descriptions of violent acts against exploited girls. Loverboys were blamed for the problem of increased violence, for which the proposed solution was to educate vulnerable girls, and have schools and parents involved in preventive activities. Local governments were also held responsible for tackling the loverboy problematics. In terms of the moral base of the articles in the violence frame, an equal number emphasized helping people and stopping the crime of human trafficking.

The second topic dealt with the Sneep case (see 7.3.2). These articles represented traffickers as the source of the problem and called for more effective measures against traffickers. Police and courts were held responsible for solving the issue and ensuring adequate punishment of the traffickers. The trigger for these stories was a discovery that one member of the Sneep case gang

continued operating in forced prostitution a year after the criminal group was dismantled. Regardless of that, the main emphasis in the texts was on the battering and brutal punishments inflicted on exploited women as the man in question had the 'enforcer' role in the gang.

Saban B. has a reputation for being ruthless, extremely violent exploiter of dozens of women. He operated as the leader of a gang that exploited women in prostitution in Amsterdam and Utrecht. He forced the girls to undergo breast augmentation and get tattoos with his initials. He was convicted of human trafficking in the Netherlands, but remains free in Turkey. His right hand Ufuk T. had the task to keep the girls under control. "He was Saban's beast. He battered the girls with bats, threw them into icy water to prevent bruising and swelling afterwards. And after such a beating, he would just put them behind the window again," said a former member of Saban's gang.

AT5 (2012. July 13)

This is also the only case in the sample that had photographs of genuine victims published. One such image is particularly disturbing. It shows the blurred face of the then already convicted



Picture 23 - Source camilleri.nl

trafficker (Saban B.) and next to it the swollen face of his victim covered in blood and bruises. The woman's face is beaten unrecognizable (see above). Yet the woman's red hair and eyebrow shape are distinct enough for her to be recognizable for people who knew her. Not only was that potentially endangering her safety, but it was also likely to affect her recovery and wellbeing. And if such images continue to circulate in the press six years after the woman has been rescued, it is hard to imagine how difficult it is to move on and rebuild one's life.

The fact that the press handled this case so differently to other cases is very peculiar. Even though the case was actually in 2007, when standards in protecting victims' identity and propensity to

sensationalism could have been different, that does not explain why journalists and their editors did not change these practices and report on the case more responsibly in the observed period. For that reason, it is questionable if the Dutch press would be equally sensitive if photos like this and gruesome details of victims' suffering were still leaked to the press. Dutch experts also reported occasional problems with how victims were handled by the press. In particular, they encountered the practice of victim blaming and experienced difficulties with explaining the nuances of trafficking to journalists who interviewed them. The loverboy victim I interviewed reported on constantly being asked to explain how she got involved in prostitution, why didn't she run away from her pimp and leave prostitution, or ask family for help. It felt like she had to prove her victimhood status every time she was interviewed. There were also things that she felt scared to share with the public at first, because she was concerned she would be misunderstood. One was the fact that she returned to prostitution after being rescued from her pimp. Another is that, while she was in a relationship with him and selling sex for him, she believed she enjoyed it. It is a coping mechanisms, she argues, that many loverboy victims use, and something media could turn against them:

After I recovered, I hated it, I was disguised by it, but that was me looking at it later, from my healing part. The moment I was there, I loved it. It was a good job. I did a great job. Sometimes I was a best whore in the whole brothel, sometimes I looked the prettiest, sometimes I made a lot of money. I needed to create that story for myself.

AL12

The practice of proving victimhood in the interviews is fostering the innocent victim stereotype which is far from what many women exploited in trafficking are like. Their experiences are unique, and if media insist on human interest stories, than it should be all stories that are being heard, not only those that fit a simplistic societal idea of what trafficking is, what gender roles are, and how victims behave, feel or think.

The third topic that received attention in the online media in Holland was the case of a Mexican girl Karla, who testified of her trafficking experience and having been raped 43000 times. This is the only case that was reported on in all three countries¹²⁸. Here the author and the interviewed victim were emphasizing how great the issue of trafficking for sexual exploitation was in Mexico,

¹²⁸ There were some topics, like the link between sporting events and human trafficking for sexual exploitation, exploitation of Yazidi and other migrant women by IS fighters, and reports on findings of the US State Department's TIP report that were portrayed by the media in all three countries. However, when it comes to individual cases of human trafficking, this was the only one in the sample that got coverage in the media of all three countries.

and advocating for raising awareness about the gravity of the issue. Yet, in all three countries this can be considered as an ‘imported’ frame because the story was taken over from the US media.

7.3.5. Migration



Picture 24 - Source zamanvandaag.nl

Less than 1% of articles that were published in the Dutch online media between 2011 and 2015 framed the issue of human trafficking as predominantly a migration phenomenon. Two topics were problematized in these articles. First, concerns emerged that Eindhoven airport was being used as a trafficking hub to bring Eastern European victims to Western Europe in 2013. Later came the migration crisis, and media outlets started paying attention to the vulnerability of Syrian migrant women to human trafficking for sexual exploitation. The first set of articles called for greater policing of the borders and harsher anti-trafficking measures preventing both victims and traffickers from entering the country. The second concerning Syrian

refugees did not define possible solutions, nor those responsible for repairing the situation. This sample is too small to draw any related conclusions. What is interesting, though, is that UK media also abstained from offering solutions and assigning responsibility for solving problems in articles on the vulnerability of Syrian migrants. It would be important for future research projects and investigations into the coverage of the migration crisis to explore whether migration crisis problematics are framed as unsolvable, and why. From the perspective of framing human trafficking as a migration-related phenomenon, the solutions that Western governments want to push for (harsher policing and border control) are easily communicable when it comes to foreign evil traffickers. The same goes for their Eastern European victims, well-established in the trafficking discourse as naïve opportunists who are anyhow better off in the safety of their far-away homes. When it comes to refugees, however, it is not possible to argue for such solutions without violating states' international legal obligations. This could potentially explain silence in the media in relation to (non-existing) solutions that could be applied to the problem of migrants' vulnerability and that are simultaneously compatible with hegemonic political interests in Western Europe.

Even though the number of migration-framed articles is negligible, it is still worth considering several aspects of it. Firstly, the importance of the frame came up in many of the interviews. According to the anti-trafficking professionals from the Netherlands the migration frame was very popular some years ago.

States want to have more power, and organized crime, trafficking, terrorism, etc. are the ideal arguments for more power for the state, more power for the police, at cost at privacy of citizens for instance. To achieve that you have to frame something as a threat to the society, a horrible threat, and then you can use that to push all kind of measures and to legitimize those that would never be accepted if you couldn't defend it by this horrible treat. And trafficking definitely has been used to close the borders and to give more power to the police and the state.

NM5

Second, manifestations of the migration frame did emerge in other articles, even though they were secondary to the focus on criminal justice or prostitution and more mildly pronounced than in the case of Britain or Serbia. As explained in section 7.3.1, nationality of victims is often not disclosed in order to have their identity protected. This good practice is something that most outlets adhere to in the Netherlands. Yet, when articles are not dealing with specific trafficking cases and victims, Eastern European victims are often referred to as a particularly vulnerable category. This claim is in line with the national statistics on human trafficking (see 7.1.). The problem, however, is created by those media articles that represent all sex workers from Eastern Europe as victims of human trafficking. As previous research has shown, such representations helped bring about a law that forbade women from Eastern European countries that are not members of the European Union to work legally in the sex industry in the Netherlands, and made them more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation (Siegel, 2009). Residues of such practices are still visible in the sample. Here, one can spot that it is only migrants who are perceived as victims. What is more, prostitution, forced prostitution, illegal prostitution and human trafficking are often used as synonyms in these texts.

A young Eastern European woman rents a hotel room on her own. She pays cash, for the whole week, and almost never comes out from the room. These are signals that may indicate illegal prostitution, as happened to a 16-year-old girl in Valkenburg. It is up to the hotel staff to recognize such situations on time.



Picture 25 - Caption: Signs of prostitution in hotels

Clockwise from the centre: female guests 18-30 years of age and Eastern European looking; Sex toys or lingerie in the room; Condoms in the bin; Do not disturb signs on the room door; Great demand for towels and clean sheets; Great number of men going into the room; Paying in cash; Women stays alone and does not leave the room the whole day.

van Steenberghe (2015, January 26)

After laying out indicators that, arguably, can be used to detect prostitution, but not human trafficking, the author of the article tries to equate the phenomena by saying it is hard to estimate the extent of hotel prostitution and then quoting statistics on human trafficking. Not only that, he uses numbers of potential victims of all types of human trafficking, not numbers of confirmed victims that were trafficked for sexual exploitation.

Despite these measures, hotel prostitution continues to occur even though it is difficult to express in hard numbers. Last year, Rapporteur of Human Trafficking Corinne Dettmeijer received about 1400 reports of trafficking in human beings.

Ibid.

Lastly, it is important to consider why the migration frame lost its popularity in the Netherlands. This research indicates that political interests could be the deciding factor. Namely, measures that prevent non-EU sex workers to come and work in the country are already established. As long as sex work is legal, further restrictions in this direction would collide with the right of free movement of workers within the EU. Therefore, that angle is now out of focus. The topic of tightening prostitution regulation, on the other hand, is getting more and more attention in the press. No tolerance discourse is kindled. Domestic trafficking, i.e. the loverboy cases, are

becoming more topical and are deemed more concerning for society than exploitation of foreigners. Topics that receive most media attention are pushed directly by the leading political parties involved in campaigning for WRP. I am not arguing that media should not be used to promote solutions that could reduce trafficking. However, it is essential to have media that raise questions, consider alternative positions, and make sure it is in the best interests of the people who are being protected and not those of political parties and people in power. The problem of inert media prone to reproducing hegemonic values and ideas is a pressing issue in all three countries. Some actors in the Netherlands have found a way around this inertia. For example, the Bureau of the National Rapporteur feeds the media with articles written by their press team:

Our Bureau for example, if we do research and we think we have something interesting, then we call the media and we write the article for them. If you do not do that, there will be no article. But if you write it, they will be eager to publish.

ES7

Nonetheless, accepting mediatisation and adjusting to it is just one piece of the puzzle. More needs to be done to enable equal media space to all participants in the debate and to foster conditions in the media that will allow for more analytical, quality journalism to take place.

7.4. Chapter Summary

In the Netherlands, media focus in framing the issue of human trafficking for sexual exploitation fell heavily on criminal justice and prostitution. When combined together, the remaining three frames – human rights, violence, and migration – accounted for just a little over 5% of the sample. Another feature of the reports were the overlaps of the two most popular frames: criminal justice framed articles frequently mentioned prostitution regulation problematics, and the prostitution-framed articles often rely on legally processed cases of human trafficking that are used to support argumentation for promoted legislative changes. The most violent and shocking cases were in focus of public attention.

Unlike Serbia and the United Kingdom where media show little propensity to criticise governmental efforts to tackle human trafficking, Dutch media are happy to question the adequacy of the national anti-trafficking response. This is commendable. However, analysis showed that the driving force behind such critical pieces was rarely thorough and unbiased

journalistic investigation. Rather, media were responding to rising abolitionist voices and ongoing policy changing efforts. Analysis of the harsh debate on changing prostitution regulation to curb human trafficking in the sex industry also showed the responsiveness of politicians to emerging topics in human trafficking. Media spin was frequently employed to stir the attention to trafficking and make sure discussion fits their political agenda. Sentiment against legalisation grew over time in the period observed. Finally, observations in the chapter show that the opposing camps in the prostitution debate are playing the blame game. This means that interviewed abolitionists argued that all the wrongs with mediated representation are caused by their liberal opponents who try to represent trafficking as a trivial or non-existent issue in the media. The sex workers' rights groups, on the other hand, blamed the abolitionists' camp for overemphasizing problem of human trafficking, promoting anti-prostitution measures that make sex workers more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, and denying the agency of sex workers who choose to do work in the sex-selling industry. That leaves little space for informed public dialogue. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that the media are doing a poor job in offering objective portrayals and analyses, but are rather picking sides in the morally-charged conflict. For the best interests of human trafficking survivors and other vulnerable groups to be protected, it is essential to enforce change and improve the quality of trafficking coverage.

The cultural heritage of the Dutch colonial past is notable in the research. It is manifested in judgemental attitudes about foreign victims and their morality, rescue campaigns and a white saviour complex, perception of foreign vs. domestic traffickers, and differentiation between cases involving domestic and foreign victims.

Government and political actors in the country are represented as powerful and capable of putting an end to trafficking and the associated abuse. Not surprisingly, in the wake of policy changes, those involved in making and implementing the changes – politicians and political parties, MPs, local and national government – are portrayed as the most relevant and capable solution providers. The centrality of prostitution regulation in reporting on human trafficking for sexual exploitation also entails a lack of attention to human rights-related problematics. As in the other two countries, the focus is on suppressing crime rather than on improving the position of its victims.

Positive features identified in the sample from the Netherlands are twofold. Firstly, less sensationalism and less violence-focused pieces emerged in the Dutch share of the news compared to Serbia and the UK. In addition to that, media outlets showed greater regard for victims' safety in covering ongoing cases. Therefore, protection of victims' identities was much more carefully executed in the Dutch articles. Nevertheless, victim stereotyping and blaming was

not completely avoided. Choices of photographs that illustrate the analysed articles are also frequently problematic. Oversexualised and depersonalised images of sex workers were the most dominant, but problematic representations of the victim trope were also recorded in the sample.

CHAPTER 8 - CONCLUSION

8.1. Summary of the Empirical Findings

At an early stage of this PhD, I attended an interesting workshop on sharing research findings with non-academic audience. Staring at an empty word document when I began this concluding chapter, I thought about one of the exercises we were asked to do at that workshop. We were probed to compose a tweet and explain what our research was about in 140 characters. That is one challenging exercise for those of us fighting not to exceed the upper word count limit of a doctoral thesis. Nonetheless, there I was years later, battling a severe writer's block. The exercise popped to mind and I thought that 140 characters is close to nothing, but it is better than nothing. So I imagined I had to share my findings in a single tweet, and I started selecting the words, counting characters and looking for shorter alternatives in a Thesaurus.¹²⁹ I am not proud of the elegance of its wording, but it does effectively summarise the key findings that I wish to address in this section of the chapter:



The proportionality between volume of coverage and political will to tackle human trafficking was evident in all three countries. This is problematic, because political interest can sometimes be to ignore an existing issue, as the case of Serbia demonstrates. On the other hand, both Britain and the Netherlands were going through trafficking-related policy changes during the observed period and the media have shown great interest in the topic. All three country-specific versions of the modern slavery law in the UK and the Dutch revised prostitution legislation WRP were central drivers behind the reporting in the two countries. The analysis has shown, however, that reporting that explores governmental anti-trafficking activities is one-sided and rarely critical. Heavy reliance on official sources, their reluctance to publicly speak badly of institutions they work for, and lack of resources that would allow more time for journalists to work on their stories all took a toll on objective, analytical coverage.

The issue of human trafficking for sexual exploitation in all three countries was predominantly framed as a criminal justice issue. By positioning human trafficking as a great security threat, these articles are advocating for an uncompromising response from law enforcement and the

¹²⁹ In the meantime, Twitter changed its policy to allow for 280 characters. Needless to say, I took an advantage of that change here.

judiciary. High prevalence of the criminal justice frame in all three countries indicates that an average reader is rarely exposed to alternative ways of perceiving trafficking. In an atmosphere that fostered criminalization, prosecution of traffickers, dismantling of criminal groups, migration control, and eradication of trafficking, the rights of THB victims ceased to be a priority. As a consequence, human rights perspective was pushed out of the media. Mediated representation of human trafficking became characterized by case-driven reporting that was superficial, biased, and inert. Besides losing sight of victims' rights, criminal justice-framed articles also failed to pay due attention to root causes of human trafficking that need to be tackled for it to be eradicated.

A significant portion of the articles observed human trafficking through the lens of prostitution problematics. Predominantly negative attitudes towards sex work are recorded in all three countries. The success of anti-trafficking endeavours is linked to curbing prostitution. Eradication of crime and prostitution, thereby, served as the underlying moral justifications in the majority of texts produced in the observed period. Another moral ground that was frequently employed was the imperative of helping people in affliction. However, what was implied in the texts is that helping victims means saving them from traffickers and making sure that traffickers end up behind bars for exploiting the women. In comparison to that, articles rarely addressed the need to improve victim support mechanism and secure equal care for all who had suffered at traffickers' hands. This circular argumentation further legitimised focus on the criminal justice response.

Unsurprisingly, blame for trafficking was assigned to individual criminals and organised gangs involved in the sexual exploitation of women. In contrast, articles rarely recognised that part of the blame must be on the system that allows for exploitation to occur. Systemic accountability for oversights in spotting and reacting to human trafficking was neglected in all three countries. Identified ethnic and racial biases in representation of human trafficking offenders are particularly revealing and worth consideration. In all three countries there is a clear over-representation of foreign traffickers in the media. This was particularly visible in articles on loverboys in Holland and CSE-framed stories in the United Kingdom. In these texts origin of suspected traffickers and their religious background was emphasized as a factor that contributes to their criminal behaviour. The stereotype of the foreign evil trafficker, thereby, continues to be reiterated in mediated representations of human trafficking. It has several negative implications. By representing the trafficker (migrant) as the source of the social trouble (Choucri, 2002), these articles are promoting stricter anti-migration measures even though these have been proven as ineffective against trafficking (Berman, 2003, Sassen, 2000, Kempadoo and Doezema, 1998). Further, misrepresentation of traffickers' ethnicity makes it difficult for the members of the public to understand trafficking phenomenon and reliably assess related risks. Finally, in the light of

effects of mediatisation, this affects the work of the police that unjustifiably focuses on a certain group of offenders and neglects others who are also involved in the crime of trafficking.

On the other hand, the role of bringing solutions to the issue of human trafficking is entrusted to the states and their institutions (mainly legal and penal). They are recognised as agents that are capable of imposing effective anti-trafficking measures and suppressing human trafficking. This study confirms that states are regaining power through the discourse on human trafficking and legitimising measures of securitisation under the veil of trafficking suppression. The measures being legitimised follow policy development trends and call for stricter border and immigration control (in all three countries), securitisation and harsh policing of human trafficking (in all three countries) and harsher prostitution regulation (particularly in the Netherlands, Northern Ireland and Scotland where models of prostitution regulation similar to the one in Sweden were promoted in the observed period). This shows how governments of the UK and the Netherlands used the scare about trafficking to patch up their eroded authority and face the challenges of a national identity crises and border anxieties. Elimination of security threats – foreign traffickers and their victims – shows that governments control their territories and are also effective in preserving the morality and values of Western societies. In the Serbian sample this is not so pronounced. Yet, the discourse that is being borrowed from the EU institutions that are monitoring the way the Serbian government runs the country is rich in similar rhetoric - demonstrating zero tolerance for trafficking and exploitation, controlling the borders and migration flows. This rhetoric survives in the media even though over 90% of victims identified in Serbia are domestic citizens and in practice, the capacities of the state to monitor migration flows and identify trafficking victims among the population of migrants proved to be extremely weak.

Visual illustrations play an important role in framing trafficking news. Three types of illustrations are particularly prominent in all three countries - determined state agents in power, foreign criminals, and eroticized bodies of trafficked women. In the criminal justice-framed articles the power of the state is pronounced in images of police in action and symbols of justice following reports on court proceedings. Faces of men of colour on mugshots were particularly popular in the British press. These images strengthen the trope of foreign evil trafficking. Lastly, visual representation of human trafficking victims is particularly problematic and heavily based on the binary opposition between the innocent victim and unworthy prostitute that was discussed under section 5.3.2. These eroticized spectacles of female lust on the one hand and female victimisation on the other foster a stereotypical perception of trafficked individuals, encourage victim blaming, and impose a hierarchy of pity that labels some trafficked women (usually very young and domestic citizens) as more worthy of victim status and compassion. In general, British media showed greater sensitivity in image selection than media in the Netherlands and Serbia. When

taken into account that online news readers often only consume images and news titles, it remains central to advocate for a more careful selection of images in stories that treat the topic of human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Understanding reporting on human trafficking requires careful consideration of the political, cultural and economic context in which the analysed media reports are created. Today's focus on suppressing international organized crime, irregular migration, and modern slavery, therefore, needs to be understood as an attempt to utilize the media and try to preserve state power, the current world order, and wealth distribution. Resisting reiteration of the problematic hegemonic views on human trafficking is a difficult task for the media that are struggling for survival in an extremely competitive and fast-changing environment. Nevertheless, it is a task that is necessary to execute in order to secure reporting that will actually lead to more effective prevention, identification, assistance, and suppression of the issue of human trafficking. Hence, the last section of this chapter is offering recommendations to the media, anti-trafficking professionals, and academics involved in creating the mediated image of human trafficking. But before that, theoretical aspects of the research findings are addressed and the author's reflections on areas worthy of further research interest are offered. The concluding chapter will turn next to explain the theoretical and empirical value of the comparison of the three countries scrutinised in this study.

Theoretical relevance of the here conducted comparative study is multifaceted. On the one hand, the study showed how mediatisation works in all three countries, regardless of the variance in political conditions and local media landscapes. Deliberate strategies to use media appearances to advance anti-trafficking political agendas were recorded in all three countries. But, as chapters 5-7 demonstrate, this stream of influence is not one-sided and that the empirical data supports the socio-constructivist conceptualisation of mediatisation. As much as other social institutions adopted and accounted for the increasing the role of the media in their anti-trafficking endeavours, the later were also influenced by frame sponsors, particularly those who represented the hegemonic views on human trafficking. Therefore, it seems that scholars should focus on studying mutual transformations of media and the social world, while paying the due attention to the power dynamics between actors/institutions involved.

As discussed in section 8.2, the powerful influence of frames and their resilience was also confirmed in all three countries, as was the pertinence of culture for the framing process. This evidence supports Van Gorp's (2007) theorising on frames that was evaluated on in the second chapter of this thesis.

Even though this research has found similarities and differences between media framing in Serbia, UK and the Netherlands and attempted to explain why they exist based on the available empirical evidence, this was done with caution. Namely, this study, as many other social studies conducted in more than one country, integrates a number of different variables that are impossible to fully define or control. As overviews of human trafficking situations and mediascapes of Serbia, United Kingdom, and the Netherlands suggest, the cultural, political and economic environment in which analysed media reports are created are significantly different. The social structure and the political landscape of the three countries are unique, as are their respective media systems and the journalistic traditions. This list of variables is nowhere near extensive. For instance, a more explicit comparison would require greater understanding of actors in power and the extent to which they can influence the media. Even though interviews conducted with specialists from anti-trafficking and the media have provided some insight into this aspect when it comes to the anti-trafficking scene, it would be unwise to disregard the power balances that are in place beyond this small community. The empirical value of the comparison conducted here is that these unique features were taken into account, and the researcher acknowledged that it is only possible to compare the findings to a limited extent without making problematic and reductive inferences. In addition to that, this study has helped to bridge the knowledge gaps identified in chapter two and provide a deeper understanding of the mediated portrayal of human trafficking in three European countries based on strong empirical evidence.

8.2. Conceptualising Media Framing of Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation

In the section above I summarise the empirical findings and show what aspects of human trafficking were made more salient than others. Framing theory proposes that the use of different frames is likely to activate corresponding knowledge sets in the minds of the media consumers. As members of the public and media content producers usually belong to the same culture, it rarely happens that the mediated messages are challenged by the audience/readership. The demonstrated cultural embeddedness of motifs that representation of trafficking banks on makes employed frames all the more convincing. It is precisely those frames that rely on the principal values and moralities within a society (e.g. freedom, nationalism, rule of law, and male dominance) that are particularly popular and influential in shaping the public perception of human trafficking through the media.

This also explains the resilience of trafficking-related stereotypes and misconceptions. The white slavery myth and its protagonists (foreign evil trafficker, innocent victim, and white saviour), the unwanted migrant fixed as the cause of the social trouble, simplistic narratives of the conflict between good and evil, etc. might not be embedded in the everyday reality of human trafficking. However, that does not make any of these elements any less real, as they are the very essence of the imagined and mediated phenomenon of trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation. The persistence of frames (Van Gorp, 2007, Zald, 1996, Goffman, 1981) was demonstrated in the research. Prostitution-framed articles are a good example of that. Comparing the findings of this study with some earlier research projects discussed under section 2.3. shows that little has changed in the way ideal victim is portrayed. On the other hand, media are still adhering to the unremitting practice of victim blaming in cases that do not fit societal ideas of appropriate morality, gender roles and sexuality. Disciplining women and controlling their mobility has always been central to anti-trafficking action, and it remains so today. The orchestrated crime spectacles that cultural criminologist speak about (see Ferrell, et al. 2008) mask efforts of exercising social control and maintaining political power.

By focusing the analysis on observing how the issue of trafficking for sexual exploitation is being framed, this research encompassed all three stages relevant for scrutinising media – the production (framing by and framing through the media), the product (articles and news stories) and the effects of the product (responses of the public). This was done by combining the press analysis with interviews with media and anti-trafficking professionals, who were questioned not only about how the issue of trafficking is framed, but also what were the consequences of such framing that they have recognised in their work. Such an approach allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of media framing of human trafficking problematics and the impact it had in the given context, and secured firmer grounds for theorising about it. Exploration of links between policy making and media reporting in the thesis showed that framing occurs on both levels: framing by the media and framing through the media followed the adoption of the UK modern slavery acts and Dutch WRP. This is a two-way street – increased reporting on human trafficking generates political interest and contributes to policy change and politicians use the media appearances to push for their political agendas pertaining to trafficking and related phenomena. As Couldry and Hepp (2017) proposed, mutual inter-dependency of media and the social world is a pronounced characteristic of today's reality.

The centrality of the given culture in the process of media framing of human trafficking was extremely important in all three countries. Patriarchy dominates Serbian culture and media. The implied tolerance of crime and violence against women is a worrying discovery that calls for an uprooting of patriarchal constructions of objectified fallen women who deserve to be punished

for their lack of morals. On the other hand, recognising echoes of colonial discourses was pivotal to understanding the trafficking narratives of Dutch and British journalism. Ideas about one's own cultural and moral superiority are the underlying justifications of Western anti-trafficking interventions in far-away countries that receive nothing but positive coverage. But context, experiences, and the needs of trafficked people around the globe are not universal. This reductive imperialistic perception is not only flawed but hypocritical as well. The same unconditional humanism applied to victims in remote impoverished regions of the world and to Western teenagers exploited in their home countries is not something the unwanted foreign victims experience. Their returns home are romanticized as happy endings in the press, whereas being home often means facing the poverty, violence, political unrest, and discrimination that made these women, men, and children vulnerable to trafficking in the first place.

In the theoretical chapter this thesis addresses the concept of moral panics. Its application helps us understand the portrayal of two specific phenomena that are portrayed in the media – loverboys exploiting young girls in the Netherlands and child 'groomers' in the UK. In chapters 6 and 7 the differences and similarities in mediated conceptualisation of CSE and loverboys are explained in detail. The analysis indicated that coverage in both British and Dutch press evince characteristics of moral panics. The magnitude of the problem is exaggerated and the need for harsh policing emphasized in the reporting. Furthermore, an underlying judgment of (im)morality of offenders who do not fit the dominant culture and religion of society is central to argumentation presented in the analysed texts. Most texts, especially in the Dutch sample, highlight the young age of loverboys who exploit Dutch girls. This brings us to the final point – the fear of sexual exploitation of domestic children by foreign men is deeply rooted in the societal fears of the ethnic other and amplified by contemporary border and national identity crises.

Finally, when theorising about the media portrayal of human trafficking it is essential to consider specifics of the political, economic, and social conditions that the media operate in. Differences between the countries observed seem to suggest that changes leading towards a better quality of reporting could be anticipated only in circumstances that involve a high degree of media autonomy, safe and fair work conditions for journalists, and close collaboration with the anti-trafficking community that is ready to work with the media towards communicating human trafficking contents better.

8.3. Final Considerations

When I was gathering articles in the initial phase of my research project, it quickly became obvious that most texts on human trafficking in all three countries were hard news pieces written on individual cases. Skimming through these articles before I commenced the analysis, I quickly became concerned that these texts were going to offer little substance for qualitative analysis. How will I manage to present the data on numerous 'A was arrested for sexually exploiting B in town C' texts, and not have my thesis become the most successful sleeping pill that came outside of the pharmaceutical industry? A hundred thousand words later, I can conclude that even the shortest of articles gave grounds for a fruitful, albeit frustrating analysis. In this section, I wish to address some of the reflections I had while working on this PhD project and to point out areas that are worthy of further academic and professional interest.

As a media expert converting to a criminologist, I stand torn between understanding the media logic and my allegiance to the goal of protecting the best interest of trafficked people that I acquired during my years in the civil sector. I can very well understand the need for including a human interests story in an article, for instance, and at the same time see very little ground for encouraging vulnerable trafficking survivors to share their stories while their suffering is still 'fresh' and thereby newsworthy. For that reason, I want to address here one of the findings that I did not have an opportunity to discuss at length elsewhere in the thesis because it does not concern a particular frame or an individual country. The tensions between media professionals and anti-trafficking professionals in that sense proved to be universal. Regardless of where they came from and how they felt about their working conditions, interviewed media experts were unhappy with the anti-trafficking community for showing little understanding off their needs and the logic of their work. Similarly, interviewed anti-trafficking professionals were quick to blame the media for all the wrongs with mediated representation of trafficking, dismissing their own role in shaping public perception of the phenomenon. For an improved representation of human trafficking to occur, this blame game has to stop. This is well exemplified in analytical, quality pieces encountered in the sample that were products of collaborations and fostered relationships of trust between media and anti-trafficking professionals. A major contribution this thesis has provided lies in the fact that it took into account experiences of professionals in both sectors and combined them with media content analysis to achieve a better understanding of the framing process and its implications. Therefore, I hope academia will not be the only field benefiting from this work, and that both media and anti-trafficking professionals will find it useful.

The second issue I want to address stems directly out of this conflict: the question of interviewing victims. Through analysis of what journalists had to say to me, I can only conclude that this is an

important aspect of human trafficking news making and one that cannot be substituted with the made-up case studies that anti-trafficking actors are sometimes offering as a substitute. On the other hand, experts from anti-trafficking circles have a bulk of negative stories to share when it comes to using victims as sources. For that reason, most of them stopped facilitating contact between victims they are helping to recover and the media they work with. Those who still do so, report on having very strict criteria and only collaborating with well-established journalists who have earned their trust.

I do not believe that under no circumstances should a victim of human trafficking share her/his story with the public. I am, however, convinced that for such stories to be published and no ethical codes violated in the process, there needs to be a justified reason, such as a direct benefit the victim might have from addressing the public (e.g. the story serves as a tool to campaign for victims' rights to be protected in cases where deportation, legal sentencing, systemic discrimination etc. can occur). Another valid reason is sharing information of public interest, but this does not extend to titillating spectacles of violence that most victims' testimonies come down to in the analysed sample. For quality and non-harmful journalistic practice, it is necessary for these conditions to be met:

- (a) the victim had enough support and feels ready to talk about it;
 - (b) the victim is familiar with the possible negative implications of her/him going public (e.g. stigmatisation, being recognised, prompting trafficker's retaliation, victim blaming and other negative reactions to the story, etc.) and wants to proceed with the interview nevertheless;
 - (c) the victim is in control and chooses what to share and what not, and can revoke her consent to being interviewed at any time;
 - (d) there are no external pressures pushing the victim to give media statements (e.g. encouragement from aid-providing agencies or media);
- and
- (e) the journalist¹³⁰ makes sure the victim's identity is protected and safety and wellbeing prioritised over everything else;
 - (f) the journalist adheres to professional and ethical standards, does not resort to sensationalism and avoids creating spectacles of violence;
 - (g) the journalist has extensive experience in covering sensitive topics (e.g. gender-based violence and trauma) and a deep understanding of the issue of human trafficking.

¹³⁰ Here and below, word 'journalist' can be substituted with 'social researcher' or any other professional who might want to interview a victim of human trafficking in a quest for knowledge.

Finally, I have spent a lot of time thinking about the potential influence framing devices have on the audience members. I uncovered many stereotypical representations, moral panic-inducing messages, traces of patriarchy, victim blaming, etc. An important question that remains unanswered is how many of these elements the reader gets to recognise and gets affected by? Not a crime and media obsessed PhD candidate reading these texts in hopes of really contributing to a better understanding of media representation of trafficking and its consequence. A regular news reader. A reader who is immersed in endless cyclone of information, interflowing from billboards, kiosks, smartphones, computers, TV screens, radios, papers, conversations had and chit-chats overheard, branded bags, buses, and clothing items, leaflets, stickers, protest signs, etc. A reader used to people tirelessly sharing and ranting about a plethora of greatly important issues on social media that very few will have the time to really read into, but many will 'like' or leave some generic comment such as 'appalling', 'dreadful', 'my prayers are with the victims', etc. A reader who is part of the communication dominated world that is changing so rapidly, that myself, a 28 year old media scholar/criminologist, frequently feels 'too old' to keep up with. Just with news titles popping constantly on his/her Twitter and Facebook news feeds, the same reader may feel overwhelmed by news without opening a single news portal webpage. So, will he/she recognise the framing devices? Or at least be wary of victim blaming, racial/ethnic biases, and sensationalism? These questions will remain unanswered by this thesis, but it is my sincere hope that it will inspire future inquires that will demonstrate if traditional methods of analysing news, constructivist readings, and critical reflections need to adapt somehow to the new ways of media consumption and circulation.

8.4. Recommendations

Strict **adherence to ethical and professional standards** in journalism is essential when it comes to covering sensitive topics such as human trafficking. Media that cover the topic of human trafficking need to do so by having the public interest and the interests of trafficking victims prioritized over making profits.

The common conflation of human trafficking and related phenomena, together with frequent misconceptions about the THB issue itself, are signalling that media professionals need to be better educated about the topic. Having **workshops for journalists** would be a useful step forward, especially if the trained journalists are schooled to share the acquired knowledge within their

news desks and wider. These training sessions need not only to provide accurate information on human trafficking to media professionals, but also encourage them to deconstruct stereotypes, explore new angles, be critical, and avoid simplification. Bearing in mind that, due to the nature of the industry, most journalists have a limited opportunity to write reports on human trafficking, it is necessary to foster general sensitivity that spreads beyond the topic of THB.

Understanding all the complexities of human trafficking is a difficult task even for the scholars involved in studying it. However, that does not mean **avoiding simplification** of the phenomenon should not be an imperative for the media. Media need to educate their consumers and broaden their knowledge of the phenomenon, rather than underestimate their potential to grasp the phenomenon of trafficking and related risks. At the same time, anti-trafficking practitioners and scholars need to think about ways to communicate THB news in an understandable and accurate, media-friendly way. Therefore, **workshops for anti-trafficking professionals** who provide information on human trafficking to the media need to be organized as well.

Paying special attention to titles and images used in trafficking news stories is of pivotal importance because these proved to be the richest sources of sensationalism and stereotyping. While education of journalists can help overcome this problem to an extent, one must take into account that titles and visual illustrations are often picked by editors and graphic editors. For this reason, educations on THB reporting needs to target these professionals too or think of alternative ways to avoid malpractice. For instance, journalists should be encouraged to propose interesting alternatives to sensationalistic titles and acceptable visual illustrations. Furthermore, anti-trafficking practitioners can produce different photographs and footage that will substitute for eroticized and other problematic images available on stock. These photographs and records should be distributed to the media or otherwise made readily available for publishing and broadcast.

The practice of interviewing victims of human trafficking has proven to be exceptionally harmful. Therefore, journalist should **only conduct interviews with trafficked people if stories produced will be meaningful and beneficiary to the interviewed trafficking survivor**. Journalists need to strictly adhere to ethical standards and prioritize the interest of the interviewed victim above all. It is also their obligation to interview only those people who experienced THB that had enough time and support to recover, making them able to make an informed decision about whether or not they want to make the media appearance and face the possible consequences. In addition to that, following questions must be considered when assessing benefits of a THB story based on an interview with a survivor: Is the story making people less vulnerable to trafficking or raising moral panics? Is the reader being familiarized with related risks or entertained by the THB spectacle of

suffering? Is the story benefiting or harming the interviewed victim? Is it easier to secure prosecution of trafficker if the story is shared with the public? Or might the trafficker be more likely to retaliate against the victim if s/he talks to the media?

It is essential for both journalist and trafficking professionals to **consider consequences of framing publicized trafficking stories in a certain way**. This consideration needs to reach far beyond the immediate actors affected by the given case/issue thematised in the report. Rather, one needs to be aware of all the implications that given frame might have. None of anti-trafficking media campaigns and publications should be given space in the media if they promote harmful policies, adversely affect trafficking survivors, endanger other vulnerable groups such as migrants and sex workers, or give rise and sustain conditions that allow exploitation of people through THB.

Given the negative consequence of migration, criminal justice, and modern slavery frames, it seems that a **shift back to human rights perspective** might be the most logical step forward.

Research suggests there is a great frustration with sources among media professionals and (vice versa) with media professionals among the anti-trafficking experts. To counteract this dissatisfaction, **close collaboration between the press and anti-trafficking community needs to be fostered**. This collaboration needs to be directed towards protecting the interests of the general population and trafficked people and not towards publishing stories that sell well and attract donations or otherwise serve the interest of NGOs and institutions involved in fighting trafficking.

Finally, the situation regarding the mediated representation of THB is unlikely to change for better if efforts are not put into **fostering free media environment** in which hegemonic narratives can be contested. Bearing in mind current global journalism crisis, it is evident that such changes will take time. Nevertheless, for the media to excel in the roles discussed at the beginning of this thesis, and fully support fight against trafficking in human beings, it is necessary to show perseverance and determination in creating healthier media sphere. Until these conditions are met, alternative platforms need to be used and created to communicate knowledge about human trafficking. Critical blogs and non-profit media outlets can be used by both journalist and THB scholars to share information that is not deemed newsworthy by commercial news channels. The academic and research community should also up their game and think about ways to share their findings outside of academic journals and university classrooms.

The set of recommendations provided here may be criticised for being utopian in character. Indeed, socio-political forces at work and structural challenges media outlets face in their struggle to survive in the ruthlessly competitive market cannot be ignored. These factors impede the realistic likelihood of journalists considering these recommendations in the first place as well as them having the desired effects. For that reason, it is pertinent not to forget the great

responsibility anti-trafficking professionals carry for the way human trafficking is framed and represented in the media. Only joint efforts of media and anti-trafficking professionals can lead to preferred outcomes. In addition to that, it is my firm belief that problems that media are facing should not justify journalistic malpractices or prevent us from finding potential remedies. The basic function of the media is to select and construct topics of general concern to the society. It is imperative that they do so in a non-harmful way, and I hope that proposed recommendations can serve as a helpful guidance.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Coding Book for Quantitative Analysis

1. **Publication Title**

2. **Date of Publication**

3. **URL**

4. **Genre of the report**

- a. hard news
- b. news feature/reportage
- c. commentary/editorial
- d. interview

4. **Length of report** (*in words*)

- a. Under 200
- b. 201 – 500
- c. 501 – 1000
- d. Over 1000

5. **Dominant Frame**

- a. criminal justice
- b. prostitution
- c. human rights
- d. migration
- e. violation
- f. child sexual exploitation
- g. other

6. **Sources**

- a. police representative
- b. government official (*police not included*)
- c. Civil Society
- d. IO representative
- e. academics/researchers
- f. religious groups leaders
- g. trafficker/accused
- h. victim
- i. victim's family member/friend
- j. celebrities
- k. journalist
- l. politician
- m. customer
- n. sex industry affiliated
- o. foreign governmental employee
- p. legal expert
- q. judiciary practitioner
- r. other
- s. N/A

7. Region covered

- a. home country
- b. country from the region country
- c. other European country
- d. Asia
- e. Africa
- f. US and Canada
- g. Latin America
- h. Australia
- i. global
- j. unspecified

9. Victim's age

- a. minor
- b. adult
- c. various age (*in case there is more than one victim mentioned in the article and they don't fit the same age category*)
- d. unassigned (*here and elsewhere, unassigned means victim is mention in the text but not her age/gender/nationality*)
- e. N/A (*here and elsewhere, N/A means victim was not mentioned in the text*)

12. Victim's gender

- a. male
- b. female
- c. both male and female
- d. transgender
- e. unassigned
- f. N/A

13. Victim's nationality

- a. domestic national
- b. foreigner
- c. both domestic and foreign nationals
- d. unassigned
- e. N/A

14. Trafficker's age

- a. minor
- b. adult
- c. various age (*in case there is more than one trafficker mentioned in the article and they don't fit the same age category*)
- d. unassigned
- e. N/A

15. Trafficker's gender

- a. male
- b. female
- c. both male and female
- d. transgender
- e. unassigned
- f. N/A

16. Trafficker's nationality

- a. domestic national
- b. foreigner
- c. both domestic and foreign nationals
- d. unassigned
- e. N/A

Appendix B - Frame Analysis Sample: Number of Articles per Annum/Category/Country

NETHERLANDS	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total (category)
Criminal justice	7	11	11	33	40	102
Violence	2	1	4	0	5	12
Prostitution	7	3	23	30	39	102
Migration	0	0	2	0	1	3
Human Rights	0	0	6	14	7	27
Total (annum)	16	15	46	77	92	246

UNITED KINGDOM	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total (category)
Criminal justice	2	5	9	12	17	45
Violence	2	1	12	18	12	45
Prostitution	2	6	10	20	8	46
Migration	2	4	5	10	15	36
Human Rights	5	4	5	8	7	29
CSE	1	11	10	10	13	45
Total (annum)	14	31	51	78	72	246

SERBIA	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total (category)
Criminal justice	10	18	53	32	12	125
Violence	2	6	7	2	16	33
Prostitution	2	8	17	13	22	62
Migration	0	4	2	3	2	11
Human Rights	3	5	1	4	2	15
Total (annum)	17	41	80	54	54	246

Appendix C – Definitions of Coding Categories for the Frame Analysis

Coding Category	Description
Problem	What trafficking related issue(s) is problematized in the text?
Responsibility for causing the problem	Who is labelled as the actor(s) responsible for causing the issue(s) problematized in the text?
Responsibility for solving the problem	Who is labelled as the actor(s) responsible for solving the issue(s) problematized in the text?
Solution to the problem	What solution(s) is proposed to the issue(s) problematized in the text?
Moral base	What moral base/justification(s) is the text banking on?
Photograph	What is represented on the photograph(s) illustrating the article?

Appendix D – List of Interviews

Participant (code name)	Sector of work	Date of interview	Method and place of Interview
AK1	Civil	27.7.2015	In person, Serbia
AG2	Media	29.7.2015	In person, Serbia
AI3	Civil	29.7.2015	In person, Serbia
VB4	Civil	27.9.2015	In person, The Netherlands
NM5	Education/research	23.10.2015	In person, The Netherlands
EM6	Public	30.10.2015	Phone interview, The Netherlands
ES7	Research	2.11.2015	In person, The Netherlands
ER8	Media	12.11.2015	Phone interview, The Netherlands
ES9	Civil	19.11.2015	Phone interview, The Netherlands
NM10	Media	24.11.2015	In person, Amsterdam
AM11	Civil	25.11.2015	In person, The Netherlands
AL12	Civil	3.12.2015	In person, The Netherlands
AE13	Media	11.12.2015	In person, The Netherlands
AA14	Media	11.12.2015	In person, The Netherlands
EI15	Civil	16.12.2015	Phone interview, The Netherlands
EM16	Civil	18.12.2015	In person, The Netherlands
ET17	Media	18.12.2015	In person, The Netherlands
AE18	Civil	22.12.2015	In person, The Netherlands
AL19	Research/education	22.12.2015	In person, The Netherlands
AJ20	Media	23.12.2015	Phone interview, The Netherlands
RM21	Public	21.1.2016	In person, Serbia
AJ22	Civil	27.1.2016	In person, Serbia
AV23	Media	28.1.2016	In person, Serbia
AI24	Media	29.1.2016	In person, Serbia

AS25	Public	3.2.2016	In person, Serbia
AS26	Media	4.2.2016	Skype interview, Croatia
AG27	Public	11.2.2016	In person, Serbia
AJ28	Research/education	11.2.2016	Skype interview, Serbia
AS29	Media	12.2.2016	In person, Serbia
NM30	Research/education	13.2.2016	In person, Serbia
AJ31	Civil	17.2.2016	In person, Serbia
AS32	Research/education	20.2.2016	In person, Serbia
AD33	Civil	20.2.2016	In person, Serbia
AI34	Media	20.2.2016	In person, Serbia
SM35	Media	24.2.2016	In person, Serbia
ND36	Media	25.2.2016	In person, Serbia
AA37	Public	26.2.2016	In person, Serbia
XA38	Media	22.3.2016	Phone interview, The United Kingdom
YC39	Research/education	6.4.2016	Skype interview, The United Kingdom
NR40	Civil	6.7.2016	In person, The United Kingdom
HB41	Civil	11.7.2016	Phone interview, The United Kingdom
WA42	Media	19.7.2016	Skype interview, The United Kingdom
EM43	Media	28.7.2016	Skype interview, The United Kingdom
LP44	Public	29.7.2016	In person, The United Kingdom
YK45	Civil	2.8.2016	Phone interview, The United Kingdom
NM46	Media	2.8.2016	In person, The United Kingdom
EK47	Civil	11.8.2016	Phone interview, The United Kingdom
AT48	Civil	14.10.2016	In person, The United Kingdom

Appendix E – Topic List for Experts

Personal involvement in THB

- How did you start working in anti-trafficking?
- In what ways does the job you do involve collaboration with the press?
- For how long have you been working in the sector?

Perception of media in the country

- Can you tell me about media in your country?
- Is reporting on crime a prevailing topic in media reports in your country?
- What would you like to change in the media arena in your country?

Perception of media reporting on THB in the country

- Is human trafficking ‘a hot topic’ for the media in your country?
 - How do you explain that?
- What are media reports on human trafficking about?
- Which form of human trafficking is most frequently reported on?
- Does media account of human trafficking differ from what you see in the practice?
 - In which way?
- Is approach to reporting on trafficking for sexual exploitation different from other forms of THB?
- Have you noticed certain prevailing motives in reporting on trafficking for sexual exploitation?
- There is a debate about certain stereotypes and myths that revolves around human trafficking issue – like that of ‘the migrant other’, or ‘modern slaves’. What do you think about that?

Personal experience with the press

- What information do journalist ask from you?
- Did you experience some problems in your collaboration with the press?
- Have you ever experienced that your quotes end up misinterpreted or fabricated?
 - How frequent?
 - What was changed?
- Why do you think this happened?

Policy and the media

- Do you think that the way media report on human trafficking has an impact on policy creation?
- Have you noticed that media is being used as a policy promoting tool in your country?
- Did you ever try to use the media to promote certain ideas about THB?
 - What was your goal? (to affect public / pressure politicians / change laws?)

Actors involved in talking about THB in the country

- Who is involved in creating the public image on human trafficking in your country?
- Of these actor, who do you see as having most influence in the media?
- Where do you see yourself/your organization/institution in that?
- Can you tell me more about relations between these actors?

Foreign media

- Have you talked to foreign media? Does that experience differ from that with national press?
- Do you follow reporting abroad? How does it compare to reporting in your country?

Appendix F - Topic List for Journalists¹³¹

Working in media and reporting on THB/crime

- How did you start working as a journalist?
- For how long have you been working in the sector?
- What are the topics that you normally cover?
 - Can you tell me a bit more about crime reporting that you do?
- Can you tell me a bit about your working process?
- How do you decide on topics to cover?
- How much time do you have to prepare for interviews?
- How much time do you have to prepare your story/show?
- do you encounter some difficulties in that process?

Perception of media in the country

- Can you tell me about media in your country?
- How does it feel working as a journalist there?
- What do you think about the way crime is reported on in your country?

Perception of media reporting on THB in the country

- What are media reports on human trafficking about?
- Which form of human trafficking is most frequently reported on?
- Is approach to reporting on trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation different from other forms of exploitation?
- What composes a good 'human trafficking' story?
- Do you think something should be changed in the way media approach crime and trafficking related stories?

Personal involvement in reporting on THB

- Do you know for how long have you been involved in covering THB?
- How well do you know the topic now?
- What types of information are you looking for when reporting on THB?
- Who do you normally try to contact when covering this topic?

Policy and the media

- Do you think that the way media report on human trafficking has an impact on policy creation?
- Have you noticed that media is being used as a policy promoting tool in your country?

Foreign media

- Do you follow reporting abroad?
- How does it compare to reporting in your country?

¹³¹ Appendix E and Appendix F provide a list of topics that guided the interviews. Under each topic list of questions is provided as an illustration. As interviews were semi-structured, the order, the formulation and posing of questions differed from one interviewee to another. However all topics were covered in all interviews, unless the interviewee specified s/he has no knowledge of a certain topic.

Appendix G – Comparative Tables¹³²

Dominant Frame	UK	SRB	NL
Unassigned	0.00	0.00	0.00
Not applicable	0.00	0.00	0.00
Criminal Justice	56.93	46.07	67.78
Prostitution	15.74	22.14	26.16
Migration	2.27	3.93	0.39
Human Rights	1.88	5.36	3.48
Other	8.23	9.29	0.64
Violence	5.18	11.79	1.55
CSE	9.78	0.00	0.00
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Genre	UK	SRB	NL
Unassigned	0.00	0.00	0.00
Not applicable	0.00	0.00	0.00
Hard News	32.22	46.43	20.23
News feature/reportage	61.99	51.43	75.90
Commentary/Editorial	4.95	1.79	3.22
Interview	0.84	0.36	0.64
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Region covered	UK	SRB	NL
Unassigned	0.00	0.00	0.00
Not applicable	0.00	0.00	0.00
Home country	71.83	38.57	85.31
Country from the region	0.51	17.86	0.13
Another European Country	3.34	13.93	2.45
Asia	4.82	7.14	1.16
Africa	0.45	0.00	0.13
US & Canada	9.65	3.57	1.42
Latin America	2.89	2.86	0.90
Australia	0.26	0.00	0.00
Regional (including home country)	0.39	6.79	1.29
Home country and another European country	2.89	8.21	4.12
Global	2.25	1.07	0.52
Home country and non-European country	0.39	0.00	2.58
Latin America and Africa	0.06	0.00	0.00
US & Canada and Australia	0.26	0.00	0.00
	100.00	100.00	100.00

¹³² In percentages.

Source 1-7	UK	SRB	NL
Unassigned	0.00	0.00	0.00
Not applicable	348.87	352.83	77.45
Police Representative	22.60	24.53	2.06
Governmental Official	9.61	10.51	3.24
CSO	12.62	19.95	1.78
IO	1.44	2.96	0.32
Academic/researcher	2.47	1.08	0.32
Victim	12.54	16.17	1.22
Trafficker/accused	2.64	1.35	1.48
customer	0.00	0.00	0.32
celebrety	0.54	0.81	0.00
journalist	1.15	2.96	2.43
Politician	6.60	2.43	0.15
religious group leader	2.10	0.00	0.02
victim's family member/friend	1.77	2.16	0.13
sex industry affiliated	3.46	3.77	0.60
other	4.82	7.01	0.30
Foreign governmental employee	0.12	1.35	0.21
Legal expert	3.42	1.62	1.85
Judiciary practitioner	12.08	1.35	5.30
National Rapporteur	0.00	0.00	0.79
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Length of text	UK	SRB	NL
under 200	13.76	22.86	38.00
200<X<500	49.39	49.64	55.00
500<X<1000	29.32	21.79	1.00
X>1000	7.52	5.71	6.00
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Victim's age	UK	SRB	NL
Unassigned	6.56	17.86	16.88
Not applicable	17.94	15.00	15.72
Minor	42.89	28.93	33.25
Adult	26.75	18.93	23.84
Various age	5.85	19.29	10.31
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Victim's gender	NL	UK	SRB	NL
Unassigned	31	6.50	2.14	3.99
Not applicable	122	17.88	13.21	15.72
Female	602	70.48	80.36	77.58
Male	4	2.44	0.36	0.52
Both F and M	17	2.12	3.93	2.19
Transgender	0	0.39	0.00	0.00
Female and transgender	0	0.06	0.00	0.00
M, F and T	0	0.13	0.00	0.00
	776	100.00	100.00	100.00

Victim's Nationality	UK	SRB	NL
Unassigned	16.01	11.79	50.64
Not applicable	18.01	14.64	15.72
domestic national	19.10	39.64	9.79
foreigner	44.57	29.29	20.62
both domestic and foreign national	2.32	4.64	3.22
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Trafficker's age	UK	SRB	NL
Unassigned	1.99	5.71	26.68
Not applicable	28.17	30.71	19.46
Minor	0.77	1.07	0.52
Adult	68.49	60.00	53.09
Various age	0.58	2.50	0.26
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Trafficker's gender	UK	SRB	NL
Unassigned	2.83	2.14	17.65
Not applicable	28.10	30.71	19.46
Female	4.69	5.71	1.80
Male	43.92	43.21	49.61
Both female and male	20.39	18.21	11.47
Transgender	0.00	0.00	0.00
Male and transgender	0.06	0.00	0.00
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Trafficker's Nationality	UK	SRB	NL
Unassigned	19.68	5.00	35.44
Not applicable	29.20	31.07	19.46
domestic national	9.97	33.57	25.64
foreigner	35.11	24.29	1.42
both domestic and foreign	6.05	6.07	18.04
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Appendix H - Email Correspondence

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21. novembar 2012 14:51
To: ek@astra.rs
Subject: [REDACTED]

Postovana,

Javljam se po dogovoru sa [REDACTED]. Ja sam [REDACTED], upoznali smo se pred moj put u Svedsku. Dakle, sa tim materijalom radim polucasovnu emisiju (tacnije 25 minuta) za RFE. Posto su tamo sagovornici vrlo rigidni, posveceni, ali ne daju prostora za drugo misljenje, mislim da je neophodno da se drugaciji stavovi cuju. Kolege sa Kosova i BiH dodace svoje sagovornike. A ja bih voleo da od nekog iz Astre cujem komentare na pitanja.

1. Zbog cega svedski model, sa kaznjavanjem kupaca, ne bi (i da li bi) bio primenljiv u Srbiji? Svedski zakon su do sada adaptirali u Norveskoj i na Islandu, a vodi se kampanja da se isto ucini i u Francuskoj (tako nam je tamo predstavljeno).
2. Postoje li ovdasnji pokazatelji, koliko je prostitucija ovde povezana sa trgovinom ljudima. Dakle, tamo navode da je vise od 95 odsto prostitutki koje su otkrili bile zrtve trgovine ljudima, te da ih upravo rezultati primene zakona uveravaju da je to bilo ispravno resenje.
3. Opsta ocena - moze li prostitucija biti stvar izbora, potrebna mi je opsta ocena, posto su tamo vrlo iskljucivi. Na pitanje tako postavljeno, automatski daju negativne odgovore.

Hvala unapred

Appendix I – Article Published in Kent on Sunday

1438

WEEKLY FREE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR  EDF ENERGY London and South of England Media Awards **FREE**

Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk August 28, 2016 East edition No 727

TRANSPORT

Rail line closed last winter to re-open

Repairs to busy route from Dover to Folkestone completed

NEWS

Fears grow over human trafficking

Rise in number of sexual and domestic slavery cases

NEWS

Get on your bikes and ride

Nationwide bid to boost cycling is being launched in the county

EDUCATION

GCSE results - the wait is over

How the county's pupils fared in their exams

BILL KENWRIGHT PRESENTS

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As migrant numbers rise fears grow over human trafficking

As the gateway to Europe, our county is no stranger to the efforts of migrants to gain entry illegally but there is concern some may be suffering slavery, sexual exploitation or domestic servitude...

By Adele Couchman

adele.couchman@archant.co.uk

THERE is still "a huge problem" in recognising victims of human trafficking, an academic has warned, after more were found in Kent last year than nearly everywhere else in the UK.

Some 88 potential victims were forwarded on to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) last year, a process set up by the government to identify and support those who have been trafficked in Britain.

Kent was ranked eighth for the highest number of suspected human trafficking victims out of a total of 45 police force areas according to the National Crime Agency (NCA).

The grim statistics come as The Salvation Army announced earlier this week it has seen nearly a fivefold increase of slavery victims it has helped in England and Wales since 2012.

The charity said more than 1,800 people were given support between April 2015 and March 2016, up from 378 between July 2011 and June 2012 – its first year of operating the government contract to support victims.

Almost half had been sexually exploited, 42 per cent were subject to forced labour and a further 13 per cent were victims of domestic servitude.

Unsurprisingly, the problem in Kent has been linked with the county's migrant crisis – with Dover MP Charlie Elphicke earlier this week calling for stronger borders to stop the influx of people who could be trafficked from the Calais jungle.

University of Kent PhD student Elena Krsmanovic has expressed similar worries about the vulnerability of refugees and asylum seekers after witnessing migrants arriving in Serbia whilst working for an anti-trafficking charity.

"Of course people travelling through dangerous routes trying to get to countries are under much greater risk," she told KoS.

"Whilst they are travelling, many who are desperate to escape their origins will have to pay off debts to their smugglers.

"They're not in a position to say no to work, no matter how dehumanising it might be.

"When they've reached their destination, there have been many cases of people working in the illegal sector until they get asylum.

"When someone doesn't have proper documentation it leaves them much more likely to be exploited underhand."

After helping survivors for the Serbian charity ASTRA, the 27-year-old criminology researcher is keen that people understand what trafficking involves so victims can be identified and receive the support they need.

12 Week ending August 28, 2016



ON THE RISE: The Salvation Army announced this week it had seen nearly a fivefold increase in slavery victims in England and Wales since 2012

"There's a huge problem with people not having the capacity to recognise victims, so there may be many out there who could be missed and not taken care of," she said.

"Cases are not always sexual and violent like the media makes out – someone could still be suffering without cuts and bruises."

Earlier in June, a judge ruled in favour of six Lithuanian migrants who said they had been trafficked as chicken catchers for a Maidstone firm.

Speaking of their ordeal, the men said they had been forced to work in inhuman and degrading conditions and threatened by supervisors with fighting dogs.

For many migrants, the future lies in not only brothels but also car washes and fruit fields to enable them to pay off their debts for what they believed would be a better life.

With more than 1,000 unaccompanied child refugees arriving on our shores last year, Kent County Council (KCC) says it is very mindful about the possibility of trafficking and ensure checks are in place but concedes activity at Dover is what may be pushing up the figures.

"It is KCC's legal responsibility to care for under-18s who arrive in the county from abroad, seeking asylum.

"As a matter of course, when new arrivals come into the care of KCC, we refer those Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children that have been identified at particular risk of being trafficked to the NCA.

"This could include certain coun-

tries of origin, such as Vietnam, stories that are suspicious, or if they are in receipt of large sums of money.

"Because of the high number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children coming into the county through Dover, this will inevitably make the figure for Kent higher, but does not necessarily mean they have been trafficked."

"We work closely with the Home Office and the police to disrupt trafficking activity and to protect and safeguard any individuals

who are deemed to be at risk."

A Kent Police spokesperson added: "We have made significant advances in educating and training officers and staff to look out for the warning signs of human trafficking and modern slavery and that, coupled with the county's geographical position as the gateway to Europe, are the key reasons why we see more potential victims than other forces.

"Kent Police is also in the process of developing a new training course that focuses on safeguarding, investi-

gation and prosecution for senior investigating officers and it is hoped that this will be jointly delivered by the CPS and result in an increasing amount of successful convictions for offences covered by the new Modern Slavery Act 2015.

"An assistant chief constable from the force also chairs a newly-created Kent Anti-Slavery Partnership which brings together the various partner agencies and charitable organisations in order that victims can be protected and offenders prosecuted."

JUNCKER 'HOPELESSLY OUT OF TOUCH,' CLAIMS DOVER MP

THE president of the European Commission has been slammed as "hopelessly out of touch" by a Kent MP.

It comes in a row over national borders, such as the Le Touquet agreement between England and France, which Brussels' top official Jean-Claude Juncker described as "the worst invention ever".

However, Dover MP Charlie Elphicke has rubbished the European chief's claims, and insisted the border between his constituency and Calais across the Channel was fundamental to Britain's security.

He told KoS: "Clearly Mr Juncker is hopelessly out of touch with the concerns of citizens across Europe.

"The Schengen area of free movement doesn't work for

anyone, meanwhile the border with Dover and Calais is far stronger and ensures we are maintaining more control than they are on the continent.

"It's welcome to see some improvements made, but more needs to be done.

"We need to have a Dover patrol to keep the Channel secure, we need to have the Jungle [camp housing thousands of migrants in Calais] dismantled and we need to clamp down on traffickers."

Sources close to Theresa May, who last month met with French President Francois Hollande and announced that the Le Touquet agreement would remain despite Brexit, also said Mr Juncker's comments were "not something that the prime minister would agree with."

Her official spokesperson added: "You have heard the Prime Minister talk about the views that the British people expressed in the referendum.

"The British people think that borders are important, having more control over our borders is important, and that is an issue we need to address."

Security has certainly been stepped up since last summer, when hundreds of migrants stormed the Channel Tunnel, causing disruption to services and leading to delays and cancellations.

However, a Home Affairs Select Committee report last month said the number of Border Force vessels in operation was "worryingly low" and recommended the use of Royal Navy vessels to make up for the shortfall.

kent-life.co.uk kentnews.co.uk

Appendix J – Example of a Criminal Justice-framed Article

EPPING FOREST
WALTHAM FOREST
CHINGFORD
WANSTEAD & WOODFORD

Guardian

Log in Register 

5.4°C Walthamstow

NEWS SPORT PHOTOS VIDEO WHAT'S ON JOBS PROPERTY ANNOUNCEMENTS CARS LOCAL INFO

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Dawn operations in Waltham Forest, Redbridge, Newham and Barking & Dagenham result in four arrests



DAWN raids targeted men believed to be responsible for sex attacks and trafficking children for prostitution (file photo)

First published Thursday 13 December 2012 in News

DAWN raids targeted men believed to be responsible for sex attacks and trafficking children for prostitution.

A total of 12 properties were involved in the operations in Waltham Forest, Redbridge, Newham and Barking & Dagenham this morning.

Four men were arrested, including a 23-year-old from Leyton who was suspected of sexual touching, controlling a child prostitute and conspiracy to traffick a female within the UK for sexual exploitation.

The Met has so far identified four victims

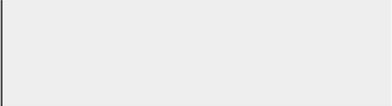
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- Shop assistant 'stunned' by £80k

 aged between 16 and 18.
Det Insp Kevin Hyland, of the Trafficking and Prostitution Unit, said: "The victims we have identified so far were all young and vulnerable individuals. Their abusers targeted them for this reason.

"We are working to ensure that all victims we identify during our investigation receive the care and support that they need.

"Our priority is always the safety and wellbeing of the victim. I urge any other victims of this type of crime to report it to police so that they can receive the help they need."

Five held over double daylight street stabbing

Orient fightback salvages Gillingham point

Autistic woman died due to 'neglect' by GPs and hospital staff

UKIP candidate chosen for Leyton and Wanstead

Neighbours at war: woman smashed bitter rival over the head with claw hammer as violence erupted due to long-running 'irrational' hatred

Appendix K - Example of a Prostitution-framed Article


Groninger
krant

[Home](#) [Vandaag](#) [Gronings nieuws](#) [Politiek](#) [Lifestyle](#) [Sport](#) [Casus](#) [Opinie](#)

Dinsdag 1_

Advertentie:



» Volgend artikel


 Zomaar een mening: 'Rechters in opstand'
 Luisteren + - Ik lees dat de rechters in Noord-Nederland willen dat hun bestuur opstapt. ...



» Gronings nieuws
 Provincie investeert 1,4 miljoen in

CDA en ChristenUnie: Geen prostituees onder de 21 jaar

Feb. 04 Persbericht Politiek no comments

[Luisteren](#)

Het CDA en de ChristenUnie in de stad Groningen willen de minimumleeftijd voor prostituees verhogen van 18 naar 21 jaar. Beide partijen vinden dat tieners niet in de prostitutiewereld vol misstanden thuisshoren. Gemeenten hebben de mogelijkheid om via de lokale wetgeving de minimumleeftijd voor prostitutie te verhogen, in Amsterdam is dat al gebeurd.



Afgelopen weken zijn in de documentaire 'Jojanneke in de Prostitutie' de misstanden die samenhangen met prostitutie aan de kaak gesteld. De documentaire zette scherp neer dat er heel veel jonge en kwetsbare vrouwen slachtoffer zijn van seksuele uitbuiting en mensenhandel. CDA raadslid Anne Kulk: 'Het is walgelijk om te zien hoeveel misstanden in de zogenaamde 'legale prostitutie' plaatsvinden. Wij moeten opkomen voor deze kwetsbare groep tienermeisjes en voorkomen dat ze in een levenschte nachtmerrie terecht komen.'

In een [brief aan de raad](#) stellen het CDA en de ChristenUnie voor om de lokale verordening aan te passen, omdat zelf stappen willen zetten om misstanden tegen te gaan ze niet meer willen wachten op de trage wetgeving in Den Haag en. ChristenUnie raadslid Edward Koopmans: 'Gedwongen prostitutie is een moderne vorm van slavernij. Daar kunnen we onze ogen niet voor sluiten. Met dit voorstel voor een leeftijdsverhoging wordt het pooliers en loverboys moeilijker gemaakt om tieners tot prostitutie te dwingen.' De twee partijen agenderen dit voorstel in de Gemeenteraad. Aanstaande donderdag is er ook een debat in 'Huis De Beurs' over mensenhandel en de wereld van prostitutie.

Appendix L - Example of a Violence-framed Article

вечерње
НОВОСТИ
online

Subotica
NASLOVNA SPORT PLANETA SCENA KULTURA SRBIJA BEOGRAD ŽIVOT + ZABAVA TURIZAM

Latinica Бирилице
Politika Društvo Ekonomija Hronika Dosije **Reportaže** Republika Srpska Tehnologije Auto Zanimljivosti

Majka me prodala za 500 evra!

V. TALOVIĆ | 06. jun 2012. 20:59 | Komentara: 77

Potresna ispovest J. K. (19), žrtve surove trgovine ljudima u Srbiji. Imala sam 13 godina kada me je trgovac silovao. Tri puta su me preprodavali. Gori pakao ne postoji



Utočište u Sigurnoj kući

SRODNE VESTI

Kraljevčanka, dobitnica Sretenjskog odlikovanja: Dok sanjam, još pričam sa umrlim

Španija: Daset sveštenika optuženo zbog zlostavljanja

Zagreb: Trudnu maloletnicu držali zatvorenu, tukli, bičevali i silovali!

Novi Sad: Muž me je tukao dok sam dojila bebū!

Muž pijan pokušao da me ubije, svadali smo se i ranije zbog njegovog alkoholizma!

BILO mi je 13 godina kada me majka prodala gastarbajteru iz okoline Požarevca. Dao joj je 500 evra i boks cigareta. Nije ni trepnula. Nije me poljubila za rastanak. Drhtala sam kad me je pomilovao po bosoj nozi. Odveo me je u kuću, veliku s kupatilom i šustiklom na televizoru. Bila sam gladna. Odmah me je silovao. Vrištala sam, a on me je tukao. I tako, svakoga dana naredne tri godine. A onda me prodao za 600 evra, bratu od strica, a ovaj vlasniku striptiz bara u okolini Berana.

J. K. (19), iz sela kraj Obrenovca, šest godina bila je žrtva surove trgovine ljudima. Zahvaljujući šverceru Laletu iz Čme Gore, u čijem se „zagrljaju“ našla, uspela je da, sklopčana u njegovom prtljažniku, pobjegne iz šestogodišnjeg pakla. Imala je sreću da joj utočište postane Sigurna kuća. Sa vidnim posledicama zlostavljanja po telu, umornog pogleda, otvorila je ranjenu dušu:

- Nisam imala dokumenta. Ne znam kako smo prešli granicu. Našla sam se u nekom čumezu. Sve je smrdelo na alkohol i duvan. I znoj. Bila sam umoma. Vlasnik bara je imao veliki zlatan lanac i grube ruke. Pomilovao me po glavi, dao mi da jedem i upoznao me sa devojkama. Većina su bile strankinje. Posle sam saznala da su Moldavke i Ukrajinke. Bilo je i naših. Čudno su se osmehivale i bile su zle. Jedna mi je zapretila da će me ubiti ako joj „skinem“ mušteriju.

Te noći silovao je vlasnik bara. Naredne večeri bila je s trojicom mušaraca, sledeće s petoricom. A onda je, kaže, prestala da broji i muškarce i noći.

NAJNOVIJE

NAJČITANIJE

NAJVIŠE KOMENTARA

SPORT

10:43 **Okazan** sastanak Vučića i direktora...

11:47 **Domaci** proizvođači mogu da učestvuju na tend...

11:41 **Niš:** Hapšenje zbog trgovine cigaretama

09:37 > 11:30 **VIDEO** Objavljen snimak ubistva...

11:30 **Dužni** ko Grčka, bogati ko Krez

11:45 **U Srbiji** najviše...

Prikaži 10 vesti

Prikaži sve vesti

SAMSUNG

НОВОСТИ

Због кише угрожена ТЕ Костопац, потоп у Вршцу

Nova Android aplikacija

Pisma čitalaca

Postanite reporter

SRPSKU DECU USVAJAJU I AMERIKANCI I ŠVEĐANI

naslovna za 01.03.2015.

Kliknite za veću sliku

SRODNE TEME

▸ Trgovina ljudima

- Davali su mi neko piće od koga se dugo ostaje budan. Verovatno i drogu. Kako je vreme prolazilo, nikakav bol nisam osećala. Po danu sam spavala, uveče radila. Zasadu je uzimao vlasnik sa zlatnim lancem. Jednom me pretukao kad sam bakšiš zadržala za sebe. Tri dana sam povraćala krv.

Jednog jutra J. K. je probudio urlik iz susedne sobe. Uletela je i videla strašan prizor. Devojka je ležala u lokvi krvi. Znala je da je prethodne noći u bar došao „neki važan klijent“, koji je tražio „posebne usluge“. Dobro je platio.

- Gazda nam je pripreto da će ubiti svaku od nas ako pisnemo o ovom događaju - kaže J. K., paleći cigaretu za cigaretom.

Dve sestre, Beograđanke, pokušale su da pobegnu. Ali su ih brzo vratili gazdini ljudi u uniformi. Jedna sestra je popila kutiju tableta.

- Tada sam prvi put videla gazdu zabrinutog - seća se J.K. - Ubrzo su došli neki ljudi, ovog puta u belom. Devojka nije umrla. Ali je poludela. A druga sestra se zaljubila u gazdu. Bila je spremna sve da uradi za njega - da ima najviše mušterija, da nas cinkari, maltretira. Ta je dušu prodala đavolu. A on, kad je hteo da je pohvali, pozivao je kod sebe u sobu. Izlazila je sva važna, moćna. Još gora i opasnija.

J. K. se navikavala na ovakav život. Za drugi nije ni znala. Ni smrad joj više nije smetao. Dobijala je veš od jeftine čipke i roštilj, za snagu. Ponekad i neko strano piće.



- A onda, jedne noći, u bar je došao Lale. Imao je kovdžavu kosu i majicu na tregere s likom Mika Džegera. Smejala sam se. Nije bio surov, kao drugi. Odabrao je baš mene iako mu je gazda nudio Moldavku „sa šipke“. U sobi je hteo da pričamo. Nisam znala o čemu. Rekao mi je da sam drugačija i da će mi pomoći da pobegnem. Nisam znala ni gde da bežim, ni da li to zaista želim. Iskrala se iz sobe. Smestio je u prtljažnik kamiona, prekrio starim čebetom i preveo preko granice. Dovezao je do Beograda, dao joj 500 dinara i rekao da ide u policiju.

U policiju, međutim, nije morala sama. Patrola je pronašla u parku i privela u stanicu. Odatle su je smestili u Sigumu kuću. Sada je na rehabilitaciji.

IZBRISANA IZ SRCA

J. K. o svojoj majci koja je prodala ne želi ni da razmišlja. Ona je, kako kaže, izbrisana iz njenog srca. Ništa ne zna o njoj, niti je interesuje. Sada samo sanja da živi novi život.

Od ljudi koji se bave njenom resocijalizacijom saznali smo da je i njena majma „na samom društvenom dnu“. Alkoholičarka je i bavi se prostitucijom.

POSLEDICE DUGO TRAJU

- PROCES otklanjanja posledica je dug, nekad se broji i godinama - kaže Vesna Stanojević, koordinator u Savetovalištu za žrtve porodičnog nasilja. - Kada žrtva trgovine ljudima dođe do prihvatišta, prvo joj se pruža medicinska pomoć. Sledeći korak je obezbeđivanje dokumenata. Većina devojaka su i postale žrtve međunarodnog kriminala jer nisu imale dokumenta. S lažnim dokumentima ih lakše prebacuju i prodaju preko granice i tako ucenjuju da se ne obrate policiji.

ZLOČIN I KAZNA

VELIKI problem su spori sudski procesi. Nekada traju i godinama. A tada, većina devojaka koje su bile žrtve trafikinga, ne želi da svedoči protiv svojih „dželata“ jer su počele novi život i ne žele da otvaraju stare rane. Tako zločin ostaje nekažnjen - kaže Vesna Stanojević.

VESTI IZ RUBRIKE

Srbin Francuzima raširio krila



Posle škole časovi samoće



Kuhinja u Srpskoj, soba U Federaciji



Dobrota kuće sagradila

Appendix M - Example of a Migration-framed Article

Nieuws
Cultuur & Leven

de Volkskrant

ZOEKEN
INLOGGEN

Leven

Gratis registreren >

Al een account? [Login](#)



Politieagenten doorzoeken in 2012 peeskamers in Eindhoven tijdens een grote internationale actie tegen mensenhandel. © ANP

GERELATEERDE

Prostituees burgemeest
1 mei 2013

Meer samenwerking Hongarije om mensenhandel
17 april 2013

EU waarschuwt Nederland inzake mensenhandel
15 april 2013

MEEST GELEZEN LEVEN

- 1
Wat doet de NS wél goed?
12770
- 2
Advies: ent zwangere vrouwen in tegen kinkhoest
10285
- 3
'Ik ben zo fucking gemiddeld'
7459
- 4
Alleen op de wereld
6732
- 5
Optimale percentage keizersneden in een land is 19 procent
5174

[BEKIJK HELE LIJST](#)

Toename mensenhandel via luchthaven Eindhoven

Eindhoven Airport wordt in toenemende mate door criminelen gebruikt voor mensenhandel en mensensmokkel. Dat zegt de Koninklijke Marechaussee, die vorig jaar 31 incidenten op het gebied van mensenhandel constateerde op het Eindhovense vliegveld.

Door: Peter de Graaf 2 mei 2013, 06:55

'Veel mensenhandel gebeurt vanuit het Oostblok', zegt een woordvoerder van de marechaussee. 'En een aantal budgetmaatschappijen vliegt vanuit Eindhoven op Oost-Europa.' Zo vliegt WizzAir op vijftien bestemmingen in Oost-Europa en Ryanair op vier bestemmingen. Voor mensenhandelaren is het aantrekkelijk om hun slachtoffers, vooral vrouwen die in de prostitutie worden ingezet, goedkoop te vervoeren via budgetmaatschappijen.

'Vergelijk het met Maastricht Airport of Groningen/Eelde. Die hebben geen budgetmaatschappijen die op het voormalige Oostblok vliegen. Het aantal mensenhandelzaken is daar nul', aldus de woordvoerder.

Daarnaast speelt de groei van Eindhoven Airport een rol. Vorig jaar passeerden bijna drie miljoen passagiers de regionale luchthaven, zowel op chartervluchten naar de zon als op lijnvluchten naar andere Europese bestemmingen. 'Met het aantal passagiers neemt ook de criminaliteit toe', constateert de marechaussee. Hij ontkent dat minder strenge controles een rol spelen: 'Mensen worden ook op Eindhoven gewoon gecontroleerd, zeker op vluchten buiten het Schengen-gebied.'

Harde uitspraak

De persafdeling in Den Haag deed woensdag haar best om een harde uitspraak van de hoogste baas van de marechaussee op Eindhoven Airport te nuanceren. In een interview met Omroep Brabant, dat woensdagavond werd uitgezonden, noemde brigadecommandant Léon Slegers het vliegveld zelfs 'een mainport' voor mensenhandel.

Volgens de persvoorlichter gaat het te ver om Eindhoven een mainport te noemen. Hij wijst erop dat de marechaussee-afdeling die belast is met het 'mobiel toezicht binnengrenzen' (weg, water, trein) vorig jaar 251 incidenten heeft geconstateerd. En de marechaussee op Schiphol heeft vorig jaar 55 mensenhandelzaken ontdekt die hebben geleid tot justitieonderzoek. Volgens hem hebben niet alle 31 incidenten op Eindhoven Airport geleid tot een onderzoek: 'Soms is alleen de lokale politie geïnformeerd om even alert te zijn op iemand.'

Speerpunten

Mensenhandel is een van de speerpunten van de marechaussee, die daarbij nauw samenwerkt met het Openbaar Ministerie. Vorig jaar deden politie en justitie een grote inval op het Baekelandplein, het hoerenplein in Eindhoven. De helft van de 44 aanwezige prostituees werd gelinkt aan mensenhandel. Burgemeester Van Gijssel van Eindhoven sprak van 'moderne slavernij'.

Eindhoven Airport is ook aantrekkelijk voor mensenhandelaren door zijn ligging vlak bij België en Duitsland. Brigadecommandant Slegers vreest dat het aantal mensenhandelzaken dat wordt geconstateerd nog maar het topje van de ijsberg is.

Ook drugshandelaren hebben het Eindhovense vliegveld ontdekt. Vorig jaar werden 232 drugszaken geconstateerd door de marechaussee. Opmerkelijk daarbij is dat de bolletjesslikkers Eindhoven als uitvalsbasis gebruiken naar andere bestemmingen in Europa, terwijl ze op Schiphol vooral aankomen. Volgens de marechaussee is het aantal drugszaken op Eindhoven het afgelopen jaar wel gestabiliseerd. Ter vergelijking: op Schiphol zijn in 2012 ongeveer 1.100 drugszaken gerapporteerd.



Appendix N - Example of a Human Rights-framed Article

Srbija | Region | Svet | Ekonomija | Stav | Kultura | Društvo | Intervju | Sport | Entertainment | Kolumna | Felton | Fotogalerija | Prikaži

Srbija | Vesti | 06.03.2014 - 15:47 | Pošalji prijatelju | Verzija za štampu | Samo tekst | Sve komentara

Saopštenje nevladine organizacije ASTRA Prva odšteta za žrtvu trgovine ljudima

e-Novine | Veličina slova: - +

Borba za prava žrtava: Jedna od konferencija za medije NVO ASTRA, arhivska fotografija
Photo: rrc.rs

Povodom prvog slučaja u kojem je osoba koja je bila žrtva trgovine ljudima dobila odštetu, nevladina organizacija ASTRA upozorila je da Srbija nema efikasan sistem za kompenzaciju, te da se žrtve trgovine ljudima po izlasku iz lanca eksploatacije susreću sa brojnim kršenjima svojih prava, koje sistem ugrožava, umesto da ih štiti. U saopštenju te organizacije ukazuje se da je neophodno osnovati efikasan i održiv fond za kompenzaciju žrtvama nasilnih krivičnih dela, ali i koristiti zakonsku mogućnost nadoknade štete u okviru krivičnog postupka

Apelacioni sud u Novom Sadu potvrdio je odluku novosadskog Osnovnog suda u pamičnom postupku, kojom se četvoro ljudi, prethodno osuđenih za izvršenje krivičnog dela trgovine ljudima, obavezuje da, na ime naknade nematerijalne štete tužilji koja je bila žrtva trgovine ljudima, solidarno isplati ukupan iznos od milion dinara. Na ime pretrpljenih duševnih bolova zbog povrede časti, ugleda, slobode, prava ličnosti i dostojanstva, njoj će optuženi narednih meseci u ratama isplaćivati sumu od 800.000 dinara i kao i iznos od 200.000 dinara na ime pretrpljenog straha, saopštila je nevladina organizacija ASTRA.

Sud je, kako se ističe u saopštenju, obavezao okrivljene na nadoknadu pamičnih troškova u iznosu od 327.375 dinara. Kako je novac za ove troškove prvobitno izdvojen od sredstava NVO ASTRA namenjenih pružanju pravne pomoći osobama koje su preživle trgovinu ljudima, novac kojim se ova sredstva nadoknađuju je, uz saglasnost klijentkinje, uplaćen na poseban račun i biće dalje korišćen kako bi se žrtvama trgovine ljudima obezbedila održiva pravna pomoć i ostvarenje prava na nadoknadu pretrpljene štete, u drugim sudskim postupcima.

OSTALI ČLANCI IZ RUBRIKE VESTI

- Odluka Skupštine Grada Beograda
Spomenik poginulim Srbima
- Dijabolični izveštaj Amnesti internešenala
Srbija kriva za Falun Gong i sve druge faluse
- Međunarodna poternica za predsednikom
skupštinskog Odbora za bezbednost
Interpol traži Momira Stojanovića
- Zorana Mihajlović, potpredsednica Vlade
Srbije
Poruka ženama - prijavite nasilje
- Džon Keri, državni sekretar SAD
Rusija maršira u Srbiji sa većim
uticajem nego ikada pre
- Evropski parlament odlučio
Što pre otvoriti prva poglavlja sa
Srbijom

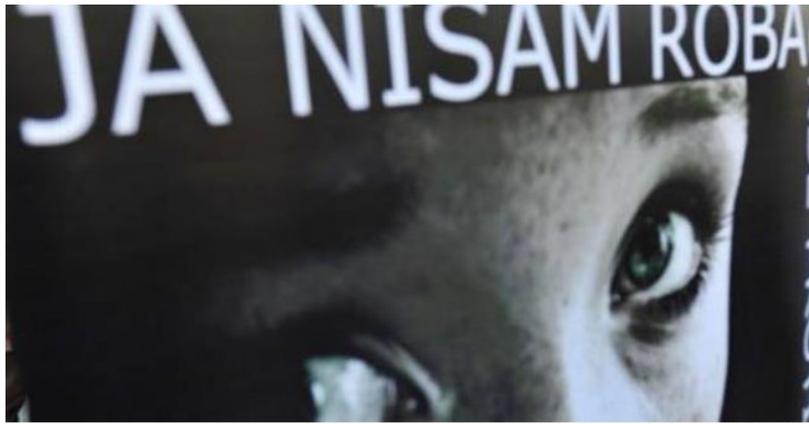


Photo: slobodnaevropa.org

"Iako je krivično delo trgovine ljudima u srpsko zakonodavstvo uvedeno još 2003, a pravo na nadoknadu štete žrtvama garantuju i domaći zakoni i međunarodne konvencije koje je Srbija potpisala, ovo je prvi slučaj da u našoj zemlji osoba koja je bila žrtva trgovine ljudima dobije odštetu (u prethodna dva slučaja oštećenima nije isplaćena dogovorena suma). To je jasan pokazatelj da Srbija nema efikasan sistem za kompenzaciju, te da se žrtve trgovine ljudima po izlasku iz lanca eksploatacije susreću sa brojnim kršenjima svojih prava, koja sistem ugrožava, umesto da ih štiti. Da bi se ova situacija promenila, neophodno je osnovati efikasan i održiv fond za kompenzaciju žrtvama nasilnih krivičnih dela, ali i koristiti zakonsku mogućnost nadoknade štete u okviru krivičnog postupka", naglašava se u saopštenju NVO ASTRA.

U navedenom slučaju, konstatuje se u saopštenju, mogućnost nadoknade štete kroz krivični postupak nije iskošičena, već je žrtva za ostvarivanje svojih prava upućena na novi, pamični postupak.

"Nakon pretrpljenog zlostavljanja u lancu trgovine ljudima, žrtva je bila prinuđena da tokom krivičnog postupka koji je trajao četiri godine, ponovo preživljava tramatične događaje, kroz davanje iskaza i suočavanje sa trgovcima. Upućivanjem, nakon toga, na pamični postupak, koji je trajao tri godine, uprkos psihološkim veštačenjima koja su ukazivala na postojanje posttraumatskog stresnog poremećaja, umesto da se izbegne sekundama viktimizacija, žrtva je još jednaput stavljena u poziciju da se njena trauma preispituje, a ona iznova suočava sa osobama koje su za to odgovorne.

Čekajući više od sedam godina na pristup pravdi i nemajući mogućnost da stavi tračku na traumatična iskustva, oporavak žrtve trgovine ljudima je znatno usporen", ističe ASTRA.

Kako bi se u našoj zemlji uspostavio efikasan sistem za kompenzaciju žrtvama, ASTRA od 2012. godine realizuje projekat Balkans ACT Now! u okviru koga je pokrenuta inicijativa za izmenu zakona i uspostavljanje fonda za kompenzaciju, u cilju adekvatne zaštite prava garantovanim žrtvama ovog oblika kriminala. U narednom periodu grupa eksperata radiće na izradi predloga zakonskih izmena, a biće pokrenuta i medijska kampanja kako bi se šira javnost upoznala sa pravima žrtava trgovine ljudima, saopštila je ova organizacija.



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Oceni 5.00

Najčitaniji

Najviše komentara

- Odlazak klona
- Sukob policije i vojske
- Rusija preti Srbiji ekonomskom odmazdom
- Koju slavu ti je deda slavio, Zlatane?
- Umro Dobrica Ćosić

Tagovi

Nema tagova za ovaj članak

Appendix D - Example of a GSE-framed Article



Children as young as 10 'groomed for sex by gangs'

🕒 17 January 2011 UK

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Children as young as 10 are being sexually exploited by organised gangs of men in cities across the UK, a leading charity says.

Barnardo's says it is working with more than 1,000 children who have been groomed, abused and trafficked for money, and the problem is growing.

It says a specific minister must be given formal responsibility for tackling the issue.

The Department for Education said it was determined to take action.

'Used and abused'

Barnardo's said it had 22 teams across the UK and all but one of them had come across organised child trafficking.

Anne Marie Carrie, Barnardo's new chief executive, told the BBC the problem was far more prevalent than it had previously thought and the 1,000 or so victims identified were "the tip of the iceberg".

She also said the average age of those abused had fallen from 15 to 13 in recent years.



"Children are being passed from man to man, home to home, city to city," she said. "It's the domestic trafficking of children for money.

"This problem is getting worse in that it is getting more organised, certainly the grooming is becoming more organised using technology.

"The children are as young as 10. These children are being used, abused and thrown away by organised gangs of men."

Earlier this month, two married British men of Pakistani origin were jailed in Derby for grooming and abusing several teenage girls. The former home secretary Jack Straw later claimed some Pakistani men believed white girls were "easy meat", but he was immediately criticised for his remarks.

Following the case, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (Ceop) announced that it had begun a study "to identify any patterns of offending, victimisation or vulnerability".

Ms Carrie said the children at the heart of the issue had "been forgotten as discussion has focused on the ethnicity of perpetrators in high-profile cases".

"Without a minister with overall responsibility the government response is likely to remain inadequate," she added.

A spokeswoman for Department of Education said: "Child sexual exploitation is an appalling crime - it is a form of child sexual abuse and must not be tolerated.

"This is a complex problem and we are determined to tackle it effectively by working collaboratively right across government and with national and local agencies."

'Heartless'

Penny Nicholls, director of children and young people at The Children's Society, echoed Ms Carrie's remarks and urged the government to make a single government minister responsible for the issue.



I got hit and punched, so I had to go along with it

Grooming victim tells his story