



MASTER'S THESIS
INTERNATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Sex trafficking in Romania: the institutional and legal context

An investigation from the perspective of Romanian anti-
human trafficking NGOs

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4 February 2015
Number of words: 15 935



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Abstract

The academic field of human trafficking is still in its infancy with many topics that still need to be investigated. This study focuses on sex trafficking and source countries. The reasons for this approach is that according to different sources, sex trafficking is one of the most common forms of human trafficking and understanding the situation in the origin countries could help actors find solutions in preventing the outflow. The purpose of this case study is to identify a number of contextual factors that are hindering or facilitating the work against human trafficking. The investigation is conducted through the eyes of anti-human trafficking NGOs. These actors are not only closer to the trafficking victims and potential victims, but they also have an extensive knowledge about the trafficking situation in Romania. The method used to gather the data was semi-structured interviews as well as reports, documents and relevant legislation. Using an abductive approach, this study shows that the current laws and institutional environment are, to some extent, contributing to the perpetuation of Romania as a source country. In addition, enforcement of prostitution laws, high corruption rates and lack of political will are among the factors that are hindering the combat against human trafficking. In order to offer an alternative explanation, a shadow case of the situation of a Swedish NGO situation is shortly presented.

Key words: Human trafficking, sex trafficking, origin countries, Romania, legislation, institution, NGOs, case study.

1 Introduction

“Human trafficking is a lot of small problems that are interconnected and that transform themselves into vulnerability factors. If we manage to understand this thing and that we can each play a very important role in preventing and combating (human trafficking), things would be very easy. Very often the civil society says: we do not deal with human trafficking. But if you work disadvantaged children then you are working with traffic prevention because you are addressing certain vulnerability.” (Project manager NGO2, 2014)

According to Konrad (2002) human trafficking is currently one of the most urgent and complex human rights issues that demands a more appropriate and co-ordinated response from the international community. Human trafficking works just like a regular type of business. The traffickers act in order to maximize their profits as well as secure their position on the market, while the clients are sustaining the market. It generates worldwide around 32 billion dollars per year and it is the third largest illicit industry in the world after illegal drugs and smuggling arms (UNODC, 2014).

Lee (2011) presents in her study three different types of human trafficking, namely: sex trafficking, labour trafficking and organ trafficking. To these categories, Interpol (2015) adds sexual exploitation of children in tourism. In this thesis I will mainly focus on the sex trafficking issue, not only because statistics show that it is the most common form of trafficking in European Union, but also because most of the efforts in this academic field are directed to this type of trafficking (Eurostat, 2014).

There is a large academic literature available on why human trafficking exists and which factors are determining people to migrate in specific countries. These are called push and pull factors. Among the most common push factors for human trafficking are the desire to migrate, the vulnerability of migrants, corruption of the government, poverty and high unemployment rates (Bales, 2007; Cho, 2015). Opportunities, employment possibility, GDP per capita of the destination country are among the pull factors (Bales, 2007; Cho, 2015). Understanding the push factors is important for all the actors that are involved in the fight against human trafficking as it indicates where the focus should be placed. Most of the available studies are presenting a correlation between the levels of human trafficking and

these factors. However, this study is taking a qualitative approach to analyse some of these factors in a source country.

Policy makers and scholars are recognising the importance of nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) in rising awareness about human trafficking issues (Karlsson, 2013; Tzvetkova, 2002). Thus, NGOs are playing a vital role in spreading the message about the gravity of the human trafficking as well as combating trafficking. However, there is little academic information about the work of these types of organisations and the way they are carrying out their work in source countries (Laczko, 2005). Therefore, in this thesis I will study the institutional and legislation context in an origin country through the lenses of anti-human trafficking NGOs. The origin country that I focus on is Romania, mainly because it is one of the biggest source countries for traffickers in Europe (Eurostat, 2014).

In order to achieve the goals of this study I gathered data through interviews, legislation and existing reports on the situation of human trafficking in this country. I interviewed employees of three anti-human trafficking NGOs that operate in Romania. These actors became informants as they possess information about trafficking problems in Romania and are also able to reveal the obstacles they are facing when carrying out their work.

1.1 Background

The concept of human trafficking touches upon many disciplines and it is tackled by many organisations and groups (Laczko, 2005). Although this means that more forces are joined to fight this phenomenon, the disadvantage is that there is no universal definition of human trafficking. However, most scholars and organisations refer to the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children Supplementing United Nation Convention on Transnational Organized Crime* when discussing it. In this document, developed by UN, human trafficking is defined as:

“[...]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 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” (UN, Article 3, paragraph (a) of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children

Supplementing United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime, 2000, pp. 2).

Despite the strong academic debate on the human trafficking definition, there is a general view that the field of human trafficking lacks reliable data, mostly because it is rather hard to measure this process (Laczko, 2005). There are a number of international databases that gather information on the current situation of human trafficking such as those administered by Eurostat, International Labour Organisation and United Nation Office on Drugs and Crime. In addition, there are also national databases as most governments are conscious about the importance of keeping track of such statistics.

In 2014 Eurostat published, for the second time, a report about human trafficking in Europe that gathered data from 2010, 2011 and 2012. The data was gathered by national authorities that later submitted it to the European Commission. Although the numbers presented might not reflect the whole reality, they do indicate that human trafficking is a serious problem for the European Union. The total registered victims of human trafficking throughout the three years were the striking number of 30,146. Out of this number, 80% were female and 65% were European Union citizens. The report shows figures from all forms of exploitation, but sexual exploration is the highest with 69%. Moreover, from the total number of sexual exploited victims, 95% were women (Eurostat, 2014).

1.2 The case of Romania

The Eurostat (2014) statistics show that out of all the registered victims, Romanian citizens were among the most probable to come into contact with authorities between 2010 and 2012, with a number of 6101 registered victims across Europe during these three years. As the data above suggest, Romania is one of the main source of trafficked victims in Europe. During the years Romania became a transition country, a destination and an origin country for trafficked people. However, according to UNODC (2006) Romania is mainly a source country.

In the battle against human trafficking, the Romanian government relies on its specialised agency countering the phenomenon of human trafficking, Agentia Nationala Importriva Traficului de Persoane (ANITP) – National Agency Against Human Trafficking. The Eurostat (2014) published essential data from Member States from 2010 until 2012, but a more recent study, conducted by ANITP (2014), shows that the number of sexually exploited persons in

the first half of 2013 in Romania was 733. The statistics also illustrate that the number of underage girls who are forced and life-threatened to work as sexual slaves is very high. In the first half of the year 2013 55% of the sexually exploited victims were underage, 53.34% of them being females. These numbers confirm that human trafficking is a real problem in Romania.

Human trafficking is a very complex problem and the efforts of governments are not sufficient as they cannot reach all victims and potential victims. For example, many sex workers are afraid of asking help from authorities because the activity they are involved in is illegal or they are an illegal immigrant (Tzvetkova, 2002). The non-governmental organisations are the ones that join the efforts to combat human trafficking. Although each region has its own characteristics, NGOs usually provide similar services and carry out similar work such as prevention and awareness programmes or offering support for victims and survivors (Tzvetkova, 2002).

In Romania, without the efforts of these organisations, many victims would not find shelter, psychological or judicial help. The NGOs are the only organisations that are in close contact with the victims and that are also involved in the prevention process. In 2009 many such NGOs were closed or had to reorganise due to lack of funding (Trafficking in Persons Report, 2010). Thus, it is also important to analyse their perspective on the institutional and legal frameworks in order to identify the difficulties they are encountering.

1.3 Research question

Taking into consideration the importance of understanding the situation in source countries and looking at this problem through the eyes of the actors that are most involved in the fight against human trafficking, the NGOs, I formulate the following research question:

- From the Romanian NGOs' perspectives, which factors constrain or facilitate the work against human trafficking in Romania?

2 Literature review

2.1 Human trafficking definition

Human trafficking is a complex concept and it includes many interdisciplinary issues such as human rights, migration, law enforcement, gender issues and even corruption (Laczko, 2005). In order to understand human trafficking and research this phenomenon in depth, its definition is crucial. Even though human trafficking has gained a lot of attention in the recent years, there is still no generally accepted definition of human trafficking. Salt and Hogarth (2000) acknowledged that there are more than 20 definitions of human trafficking, which makes this concept to be greatly debated.

Although there are many available definitions, the most common and used definition of human trafficking is the one offered by the United Nations. This definition has also been fully adopted by the European Union. In addition to it, for the purpose of this research, I will also present the Romanian definition of human trafficking, which is also very similar to the ones provided by United Nations and European Union.

In 2000 the United Nations Member States signed the Convention against Transnational Organised Crime, which is the main international tool in the fight against transnational organised crime. This document was later supplemented by three documents, known as the Palermo protocols, named after the city where they were signed. The human trafficking definition is included in the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children Supplementing United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime* that is commonly referred to in the academic world simply as the Palermo protocol. The United Nations defines human trafficking as:

“[...] 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 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.” (UN, Article 3, paragraph (a) of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children Supplementing United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime, 2000, pp. 2).

The second paragraph, paragraph (b), states that it does not make any difference if the victim offers consent. The reason for this is that a victim cannot give its consent for something that is a fraud or for something that is false. Therefore, the concept that is at focus in the protocol is exploitation. In paragraph (a) it is stated that “at 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” (UN, Article 3, paragraph (a) of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children Supplementing United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime, 2000, pp.2). According to various experts the phrase “exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation” is a vague phrase deliberately. There are two reasons for this. First of all, by not narrowing it down, more countries were able to sign the protocol and second of all, this would offer the states the freedom to define exploitation and prostitution according to their purposes and policies (EC, 2004; Friman and Reich, 2007).

The Romanian definition of human trafficking is present in the New Criminal Code, chapter 7, article 210 as:

“Recruiting, transporting, transferring, hosting or welcoming of a person with the purpose of exploitation, committed:

- a) through constraint, kidnap, threat, misleading or authority abuse;*
- b) taking advantage of that person's incapability of protecting itself or express its own will or state of obvious vulnerability of that person;*
- c) by offering, accepting or receiving money or other materials in exchange of the consent of the person that has authority over that person.”(New Criminal Code, 2014, pp. 62-63)*

According to article 182 of the same Code, the exploitation of a person is explained through five different points:

- a) performing work in forced conditions;
- b) keeping someone in slavery;
- c) forcing the practice of prostitution or pornographic representations and any other forms of sexual exploitation;
- d) forcing the practice of begging;
- e) organ harvesting.

As observed above the definitions of human trafficking are similar. In addition, the Romanian law presents a more detailed explanation of exploitation. Throughout this paper, I will use the above definitions including the Romanian definition of exploitation.

2.2 Human trafficking and sex trafficking

According to Friman and Reich (2007) when governments and NGOs are referring to human trafficking they are actually referring to two main categories, forced labour and sexual exploitation. The authors further suggest that the female sexual exploitation has received more attention because its implications are more appealing to political leaders, feminists and the public. However there is also empirical evidence which suggests that in Europe sexual exploitation is the main reason for human trafficking such as the statistics presented by Eurostat in 2014.

The Palermo protocol does not clearly define sex trafficking, thus this concept, just like human trafficking, is open for debate. Lee (2011) as well as Friman and Reich (2007) suggest that this gap in the protocol divided the understanding of sex trafficking according to the views on prostitution, namely: sex slavery and voluntary work. The first category, sex slavery, is also known as abolitionism. The abolitionist perspective states that women are forced into prostitution in all situations and that this activity is “violence against women” (Tyldum et. al, 2005, pg. 16). There are a number of scholars and organisations that support this perspective. According to the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) any migration of sex workers can become trafficking (Murray, 1998). Similarly, UNDOC (2006) argues that many people end up being trafficked through prostitution. The second category is an opposed perspective stating that there is a difference between women who are trafficked and forced into prostitution and the women who are performing in the sexual market. It is important to analyse the conditions under which this activity is taking place and organised in order to establish if the women are performing against their will (Kempadoo, 2005). In this debate there is also a third view, somewhat in the middle, which suggests that there is a need to change the conditions in the sex market in order to fight against human trafficking (Tyldum et. al, 2005).

All these three views of sex trafficking are playing a role in determining whether a person is a trafficked victim. It is rather difficult to prove in which category a sex worker can be placed as one cannot simply ask them if they are performing this job willingly or not. Most would be

reluctant to answer such a question due to fear and stigmatisation.

These perspectives are important for this study because they present the existing views on prostitution. The reader needs to understand that this issue is tackled differently by actors depending on their agenda. Furthermore, these perspectives are also connected to the types of prostitution regimes presented later in this section.

2.3 Sex trafficking and origin countries

It is important to analyse the situation in origin countries in order to understand the reasons why people become victims and to find solutions to prevent an increase of the outflow. The factors that are determining a person to choose a certain country are called push factors. Laczko et. al (2002) argue that most women and men from Europe who are victims of human trafficking live in poverty and are willing to accept any job for a better life. In addition, according to GfK (2006) low levels of wages, unemployment and lack of information about working abroad are the main reason for high human trafficking rates in South-Eastern Europe. Bales (2007) and Cho (2015) add to the factors list, government corruption, conflict and social instability, country's infant mortality rate and law enforcement.

Many scholars are looking at sex trafficking through a demand and supply perspective (Kara, 2009; Jakobsson, Kotsadam and Hernæs 2014). The demand is represented by sex demand and profits, whereas the supply is made up by sex workers (Jakobsson et. al, 2014). In addition, the supply and demand approach is also a starting point for policy makers. As I will show in the next section, the legislative frameworks that countries adopt are based on either criminalising the demand, the supply or both.

According to Kara (2009) the supply of sex traffickers faced an increase in the beginning of the 1990s. The factors that contributed to the high number of victims are among the once mentioned before: poverty, economic and social instabilities and legislative framework (Kara, 2009). Globalisation also played an important role as trafficking victims are easy to transport, to exploit and to acquire. It is very easy to attract victims nowadays through different types of channels such as the internet, newspapers or using the "loverboy" concept. The transportation is easier because borders started to open more than before and the means of transportation are very low compared to the future profits the trafficked victims will produce (Kara, 2009).

There are many researchers that focus on identifying which factors in the origin country contribute to people falling victims to traffickers. The above factors are just a few from the ones scholars are investigating. Most of these studies use statistical data to prove a link between push factors and trafficking. This research takes a qualitative approach and it contributes to the existing literature by investigating which and how certain factors are hindering or facilitating the work of Romanian NGOs.

2.4 Prostitution laws in origin countries

As argued before, many authors suggest that sex trafficking is strongly connected to views on prostitution (Friman and Reich, 2007). Some scholars state that trafficking is caused by prostitution and thus prostitution should be regulated (Outshoorn, 2004). Other authors argue that the legalisation of prostitution would improve the conditions for sex workers and decrease the trafficking (Cho et. al, 2013). No matter which position one adopts in this debate, the legislative framework is a key tool in combating the rise in trafficking. Therefore, it is important to keep investigating the enforcement of the prostitution laws and how different types of regimes influence the level of trafficking to and from a country.

The three perspectives on prostitution are reflected in the laws and policies that states adopt. According to Outshoorn (2004) there are three types of prostitution regimes: abolitionism, prohibitionism, regulation. The first supports, similar to the abolitionism perspective, the criminalisation of the third parties. The second regime implies that the prostitutes are subject to penalties and prostitution is illegal. Regulation refers to a system where prostitution is legal.

These categories were also used by scholars to study the effects of national prostitution laws on trafficking. There are only two available studies that are dealing with this issue. Before 2013 there was only one such study conducted by Di Nicola et al. (2005). Based on descriptive statistics of 11 European countries, they conclude that indulgent prostitution laws result in a higher number of victims. Jakobsson and Kotsadam (2013) research is based on a bigger sample (31 countries) and it shows similar results. They argue that trafficking inflow is higher in countries where prostitution is legalised and lower in countries where it is illegal. In addition to the quantitative data, the authors also provide a short analysis of the situation in

Sweden and Norway. However, unlike Di Nicola et. al (2005), their study focuses on trafficking in destination countries.

Although the above results are very valuable, they do not reveal much about prostitution laws and the outflow of victims. In addition, the researchers are presenting a link between the two factors and the authors do not go deeper into showing neither why this happens nor if the way these laws are applied has an importance. Therefore, a qualitative study might be more appropriate for investigating how the prostitution laws are influencing the human trafficking situation in source countries. As many NGOs are working with these laws and are influenced by them, it is significant to observe how these organisations perceive their contents and application.

2.5 Sex trafficking and corruption in origin countries

The research on sex trafficking and corruption in both origin and destination countries is still developing. Hughes and Denisova (2001) and UN (2008) argue that human trafficking cannot exist without corruption. Bales (2007), Cho (2015), Zhang and Pineda (2008) argue that corruption is a push factor for human trafficking and that the efforts in fighting human trafficking should be focused on it. Therefore, a growing number of studies cite a strong link between corruption and sex trafficking.

According to Lyday (2001) there is a strong relationship between the perception of corruption and the level of government response to human trafficking. Similarly, Bales (2007) shows in his research that the government's corruption is the most important factor in predicting trafficking from an origin country. In his research he included 72 explanatory variables among which poverty, sexism, corruption, conflict, food production and population below the age of fourteen are included. Both researchers use Transparency International indicators and estimations of human trafficking from UN's World Statistics Pocketbook, Amnesty International reports and other databases of slavery and trafficking. As argued before, these kinds of data cannot always be very reliable as they are very hard to quantify. Nevertheless, both studies show that there is a strong relation between corruption and the fight against human trafficking in origin countries.

Similar to Bales (2007), Zhang and Pineda (2008) also argue that more attention should be given to the corruption of governments in origin countries. Their statistical analysis shows

that corruption is the most important causal variable of human trafficking. They conclude that corruption is an obstacle for countries in their efforts to combat human trafficking.

Cho (2015) argues that poor institutions and governance in origin countries are a push factor for trafficking. Specifically, her research shows that if there is an increase of one point on the scale from -2.69 to +2.12 in rule of law, human trafficking can be reduced by 10%. This means that if a country's rule of law is at -2.69 and it improves to -1.69, human trafficking would decrease. Furthermore, an increase by one point on a scale from -2.22 to +2.62 of in the control of corruption could decrease human trafficking by 4%. Her research also shows that law enforcement plays a greater role in origin countries. Therefore, according to Cho (2015), the institutions' quality in source countries is significant and has an influence on the level of human trafficking.

According to experts like UN (2008), PACO (2002) and Hughes and Denisova (2001) human trafficking is closely related to corruption and it cannot exist without it. There are even cases where, because of corruption, the criminal networks are becoming one with the government representatives in origin countries (Hughes and Denisova, 2001).

The corruption level and type is different in destination and origin countries and it depends on the type of exploitation. Sex trafficking is closely related to police force and local authorities. Law enforcement corruption is the most common type of corruption, and it is especially adopted in sexual exploitation. This type of corruption is usually done through bribes. Traffickers bribe policemen to let them carry out their work undisturbed and even guard their victims not to escape. In some cases the cooperation between the criminals and police force is so close that police become criminals themselves in the end (Rusev, 2013).

Bales (2007), Cho (2015) as well as Zhang and Pineda (2008) are using a quantitative method to show their results. There is a gap in the qualitative research on the relation between corruption levels and origin countries. Therefore, this study is investigating in depth how this correlation contributes to the efforts of the actors that are fighting against human trafficking, using the perspective and experience of the Romanian anti-human trafficking NGOs.

2.6 Human trafficking and NGOs

In order to prevent and help decrease the outflow from source countries there is also a need to analyse the seriousness of this issue at the origin. This means studying different types of strategies and actors that are involved in the anti-trafficking process. Among the strategies used to prevent and decrease the outflow of human trafficking is rising awareness among citizens.

According to Mahmoud and Trebesch (2010) awareness campaigns might have a positive effect on the reduction of human trafficking. The results of their study show that families who use television in order to receive information about socio-economic problems and know about human trafficking do not have a member of the family who has been trafficked. Moreover, areas where the human trafficking phenomenon is known and people are aware of its risks, the chances of a family reporting a member as a victim are lower. Therefore, they conclude that rising awareness among citizens might be a tool to fight against human trafficking. If awareness is indeed a tool for fighting human trafficking and sex trafficking, then more knowledge about the actors that are spreading the information and reaching potential victims is needed.

Karlsson (2013) research describes what anti- sex trafficking institutions are and what their objectives and focus in the society is. He argues that these institutions “refer to a relatively enduring collection of rules – including also informal rules such as norms and routines – and organized practices that prescribe appropriate behaviour for any actor, public or private, combating sex trafficking” (Karlsson, 2001, pp. 73). Furthermore, these institutions are focusing their work on detection, prevention, protection, crisis management, consequence management, and response. He then summarised the interaction between the actors and rules according to the level of their intervention in the table below (Table 1).

Table 1: The anti-sex trafficking institution

Behaviour	Actors	Rules and practices
Detection	Welfare, police, immigration authorities; NGOs Private citizens, hotels, airlines, cab drivers etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search of victims at destination (during recruitment and border crossings?) • Custom of reporting suspicious behaviour?
Prevention	Legislators UN, states; NGOs Welfare authorities; NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminalization of sex trafficking; Criminalization of sex buyers or legalization of prostitution? • Promoting norms against sexual exploitation • Awareness rising
Protection	Welfare authorities; NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing safe environment (safe shelter, protected identity)
Crisis management	Welfare, police authorities; NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate intervention during recruitment, transport, and on arrival
Consequence management	Legislators; welfare authorities; NGOs Welfare authorities; NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access for victims to health care services and participation in decisions • Physical, psychological, and social care
Response	Police, prosecutors, courts Welfare authorities; NGOs Legislators; immigration authorities Receiving/sending states; international organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal response, incl. legal assistance to victims • Social response (housing, education, vocational training, employment) • Residence permits • Repatriation; Reintegration assistance

Source: Karlsson, 2013

As the above table suggests, these organisations are playing a role in awareness rising, lobbying for models against sexual exploitation, provide protection as well as psychological and social help for victims, look for victims and offer them the necessary help to reintegrate in the society. In addition, many victims are afraid of the authorities and do not trust governmental organisations (Tzvetkova, 2002). This is when NGOs can help and offer them counselling with psychological, judicial or reintegration issues. Therefore, their importance in tackling this humanitarian problem is vital as they are present on all levels of anti-human trafficking efforts.

Anti-human trafficking NGOs also possess valuable information about the sex trafficking situation in the source countries and at the grass root level. Many of these organisations are working on the streets, helping the victims and dealing with the local authorities on a daily basis (Tzvetkova, 2002). They are also putting a great effort in reaching potential victims and include them in programmes that will hopefully make them understand the problems of sexual exploitation. Therefore, NGOs have practical information about human trafficking and are valuable informants.

There are few studies that take into consideration the importance of NGOs and even less that are analysing their situation in origin countries. This study is looking at the problem of sex trafficking in one origin country through the eyes of NGOs because they hold important information, but also because their role in combating human trafficking is essential.

2.7 NGOs and financing in Romania

The current Romanian legal framework is not in favour of the NGOs funding. The law for sponsorship, Law no. 32/1994, states that the company can donate up to 20% of the tax income for sponsorships. Thus, according to Topor and Dragomir (2013) companies do not gain much from offering money to NGOs. The main advantage that companies have is the positive marketing by associating themselves with a humanitarian cause. However, according to the same authors Romanian companies are not using sponsorships for marketing purposes as much as multinational companies either because they do not believe that NGOs have sufficient influence or because they do not have enough financial resources themselves. Therefore, the number of sponsorship depends also on the size of the company (Topor and Dragomir, 2013). If the tax deduction or the marketing strategies are not attracting companies, as Romania has a philanthropic culture, the NGOs can address the emotions of companies (Topor and Dragomir, 2013).

The European Union funds are another external way of financing for NGOs. However, this type of funding is not available for all organisations as it comes with many conditions. The tax payers are another source of income for NGOs in Romania. Tax payers have the possibility of donating 2% of their global tax to a case of their choice. However, they are not very interested in this cause because they do not trust that they money will be used efficiently (Burada et.al, 2007).

In addition to the above, the national agency combating human trafficking does not support the NGOs financially since 2009. Tzvetkova (2002) suggests that NGOs countering human trafficking face many obstacles, but most of them are generated by the absence of political will. This study will investigate how the anti-human trafficking NGOs perceive the funding problem and what other factors are contributing to their financing situation.

2.8 Social trust in post-communist countries

This research is focused on Romania, a post-communist country. As one of the methods to collect data is interviewing employees that work in Romanian organisations, it is worth to present a short description of the civil society in post-communist countries and more specifically of the social trust.

Trust plays a very important role in the development of societies as it forms a community feeling and it encourages people to take risks and contribute to the change of the society. If citizens feel that they can trust the others, they will not worry about opportunistic behaviours and thus will desire to be more engaged in social exchanges (Tyler, 2001). Social trust refers to the relationship between friends, family, and citizens in an institutional context (Horne, 2013). The type of trust I will refer throughout this thesis is, generalised social trust. This describes a faith in strangers; in people one has not previously met (Stolle, 2002).

A cross-country comparison study conducted by Bjørnskov (2006) revealed that post-communist countries have lower levels of trust compared to others. His research was based on World Values Survey data as well as statistical data from sources like World Bank or Freedom House. His independent variables included, democratic legacy, post-communist, age structure, GDP per capita, population size, education, freedom of the press, as well as different types of religions. He concluded that these results are a consequence of the communist regime times, but also of the collapse of this type of regime as the organisation of the society was pulled apart. Bjørnskov (2006) results are also supported by Paldam and Svendsen (2001) who argue that the low levels of generalised trust in Central and Eastern Europe are a consequence of dominant behaviours of communist dictatorships.

Vasilache (2010) conducted a quantitative study on the case of Romania. She used descriptive statistics and cluster analysis based on the European Social Survey data from 2008 to show her conclusions. Her results show that the Romanian society is divided in two

groups: “the engaged and the excluded” (Vasilache, 2010, pp.21). While both groups are showing high level of distrust, the reasons for this are different. The engaged group is more involved in the society and eager for change, while the excluded group is represented by people who do not want to get involved and are continuing previous social behaviours from during communist times. Her results also show that people who lived during communist times are less trusting and participate less in the society. While her research shows similar results as Bjørnskov (2006), she also points out that general trust in post-communist countries should not be taken as whole, but divided by those who are perpetuating this view and those who are not.

2.9 Theory Summary

The field of human trafficking research is still a young research field. There are many gaps in the literature and the available data is not sufficient. The human trafficking situation in origin countries is poorly researched and most of the available literature is examining the factors that are causing people to be trafficked. Studying the push factors helps understand the characteristics of origin countries and find solutions to decrease the outflow of victims. However, there is a need to explore these problems in depth and analyse how the situation in origin countries really is.

Sex trafficking is described by scholars through the perspectives on prostitution, namely: sex slavery or voluntary work (Lee, 2011). These perspectives together with the desire to tackle the supply or the demand side are reflected in the types of prostitution regimes, identified by Outshoorn (2004) as abolitionism, prohibitionism and regulation. While, the effect of national prostitution laws in origin countries is not very clear, the literature views corruption as a problem for origin countries because it facilitates the outflow of victims.

In addition, most of the available studies on sex trafficking and origin countries are using a quantitative approach and do not go in depth into exploring how the situation is from the perspective of people involved in the combat of human trafficking. This study takes a qualitative approach and investigates how the institutional and legal factors are influencing the work of NGOs. These organisations are an important source of information and can offer insight about the sex trafficking situation in origin countries. Therefore, I am using them as a method to explore the institutional environment and legal framework in an origin country.

3 Method

3.1 Design choice

In terms of design, this study falls into the category of a case study for multiple reasons. First of all, it is a combination of methods that will lead to the understanding of individuals and society. Second of all, it helps understand the complex phenomena of human trafficking by using holistic approach to real life events. As human trafficking cannot be separated from its context it is more suitable to be investigated using this type of qualitative design. Furthermore, Creswell (2009) also argues that a case study is a process and a qualitative approach during which the researcher's focuses on and explores a process or a programme; in this case the factors that are constraining the work in combating human trafficking in Romania.

Eisenhardt (1989) mentions that one of the main strengths of this type of method is that in the end they can generate theories. These new concepts can contribute to understanding a certain problem. The purpose of this thesis is not to test former theories, but rather to understand and create new ones (O'Leary, 2007; Prince & Felder, 2006). However, the weakness of this method is that the theory can be too narrow or too complex. The aim of this study will be achieved by investigating and identifying the obstacles anti-human trafficking NGOs are facing when they are carrying out their work. These obstacles refer to contextual factors and not to the internal hinders they are having in their organisation.

In addition, in order to have a good study, Yin (2009) suggests the following guidelines: the study should bring a contribution to the field, should be complete, look for alternative explanations, have enough empirical data and should keep the reader interested. This study will fill a gap in the literature as there are qualitative studies that focus on the institutional and legal context in source countries. Furthermore, while the previous theories recognise the importance of NGOs, very few analyse the situation of these organisations in source countries. The empirical data although it might not be sufficient, it is the only available one given the limited time and resources. The topic of this thesis treats a very sensitive topic that very little is known about. Although it might not be captivating for everyone, if the reader is interested in this type of issue it would keep him or her interested in reading until the end. The Swedish alternative case is a short attempt to an alternative explanation for this study.

3.2 Primary and secondary data

The method used to gather the data was both primary and secondary. The primary data consisted of semi-structure interviews and current legislative documents available on the Romanian Ministry of Justice website. The secondary data is the existing literature as well as media reports, Transparency International data and Trafficking in Persons Reports from 2010 and 2014.

In the following sections I will explain the advantages and shortcomings of semi-structures interviews as well as the sampling procedure. The legislative documents I chose for this study were the Romanian New Criminal Code (2014), a document that includes all the Romanian criminal laws. It contains 445 articles and in the analysis I will present the national laws concerning human trafficking and prostitution. In order to analyse the current laws and their application I use the information provided by the informants.

The Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index helped me determine Romania's position in the corruption ranking worldwide. The Trafficking in Persons Report is a comprehensive document developed each year by the United States of America's government. It contains information and analysis about the situation of human trafficking on a global level. Thus, the report offers valuable information about the Romanian government's involvement in the human trafficking issue. It is important to note that these two types of data gathering, primary and secondary, will not be treated separately in the analysis section, but rather incorporated as they are complementing each other.

In addition to the above sources, I will also briefly introduce the views of one Swedish NGO on the institutional and legal framework in Sweden. I conducted one face to face interview with the founder of the NGO using the same interview guide I had for the Romanian NGOs. The purpose is to examine what happens when certain institutional and legal factors are changing. Although this "shadow case" cannot generate any solid conclusions as more data would be necessary in order to compare the situation in these two countries, the answers offered by the founder of the Swedish NGO are valuable and suggest that this subject is worth to be researched further.

3.3 Semi-structured interviews

The information I found in the documents and reports was not enough to understand how the situation is in real life. These papers contained data that described the legislative framework, corruption index and offered recommendations to Romanian governments. In order to gather more insight, I conducted three informant interviews. The interviewees had information about the human trafficking situation in Romania which I could not find in other documents (Kvale, 1997).

A main characteristic of semi-structured interviews is that the researcher needs to partially plan the questions and even if they are able to be redone by other researchers, they are less controlled than the structured interviews. The reasons why I chose this type of interviews is that I wanted to be able to ask other questions than the ones in the interview guideline if needed. Each interviewee has different experience in the field of human trafficking and thus might offer insight on different topics. Moreover, I did not know very much about the human trafficking problems in Romania and I wanted to be able to ask questions along the interview, questions that might not be raised in the current literature review.

I conducted the interviews on Skype mainly due to financial reasons. The literature on the interviewing method portrays the face to face type as being the ideal approach in order to observe the interviewees reactions and body languages (Dialsingh, 2008). However, considering the fact that this is a sensitive topic, the face to face interviews are not necessarily the best way to collect the data as the informants might prefer to reveal as little as possible about themselves.

I first developed an interview guide with eight big questions to which, after my first interview, I added four more. As I wanted to gather more information about the sex trafficking situation in Romania, in the beginning of the first interview I asked more general questions. After the interview, based on previous research and my informant's answers, I added questions related to informal institutions, legal framework and other obstacles. The interview guide can be found in the appendix of this paper. The duration of the interviews was between 20 minutes and 50 minutes. After my first interview I decided that I wanted to ask more questions and because the informant did not have enough time to set another Skype meeting, we both agree to continue discussion through emails. During the third interview a

number of technical problems intervened and the informant asked if we could continue the rest of the interview via email. Thus, two interviews were continued through email, both of them with four questions. In addition to the three Romanian interviews, I have conducted a face to face interview with the co-founder of a Swedish NGO. Using the same interview guideline, the interview lasted 30 minutes.

The development of new technologies in the past years had also an impact on the way interviews can be conducted. If face to face interviews require financial resources and a certain location, the online interview only requires an Internet connection and in some cases a chat client, for example Skype or Yahoo Messenger. This type of interviewing also became popular among qualitative researchers (Hooley, Wellens, & Marriott, 2012). Depending on the tools one uses there are synchronous and asynchronous communications. The first one refers to the use of chat rooms or videoconferences and the latter to email clients and discussion groups. (Hooley et. al, 2012).

The advantage of doing Skype interviews is that I was able to access the participants without being forced to travel to Romania thus saving time and money. In two of the three interviews a video call was made, meaning that I was able to observe the body language of the respondent. Another advantage is the spontaneity of both participants, which offers the interview the possibility of asking questions based on the answers received. However, one disadvantage just like in the case of face to face interview was the need to transcribe all the conversations, which in the case of email interview is not necessary. An advantage of the email interviews is that the respondents do not feel pressure by the time and can prepare their answers thoroughly. Therefore, the answers are more trustworthy than with other methods (Opdenakker, 2006). During all of the interviews, the informants took their time to answer and offer long answers with examples and clear explanations. However, one of the informants started offering rather short answers towards the end, but mostly because of the technical problems as she felt she could not discuss further.

Although this growing type of research has many benefits, there are certain requirements for it to provide the results expected, namely a high speed Internet access, acquaintance of online tools and computer knowledge (Deakin and Wakefield, 2013). While conducting the interview through the synchronous communication I faced a few Internet connectivity issues,

I managed to successfully finish gather the necessary data with the help of asynchronous communication.

The main advantage of doing interviews is the rich and detailed information that the researcher gets. On the other hand, due to the sensitivity of this topic, I need to take into consideration that the answers provided by the informants could be in some cases insincere. The questions I asked my informants are dealing with problems such as sex trafficking, corruption, government institutions. Thus, depending on each organisation's interests and stakes, their answers might be chosen carefully so that they do not harm the organisation's image. Although I am aware that the answer they provided could be modified, the anonymity might have helped them express their opinions openly.

3.4 Sampling

In order to gather data for this study, I chose to interview the employees of NGOs that are combating human trafficking. The advantage of talking to such source is that these types of actors are closer to the victims and potential victims and have details about the sex trafficking situation in Romanian. Moreover, anti-human trafficking NGOs are focusing their work on prevention, protection, detection, crisis management, consequences management and responses (Karlsson, 2013). This suggests that they are involved on all levels of anti-human trafficking efforts. Therefore they can offer valuable insights about the sex trafficking situation as well as the institutional and legal environment.

The sampling procedure is very important as human actions cannot be understood unless the meaning that humans give them is clear. I used a purposive and theoretical sample as I chose to interview experts in this matter, Romanian anti-human trafficking NGOs employees (Marshall and Rossman, 2011).

Unfortunately there is no official database to identify all the Romanian NGOs that are active and involved in current projects. However, most of them collaborate with each other, which can help identifying the operating NGOs in the anti-trafficking field. I contacted ten NGOs that work within the field of human trafficking. Out of these only five answered and three agreed to do an interview. All of them had a very good website which contained information about programmes, collaborations and current matters. This was a great help because it provided me with a background while preparing for the interviews. The reason why I chose

these ten NGOs is because these NGOs were the only ones that I could find to have active programmes in the fight against human trafficking. There might be other NGOs that operate in this area but they do not own a website or collaborate with these other ten NGOs.

As mentioned before, five NGOs replied to my invitation for an interview. However, one NGO employee promised that she will come back to me with a date and time when she available but she never contacted me again and I could not manage to get into contact with her again. The other NGO representative agreed to do an interview, but when I started asking questions about funding and current programmes she did not answer and in return mentioned that she would like to know me better and asked for my social network details. She mentioned that she did not trust what I will write and that I might fabric information in order to make them look bad. I agreed to her conditions but she never contacted me again. Therefore, the process of sampling was rather discouraging and took longer than I expected.

Similar to the Romanian NGOs, the Swedish NGO also possesses valuable information about the sex trafficking situation in Sweden. The sample I used in this case was a theoretical and purposive as I interviewed an expert in this subject, the NGO co-founder. Due to language barrier it was rather difficult to find Swedish NGOs that are countering human trafficking. Sweden is a destination country (UNODC, 2006) and thus, NGOs are using different kind of strategies than the NGOs present in origin countries. For example the prevention strategies in destination countries are not a priority, as the organisations are focusing on reaching sex workers or offer assistance to victims (Tzvetkova, 2002). I looked for non-governmental organisations in Gothenburg and most of them were voluntary based and were focused on street outreach. After contacting three organisations that had similar activities as the Romanian ones, one agreed to a face to face interview. As mentioned before, ideally I would have gather more empirical data however, due to lack of responsiveness, language barrier and limited time I could only interview one Swedish NGO.

According to Karlsson's (2013) table, the Romanian NGOs focus their work on prevention, consequence management and social response. However, they collaborate with other NGOs on protection and crisis management. Although ideally I would have conducted more interviews, these NGOs are covering important and relevant activities. Furthermore, the other NGOs that could have been interviewed had similar focus, with two exceptions that were offering protection as well as response. However, one of these exceptions was the

organisation whose project manager refused to answer my funding questions. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the three interviews are sufficient as they reveal essential information. In addition, the Swedish NGO's focuses on prevention. While this interview is too little to provide reliable conclusions, it revealed valuable insights about the importance of the legal and institutional context in Sweden.

Due to confidentiality I numbered the NGOs as NGO1, NGO2, NGO3 and NGO4. The persons I interviewed were full time employs of the organisations. Two of them are project managers and Romanians, working for NGO2, respectively NGO3. The third person is the co-founder of NGO1, the only full time employ and is not Romanian. The Swedish NGO, NGO4, was represented by its co-founder. They have all worked in the organisations for at least one year and are involved in most of the programmes they are offering. Therefore, they possess the appropriate knowledge and experience in the field to answer the questions present in the interview guide. As mentioned before, it is difficult to know how true their answers are, but their experience in the field should also be taken into consideration.

These organisations have different establishing years but the same aim, namely fighting and preventing human trafficking in Romania. The first two have their office in Bucharest and the third in Cluj Napoca. However, their efforts and resources are not concentrated in one place but spread around many cities in Romania. NGO1 started its unofficial work more than three years ago, but was officially established a year and a half ago, which makes them a rather new organisation. Their efforts focus on three activities, namely: street outreach, prevention and awareness. NGO2 is almost as old as NGO1, being established in April 2013. The organisation is concentrating its efforts on preventing human trafficking in Romania through awareness campaigns and prevention trainings. NGO3 was established in 2006 but along the years it changed its focus from prevention strategies to protecting victims. This year the organisation went back to prevention of human trafficking. The reason for this is that it belongs to a larger NGO that promotes values of democracy and multiculturalism and does not have a humanitarian focus. Due to this new transition their current programmes are still developing. NGO4 was founded in 2010 and is fighting for a “world free of sex trafficking” (Founder of NGO4, 2014). Their work is concentrated on three directions: influencing the community and the EU to introduce laws against buying sex, cooperating with companies to integrate trafficking issues in their social responsibility strategies and doing school and

company visits with the aim to engage the pupils and employees in different types of workshops connected to sex trafficking.

3.5 Why Romania?

I got interested in this topic because I come from a country where sex trafficking is a major issue to not only for the economy but also for the civil society. However, the reasons why I chose Romania for this study is not only personal (as I am originally from Romania), but also that the statistics portray Romania as one of the biggest source countries for human trafficking victims in Europe. Romania is categorized as a very high incidence origin country according to the UNODC (2006). In addition, the Eurostat (2014) data shows that the main trafficked victims in Europe are Romanian citizens. According to Kara (2009) the main regions where most trafficked victims originate are South Asia, Central and Eastern Europe and East Asia. In addition, Eurostat's data shows that most victims of human trafficking are Romanians and are present in around 22 countries and are estimated at a number of 6101 between 2010 and 2012 (Eurostat, 2014). Therefore, it is interesting to explore which are the Romanian contextual factors that help or hinder the fight against human trafficking, by examining the views of NGOs on institutional and legal aspects.

3.6 Validity, reliability and generalizability

The quality of the research can be evaluated through the following concepts: validity, dependability, conformability, transferability and generalizability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Validity indicates if the findings are credible and if the researcher has measured what he or she was supposed to. In order to make sure that I have described and identified everything accordingly, before the interviews I gathered information about the organisations through their websites. In addition, I tried to ensure the informant's willingness to be honest by promising to keep their anonymity as well as the NGO's anonymity. Although, I have conducted only three interviews, I tried to gather as much information as possible in order to reach the aim of the paper. As mentioned in the sampling section, it was rather difficult to obtain interviews with Romanian anti-human trafficking NGOs. However, the ones that answered the interview questions are covering activities such as, prevention, offering physical and social care to victims and programmes with potential victims. Thus, the information they offered varies according to their activities.

To have a dependable research, the researcher needs to show that the results are consistent and that they could be redone. Therefore, in the method section I explain the used research design and the way the data was gathered. The conformability is similar to objectivity and it refers to the degree of neutrality. Although it is very hard not to be influenced by my own thoughts and perception while conducting this research, by presenting the limitations of this study and examining into details the methodological approach the reader can determine the conformability of the results (Shenton, 2004).

The transferability means that the study can be applied to similar situations, situations with similar research questions (Tracy, 2010). This seems to be difficult to accomplish as the context is very specific and it refers to only one country. There are two types of generalisation in qualitative research, the generalizability per say, which means that the finding about the certain sample can be generalised to the population the sample comes from. The other type is transferability, which as stated above means that the findings about a population can be applied to another population that is similar to the previous one. This study is more transferable than generalizable. Although transferability is one weak characteristic of the study, it cannot be generalized as the economic and social circumstances in Romania differ from other place and thus the results cannot be generalised to other countries. However, the findings could be applied to a place that is similar in most aspects and deals with the problem of sex trafficking as intense as these Eastern European countries.

3.7 Ethics

There are different types of ethics, namely: procedural, situational, relational and exiting (Tracy, 2010). Procedural ethics refers to rules about ethical research conduct imposed by organisations, institutions and governing bodies. Situational ethics consider the context's specific circumstances; reflect on methods and data, meaning that the researcher should think if the harms done by the study are lower or higher than the moral good. The relational ethics mean that there is mutual respect between the researcher and the researched subjects. One needs to be considerate about the consequences of the study, how the results will affect others. And lastly, there are exiting ethics, which refer to the way the results are being shares and transmitted to the outside world (Tracy, 2010).

For this study I will concentrate on the situational ethics as well as the relational and exiting ethics. Human trafficking and sex exploitation are very sensitive subjects and they involve

moral aspects as they are intertwined with the problem of human rights, illegal activities, organised crime and many other social issues. Therefore, I took into consideration moral aspects when gathering the data but also when presenting the findings and analysis. As sex-trafficking is a sensitive topic, I tried to keep my distance from taking a certain perspective when referring to the prostitutes. In addition, I did not ask names of trafficking victims or specific examples unless the informant offered them on their own. Kvale (1997) underlines that the researcher's conduct is very important during the whole process and sensitivity and morality should be kept in mind.

The interviews are also a part of the ethics considerations. I decide to keep the respondents' anonymity and confidentiality. Human trafficking is a sensitive issue and NGO employees might be reticent to reveal negative aspects about the environment they work in as this could have a bad consequence on their employment. Therefore, I informed them from the beginning that their personal details and organisation's name will be kept confidential, which in some cases helped them open up more and be honest.

3.8 Method of analysis

Before analysing the gathered data, the researcher needs to choose the appropriate method. The reasoning usually used in research is inductive and respectively, deductive. The former describes an approach that starts from the empirical findings or a specific case and results in generation of theories. The latter is based more on theory testing and starts with a general picture and ends in more specific matters (Charmaz, 2006).

Apart from these two approached there is also a third one called abduction. This is a combination between inductive and deductive approach (Carson, Gilmore, Perry, Gronhaug, 2001). Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) argue that this type of reasoning is best suited for case studies research. In this research I am analysing the gathered data with the help of theories and empirical findings in order to identify the factors that are facilitating or hindering the work against human trafficking from the point of view of NGO employees (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009).

For the data analysis I chose Creswell's (2009) six steps. This method was used for all four interviews, for the Romanian and Swedish NGOs and it is described as following:

1. I transcribed the interviews in separate documents. For the Swedish NGO I did not transcribe all the information, but rather the relevant parts, the ones that could have helped me highlight the situation of the Romanian NGOs.
 2. I read through the data in order to understand it in depth. This step was very important for the completion of the next step.
 3. The coding means that the information is divided so that similar segments can be found. During this stage, using the transcripts, I identified different kind of codes based on the informant's answers such as: organisation strategy, awareness rising, European funding problem, partnership with other NGOs, police corruption, awareness of corruption and myths about prostitution.
 4. Based on the previous step, the researcher needs to further describe the data and using the codes to create themes or categories. During the coding I noticed that the answers offered by the informants depended on the type of activities they were carrying. Therefore, the analysis is relevant if the results are divided according to the categories offered by Karlsson (2003). For example, the organisation that was working in direct contact with the police had different opinion about corruption than the organisations that were mostly working with awareness rising campaigns. Thus, the analysis and findings section is divided according to these categories.
- 5 & 6. The fifth and the sixth step involve narrating the results and connecting them to previous theories. In this case, I will use the literature review together with the answers provide by the informants to generate ideas about sex trafficking in Romanian and identify a number of contextual factors that are hindering or facilitating the work of NGOs.

4 Analysis and findings

According to the answers received from the informants and the table developed by Karlsson (2013). I structured the analysis into five parts. I will start with an overview of the situation NGOs that are combating in Romania. I will further address the sex trafficking behaviours described by Karlsson in connection to the interviews findings. In order to highlight the current situation in Romania, I will insert findings from the interview with the co-founder of the Swedish NGO.

4.1 Human trafficking and the situation of NGOs in Romania

Human trafficking became a big problem for Romania after 1990s and the need for a competent institution was indubitable. As a consequence, in May 2006 the National Agency against Human Trafficking (ANITP) was founded. Until 2009 the agency was independent and managed the national funding for anti-trafficking projects on its own. After March 2009 the agency became a subordinate of General Inspectorate of Romanian Police under the Ministry of Interior (Trafficking in Persons Report, 2010). The ANITP is divided in 15 regional centres which support the national policies against human trafficking and help with the prevention and evaluation at a local level. These centres play an important role as an intermediary between institutions that apply the law and those that offer assistance to the victims (European Commission, 2014).

The government's National Agency is, as Tzvetkova (2002) suggests, not capable of performing all the work needed in an efficient way because it does not possess the financial or human resources. Her research is also sustained by the statement of NGO3's project manager:

“We worked a lot with ANITP and very well. Obstacles were that they cannot reach their mission because of the lack of resources, human and financial. This was a problem, normally they must support the NGO, but we were the ones that supported them in their activity. They have the role of monitoring what the NGOs are doing and what they did was to request us on specific cases, even financial help. And this is a system problem.”

Although the organisations are collaborating with ANITP, this quote suggests that there are financial problems as well as human resource problems within the National Agency. Not only they are not able to provide support to other NGOs, but they are asking for help from these organisations. In addition, according to the Trafficking in Persons Report (2010) the change of ANITP under the subordination of Ministry of Internal Affairs in 2009 had an effect on human trafficking efforts as it gave less money to local anti-trafficking NGOs and it was also less cooperative with them. The results were that almost thirty NGOs had to close or reorganise due to lack of funding and thus the number of victims that received helped decreased. Ever since 2009 the government has not offered any funding to local NGOs that fight human trafficking (Trafficking in Persons Report, 2014). Thus, with no financial

support from the government, the Romanian NGOs that are combating human trafficking need to search for funding through other channels.

Supporting the findings of the Trafficking in Persons Report (2010), NGO1 mentioned that *“at this moment, the main obstacle is to find funds”*. Just like the literature suggests, she also brought up three main ways for Romanian anti-trafficking organisations to obtain funds, namely: European Union, private companies and the good will of people. The project manager mentioned that in order to obtain European funds the organisations needs to have existed for at least two years and have experience in the field. Maintaining the financing is another problem because if the money is not spent accordingly the European Union can take back the funds. Therefore, NGO1 did not manage to access any European Union funds yet. In contrast, NGO3 has been active on the anti-human trafficking scene for a very long time and obtaining funds is not such a difficult task for them as they managed to receive international financial help from European Union and organisations based in England.

Topor and Dragomir (2013) suggest that companies are not a viable option for NGOs as they do not have very much to gain. Although the legal framework is not encouraging companies to donate and sponsor NGOs, some multinational companies contribute to the society. NGO1 mentioned that they receive funds from companies that operate in Romania but that most of them have requirements:

“[...] a lot of them might have directions, like if it is L'Oreal they want you to spend the money on beauty area, like doing self-esteem of women something like that. Companies have different criteria, some want to be on feedback, on environment issues, they have directions. We benefit from them and they benefit from us.”

The above quote suggests that companies are willing to support certain humanitarian causes if it also benefits them. However, the same informant mentioned that very often it is difficult to obtain funding from companies because they have a certain opinion about prostitution and are reticent to help an organisation that is working with girls in prostitution.

The possibility of donating 2% of the global tax is not very appealing to Romanian tax payers as they are not very interested in helping NGOs (Burada et al., 2007). In addition, many tax payers, just like the law enforcement officers, think that the prostitutes are criminals. Having

this perception they are reluctant to offer money to NGOs that are working with the sex trafficking. From all three NGOs, NGO3 managed to raise funds from different individuals, not only Romanians, through an online international platform. However, she mentioned that she had to insist, send reminders and activity reports in order to keep people interested.

NGO2 owns a non-profit organisation that works in partnership with campaigns of corporate social responsibility or organisations from other countries for which they create either websites or different design services. Thus, funding is not a problem for achieving their goals. The project manager describes their situation with one simple sentence: *“Our idea is to be self-sustainable”*.

Therefore, financial obstacles depend on the experience of the NGO and their internal financing capabilities. External funding depends more in the good will of people rather than being institutionalized by the government. As mentioned before, the national agency is asking for financial help from other NGOs, which could mean that the government is not very interested in sustaining efforts against human trafficking. This could also be because there might be other pressing matter on the political agenda. Nevertheless, it reflects that there is little political will (Tzvetkova, 2002) to tackle this problem and support other organisations financially. Therefore, the government should be more involved in tackling this problem and offer more financial help if not to all NGOs, at least to its own agency that is fighting against human trafficking.

In contrast to the Romanian case, the Swedish NGO, NGO4, receives money from the government. In 2014 NGO4 conducted a project together with two governmental organisations. This suggests that the government is involved in trafficking issues and is supporting all actors that are involved in the process. Moreover, NGO4 also obtains funding through various types of channels including private persons and selling promotional materials. Although the empirical data is not enough to offer a comparison, the financial help received by the Swedish organisation suggests that the political will in this case is greater than in the Romanian one.

Although it is very important to receive support from the government, no matter how much funding the government offers to NGOs, their efforts are essential. Karlsson (2013) suggests in his table that these types of organisations are present on all levels of anti-human trafficking

efforts. This can also be observed in the NGOs I have interviewed. As presented above, their activities are not only rising awareness among citizens but are also providing assistance to victims and developing programmes for potential victims. Even if these NGOs are not present on all levels in Karlsson's table (2013), they are focusing on at least two levels and collaborating with other NGOs for the other levels. As their activities are not exactly the same, the answers received at the interviews complement one another. In the following I will present the six behaviours described by Karlsson (2013) and how they are applied to the interviews I conducted. The answers provided by the informants revealed that depending on their type of activity the obstacles they encounter are, to a certain extent different.

4.2 Detection

The detection of victims is more a search for victims. Although the purpose is to identify the victims before they are lured, the reality is that most of the efforts are concentrated on finding the victims in brothels and street prostitution (Karlsson, 2013). Moreover, as Kara (2009) suggests, the transportation and recruitment of victims is easier nowadays as borders are open and the internet is an easy tool to attract victims. The work of NGOs in detection is important as they can receive tips from victims on traffickers and thus, identify other potential victims. The three Romanian NGOs I interviewed do not work with detection, but as a non-government actor they might receive reports of trafficking which would help them detect victims. However, the interviews did not reveal any such previous cases.

4.3 Prevention

All four NGOs are focusing on prevention strategies. According to Karlsson (2013) there are three main measures used to prevent trafficking: legislation, norm creation and awareness rising. This anti-trafficking activity is the predominant one for the NGOs that took part in this study. In the following I will present these strategies in connection to the answers provided by the informants.

While, NGOs do not contribute to the creation of laws they are affected by their application, the interviews I conducted showed that the legislative framework present in Romania is an obstacle for the NGOs, especially for the one that also carries out consequence management activities. In order to illustrate this better, I will first introduce the current prostitution laws in Romania.

In Romanian until February 2014 the human trafficking criminalisation was done through Law no. 678/2001. The law contained dispositions that incriminated human trafficking and other offences connected to it. On February 2014 Romania adopted the new Criminal Code, which included the above law with a number of modifications (European Commission, 2014). Chapter seven of the Code deals with trafficking and exploitation of vulnerable persons and it contains nine articles that set crimes in lines with European directives and international laws. According to the new Criminal Code, prostitution is not a crime anymore, but a contravention, which means that sex workers will still be charged certain fines. In case the workers cannot pay these fines they will have to perform community service (New Criminal Code, 2014).

Furthermore, according to article 210 in the Code, trafficking with the aim of sexual exploitation is punished with prison between three years and ten years and five to twelve year for a public servant. If a person uses the services presented in article 182, described in the theory section, they will be punished with prison between 6 months and 3 years or a fine if the committed act is not a serious crime (New Criminal Code, 2014). Therefore, buying sexual services is criminalised.

As the above information suggests, in Romania human trafficking is illegal and criminalised by the Criminal Code. Therefore, Romania adopts a prohibitionism regime, as prostitution is illegal and the prostitutes are being punished. This type system has helped Romania to keep a low inflow of victims (Jakobsson and Kotsadam, 2013).

However, even if the laws keep the inflows towards Romania low, what happens to these laws inside the country? It is important to observe the way they are applied and their impact in the source country. Due to the focus of this study, I cannot provide a clear answer to what influence the national prostitution laws have in source countries, but I will concentrate on their application and impact in Romania.

Not all three NGOs are dealing on a daily basis with the enforcement of the Code, but they are performing their work in the Romanian environment and are in contact with many other NGOs, which offers them insight about this situation. NGO2 focuses more on prevention and awareness rising, however her opinion about the current prostitution laws in Romania is that they are not applied properly:

“In the same time we criminalise the buyers of these services but I have never met someone who has been criminalised for it. The laws are very well, but their application is optional from my point of view.”

This suggests that the contents of the laws is good and is putting emphasis on buyers, but it is also important to see them work in practice, not only on paper. The informant did not further develop the meaning of “optional”, but it could refer to the fact that the law is only applied in certain cases, when it suits the law enforcement officers. Similar to her view, NGO1’s project manager mentioned that she has never seen a case where a client of a minor victim was punished and expresses that she would like to see the law put into practice.

In addition to the misuse of trafficking laws, fining the sex workers is also a problem. Although the prostitutes do not face jail time anymore, they are still facing similar difficulties. NGO1’s project manager stated that tackling the supply side of sex trafficking in Romania through national laws is very often problematic:

“They say they don't criminalize anymore prostitution and they cannot send the girl to jail anymore, but actually they are still fining them as much as before, 500-800 lei each fine. Sometimes it gets five, six fines a day so it is really crazy amount. They are still seen as criminals, you know. Which is not very helpful for us to help them get out, you know. I understand that you can't just legalise it and I am not for legalisation, but still treating them like criminals it is difficult. And those fines they hinder them to basic access, basic lives, like IDs.”

As the work of NGO1 is extended to street outreach programmes, they were able to offer concrete examples of how the prostitutes are being treated by the authorities. Treating the girls involved in prostitution as criminals, does not facilitate collaboration between the organisations that are trying to help the sex workers and the ones that are applying the law. To explain better why it is not easy for them to help the girls get out, NGO1’s informant offered a very good example of how their organisation and the sex workers are having troubles with the policemen when this law is being enforced:

“They are being chased, the ladies, it is difficult for them. And we get also chased by the police sometimes. They don't like us being around them.”

Although the law does not criminalise prostitution, it still views the prostitutes as offenders. This means that they are obliged to pay fines, which according to NGO1's informant, in many cases collect to high amounts that one could buy a house. Therefore, the law enforcement officers are treating the sex workers as a source of revenue. This not only makes the work of NGOs harder, but it also means that the prostitutes have less chances of leaving this practice. NGO1 employee also mentioned that very often the local administration does not want to issue IDs for some of the prostitutes because of the debts they own to the state. Therefore, the current law is not facilitating the exit of sex workers from the market.

The statements of the two NGOs suggest that in the case of buyers the law is not applied as frequent as it should be. However, the law is applied in the case of fining the prostitutes. This shows an unbalance in the application of the law. In order for the laws to serve their purpose, the law enforcement officers should not offer favours to any party.

In contrast to the Romanian case, the prostitution laws in Sweden are focused on the buyer. Since 1999 it is illegal to purchase sex, but it is legal to sell it. According to Ekberg (2004) this type of legislation contributed to a decrease in demand and thus trafficking victims. Thus, Sweden does not fit in the categories presented by Outshoorn (2004) and is categorised as a neo-abolitionism regime (Jakobsson and Kotsadam, 2013).

In contrast to the Romanian anti-human trafficking NGOs, the founder mentioned that the current Swedish prostitution laws are facilitating their work and that:

“We started actually because of this law. Because I think that is the innovation, for a country to have this law. Really good innovation, to put pressure on the buyer and not the seller. And it helps because it is forms to the attitudes of persons.”

This suggests that the organisation's attitude towards prostitution is an abolitionist one. Throughout the interview she mentioned many times that it is very important to understand that the focus should be on the demand side, on the buyer and change the *“individual attitudes towards buying sex.”*

Unlike legislation, norm creation and awareness rising can be introduced and developed by NGOs. Norm creation tackles the demand side of sex trafficking, the sex buyers. An example in normal creation is the Palermo Protocol (Karlsson, 2015). While conducting the interviews it was clear that all informants are involved in norm creating as they trying to change the attitudes people have towards buying sex. The Romanian NGOs workers focused their answers more on legal and institutional obstacles rather than norm creation obstacles. However, as one of the main objectives of NGO4 is lobbying for introduction of laws that are incriminating sex buyers, when I asked the co-founder of NGO4 about obstacles they face when carrying their work she replied:

“The myth about prostitution. People think that the prostitute is doing it by her own will. If you ask sex buyer they will say she needs the money, it is better that she is with me than an angry man. Myths about prostitution that women’s sexuality is to give, that it is a right for the man.”

The Swedish NGO started the obstacles list with a factor that is connected to perceptions of human trafficking. Another obstacle she named was the sensitivity of the topic. She mentioned that when they visit companies sometimes people are rather reticent to this topic. Therefore, most of their obstacles are related to individual’s mentalities and their efforts are concentrated on the demand side of human trafficking.

No matter if they operate in a destination country or a source country, all four NGOs are putting efforts into awareness campaigns. These campaigns are aiming to inform potential victims about the reality of human trafficking and how they can avoid becoming a victim. NGO1 mentioned that the awareness programme is more general and it targets the large public with messages through posters at subways stations or workshops. The main purpose is to make people understand the dangers of human trafficking and challenge their perspective on prostitution. NGO2 went on a 37 days tour around Romania with the purpose of creating events in major cities in order to attract attention on the issue of human trafficking. NGO4 goes to Swedish schools and companies to raise awareness among citizens about the seriousness of sex trafficking and engage participants in workshops. From the interviews there were no direct obstacles addressed to these types of activities. Indirectly, they are connected to financing problems, as most of these activities require substantial funding.

However, as mentioned before, the funding issues are mostly present in the Romanian case and are related to political will as the national agency does not offer any kind of support to anti-human trafficking NGOs. In spite of the financial shortcoming, the interviewed NGOs are currently having awareness rising campaigns such as school visits, anti-trafficking workshops and having posters in the subway area in Bucharest.

4.4 Protection and crisis management

The NGOs that participate in this study do no work with providing shelter, identities to victims or with managing urgent matters. However, NGO1 collaborates with an NGO that is specialised in this matter and refers the victims to its workers. This is also a shortcoming of this thesis, not tackling this segment present in Karlsson's (2013) table, and it will be further developed in the limitation part.

4.5 Consequence management and response

Consequence management refers to offering the victims assistance in different matters such as physical or mental health. The response that NGOs could offer focuses on social response such as education or employment.

From all interviewed organisations, NGO1 is the only one that offers such activities. The street outreach programme offers victims of human trafficking (mainly sex trafficking victims) different kind of counselling and if necessary some of them are referred to shelters. The prevention activities are focused on the Gara de Nord area (Main Central Station in Bucharest), the reason for that being as the co-founder explains that:

“Gara de Nord is also like a Red Light District with a lot of prostitution there. I think it is the biggest street prostitution area there because there is a lot of people coming and people going so there's lots of women there.”

During the street outreach programmes they offer prostitutes coffee, psychological support and take them for specialised medical consult if needed. As by law prostitutes are fined, policemen are always on alert in the areas where there is a high prostitution rate. Therefore, sometimes the volunteers come into direct contact with the police when they provide assistance to the prostitutes. The interviews revealed that depending on the activity carried

and the programmes offered, the NGOs viewed corruption as a problem. When asked about obstacles that hinder their work, NGO1's project manager stated that:

“Another problem specifically to the outreach also is part of corruption from local police. It is hard to trust the police. Everybody says we need to partner with police officers for protection, but it is not so easy because we know that there is some corruption from the local police. Not necessary from anticrime officer but the local police is corrupt so that makes it difficult to collaborate with the state police.”

The above quote shows that it is hard for the NGO1 to conduct their work and improve as they fear the corrupt policemen. Ideally, there would be collaboration between the police and the organisations that are trying to help the trafficking victims. However, if the NGOs are aware of the corruption of the police, they cannot protect the victims the way they would want to. Although NGO1's efforts are concentrated on other levels as well, the project manager mentioned only the police corruption as an obstacle to their work. Rusev (2013) mentions in his study that police corruption is the most common type of corruption in origin countries, which could also be the case for Romania. According to the same author the police are bribed not to intervene in the business that the traffickers are carrying out, which is supported by the project manager of NGO1 who mentions that:

“What we meet on the street might be low level corruption, a police man taking a bribe to leave alone some pimps.”

The available literature suggests that corruption is one of the most important causal factor for human trafficking (Zhang and Pineda, 2008; Cho, 2015; Bales, 2007). According to the statements of NGO1's project manager, corruption is also an obstacle in collaborating with the police and helping the victims.

According to Transparency International (2014), Romania is ranked 69th on the Corruption Perception Index out of 177 countries. It is well-known that the post-communist country has been struggling with the corruption issues for very long. Although improvements have been made as many corrupt personalities have been sent to prison and people express their strong opinion against practices of corruption, the society still confronts this problem daily. In 2012 one third of Romanians admitted giving or receiving bribes in the past 12 months (Engelhard,

2012). Thus, corruption is still a daily issue for the Central Eastern European country. This is also supported by the employees of NGO2 and NGO3. Although they said that they did not encounter any types of corruption while performing their work, the project manager of NGO2 mentions that they are aware of this problem as a global problem:

“The fact that corruption exist, we all know that in Romania this is a problem and it is not necessarily that it is an obstacle in our professional activity but it is an obstacle in the way this country is moving forward. I cannot give an example, because we don't have one at the moment.”

Similarly, NGO3 mentioned that:

“I am not saying that it doesn't exist, I am saying that we did not meet it.”

It is important to note that the project manager of NGO3 has been working for a year and a half in the organisation and she might not have previous knowledge about the victims' assistance programme. Therefore, her statement refers to the period of time she has been employed in the NGO. The statement of NGO2 and NGO3 project managers suggests that although the NGOs are aware that Romania is facing this problem, the activities they are carrying did not give them a case when they had to deal with corruption.

The empirical findings show that the corrupt environment present in Romanian society is an obstacle for certain organisations, specifically for the ones that are in direct contact with law enforcement officers.

5 Limitations of the study

The purpose of this case study was to identify a number of contextual factors that are hindering or facilitating the work against human trafficking, from the perception of NGOs. Therefore, this study is geographically limited to Romania. However, it might be useful for researchers that are looking at countries with similar institutional and legislation situation as Romania.

One of the methods used to gather data was semi-structured interviews. Ideally, the number would have been higher. However, it was very challenging to get into contact and convince the NGOs employees to have a discussion with me. This can be because of the sensitivity of

this subject, but also because of the lack of trust of Romanian workers. Furthermore, the answers I have received from the project managers might be bias as they might not have trusted me enough to provide me with the truth. The three Romanian interviews are dealing with rising awareness among potential victims and regular citizens, street outreach as well as collaborating with others NGOs on assisting matters. The informants offered valuable insights about the situation of sex trafficking in Romania and how the legal system is hindering their work as they are working every day within this system. While, the number of interviews is rather low, there were no other available sources. As the interviewed NGOs are covering important segments of Karlsson's (2013) table, the gathered data is sufficient to draw conclusions. The service that these organisations are not covering and could have been gathered from another Romanian NGO is protection, which means offering shelter and training to victims. Therefore, the results could be influenced by an extra interview with an NGO that is dealing with these issues. However, finding an informant who works for such an organisation is a challenge.

It is worth mentioning that when I looked for potential NGOs, I did not limit myself to Romanian NGOs, but rather NGOs that operate in Romania. However, as mentioned before, there is no database with active NGOs, and among the ones that I identified was also a European NGO. Although the employee answered and agreed to an interview, she never came back with a date and date and I did not manage to get into contact with her again.

The role of the Swedish NGO is to offer an insight of what happens when legal and institutional factors are changed. Although ideally the number of interviews would be higher, the purpose of this thesis is not to compare these two situations, but rather to highlight the current circumstances in Romania. Therefore, one interview with an NGO that has similar focus as the Romanian ones raises significant questions that could be further researched.

In addition, the study could have gained a different perspective from interviews with government representative or national agency's employees as they could offer their side of the problem. They could have explained why the national agency does not support other organisations and how they view the importance of NGOs. However, the purpose of this research was to identify obstacles or benefits that the NGOs are facing and thus, their perspective is essential. Furthermore, the victims of human trafficking are the one who the NGOs are targeting the most, thus, interviews with them could have revealed the importance

of NGO's work and which activities are most efficient. However, the victims would probably not be able to identify what hinders or facilitate the work of NGOs.

As mentioned throughout this thesis, the difficulty of getting interviews can be related to the lack of trust that Romanians have. The available theories suggest that post-communist countries are less trusting than others (Bjørnskov, 2006; Paldam and Svendsen, 2001; Vasilache, 2010). One of the reasons for this is the brutality people faced during communist times. For example, Eastern Germany's State Security Service, also known as Statsi, was spying on the citizens through citizens that were employed as informants and any disobedience was severely punished. Similarly, Romania had its own Department of State Security called Securitate. It had 500.000 informants under Ceausescu's rule and it was the greatest secret police force in Eastern Bloc. Just like Statsi, the Securitate is also known for its brutal behaviours, as it arrested, tortured and killed thousands of people (Smith, 2006). The behaviour of these intelligence agencies have contributed to people's lack of trust during communism, and contributed to people's social actions after its collapse (Bjørnskov, 2006).

Recent statistics show that Romanians have little trust in their fellow citizens. The World Value Survey wave 6, gathered data about values between 2010 and 2014. To the question "Would you say that most people can be trusted", 91.4% Romanians answered that they "need to be very careful". In addition, to the question "How much do you trust people you meet for the first time", 44.9% answered that "not much" and 44.9% said "not at all". This suggests that Romanians do not put much faith in people they do not know.

The results of the World Value Survey (2014) and previous literature can be observed in this research as well. As mentioned before, obtaining the interviews with the NGOs has been a problem not only because the organisations that are actively operating in this field are not very visible, but also because of the lack of trust. The workers of the NGOs were afraid of talking to an unknown person about their activities and problems. Even if I assured them that their identity will be anonymous, they did not trust me enough to have a discussion about the trafficking situation in Romania and their work. This obstacle I encountered is also a reflection of the institutional environment present in Romania as many authors argue that generalised trust is influenced by the quality of certain institutions (Kaina, 2011).

The employees that agreed to an interview were two Romanian citizens and one European Union citizen. The Romanian informants were under 30 years old, which means that they did not experience communist times for very long. According to Vasilache (2010) this would make them more engaged in the society and willing to participate. It might also be the reason why they agreed to an interview.

6 Conclusion

Human trafficking is a pressing humanitarian issue that is present worldwide. More than 30.000 persons were registered as victims during 2010-2012 in Europe (Eurostat, 2014). Therefore, it is essential to study this problem from more angles in order to find viable solutions and offer the actors that are involved in the combat against human trafficking support. The academic field of human trafficking is still lacking reliable data (Laczko, 2005; Jakobsson et.al, 2014). The reasons for this are that human trafficking is an illegal activity and it is hard to keep track of victims (Laczko, 2005). Most of these do not trust the authorities or are afraid of even asking for help because of the consequences (Tzvetkova, 2002). Therefore, there is a need for more research on trafficking.

The aim of this paper was to identify the contextual factors present in the Romanian environment that are hindering or facilitating the work against human trafficking. In order to reach this aim, I identified these factors through the perspectives on anti-human trafficking NGO workers. The data was gathered with the help of three semi-structured interviews and available reports, documents and laws on this matter. An interesting finding is that the lack of general social trust in Romania is also visible in this research. It was very difficult to obtain an interview with NGO employees, which denotes the lack of trust and thus, already offers an overview of the institutional environment.

Based on the perceptions of the interviewed NGOs I identified a series of factors that are contributing to the current trafficking situation in Romania. As the interviewed NGOs are covering a variety of programmes, the obstacles they are facing are complementing each other. The current prostitution laws and their enforcement, high levels of corruption among law officers, the lack of financial support from the national agency as well as lack of political will to tackle this problem are the identified contextual factors that are characterising the situation in Romania. The alternative case suggested that in a society where the institutional

and legal context is facilitating the work of NGOs, their obstacles are focused more on perception, on individuals and not on institutional problems.

There is a need for collaboration between the state and other actors. The interviews revealed that the government's agency is not supporting the NGOs financially and in some cases its representative were asking for financial help from the NGOs. In addition, the law enforcement officers are sometimes hindering the work of the anti-human trafficking NGOs due to the corruption issues and stigmatisation of prostitutes. Thus, at least two governmental actors are not supporting the work of the NGOs and in some cases they are causing them serious problems. The politicians should address the human trafficking problem seriously and at least allocate more resources, both human and financial, at least to its national agency.

This study does not and cannot fill in all the gaps in the existing human trafficking or sex trafficking literature. However, it confirmed that there is a need for in depth research in origin countries, especially on the effect of the national laws and quality of institutions. Furthermore, very few studies are focusing on the work of NGOs and how these organisations are performing in a national context. The importance of NGOs in countering human trafficking is essential and thus, it should be investigate further. As the alternative case study showed, the work of NGOs is different in origin and destination countries mostly because of the institutional and legal framework. Therefore, it might be valuable to explore this gap further. Although this study does not explore in depth the political and moral will of governments, this is a problem that truly needs to be addressed.

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8 Appendix

Interview guideline

1. Can you please tell me a few words about the work of your organisation in Romania?
(When did it start its operations in Romania? What are the objectives?)

1.1 Can you please describe your work and your position in your organisation? How many years you have been working with this? How do you perceive the problem of human trafficking in Romanian?

2. Can you please tell me a few things about the financing of your NGO?

3. What kind of human trafficking programmes do you have at the moment?

3.1 Where are the programmes held?

3.2 What is the target group?

3.3 How often are they?

3.4 How many participants? Do they always come?

3.4 What happens once the programmes are finished?

4. How do you currently evaluate your programmes?

5. In your opinion, what are the obstacles that you are facing when you are carrying your work in Romania?

6. What is your opinion about the corruption in Romania? Have you been faced with it in your work? If yes, could you please offer an example?

7. What is your opinion about Romania's current prostitution laws? Do you think that the judicial system is limiting your work? If yes, in what way?

8. Is bureaucracy a problem in carrying out your work?

9. Are there any institutional settings that are facilitating your work? If yes, could you please name them and explain a little bit.

10. Do you cooperate with other NGOs? And if yes, can you please tell me about these collaborations?

11. Do you cooperate with any national agencies?

12. Do you have any comments?

Thank you very much for your time!