



BALKAN CRIMINOLOGY

Trafficking in Human Beings in and through the Balkans

Karlo Ressler

Member of the Max Planck Partner Group for 'Balkan Criminology'



PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

- Overview of human trafficking research
- Purpose of the THB research
- Research methodology
 - Quantitative research
 - Qualitative research
 - Regional approach





Illegal markets in the Southeast Europe

- Favourable conditions
 - Political and economic transition
 - Weak states
 - New allocation of state wealth
 - Corrupt justice systems
 - War





Close link with THB research in the EU

- Combating THB in the Balkans is closely linked to combating trafficking within the EU
- Similarly, data collection and study of the crime in the Balkans is inevitably inseparable from the THB research in the EU
- Significant issue for the EU
- Influence on non-member states





Human Trafficking Research

- Increased attention by governments, NGOs and media
- A considerable growth in the number of scholarly books and articles
- Significant lack of telling data on trafficking
- Challenges in interpreting and comparing the statistics





Purpose of THB research

- Numerous directions for human trafficking research
- Interdependence of research purpose and methodology
- Is a method fit to answer the particular form of the question?





Purpose of THB research

- Increase the understanding of human trafficking in the region
- Especially to illustrate *why* and *how* human trafficking happens
- Evaluate:
 - The Act
 - The Means
 - The Purpose





Research methodology

- It seems that neither qualitative nor quantitative methods can suffice by themselves
- Combining various methods can give best results
- Different quantitative measures of human trafficking





Quantitative research

- Illustrate the dimensions of the issue
- Determine the number of identified or self-identified victims and prosecuted and convicted traffickers
- Necessary to assess the real scope of the trafficking business
- Limitations





Qualitative research

- Qualitative measures might usefully supplement and extend the quantitative analysis
- Bring us closer to answers on *how* and *why* human trafficking occurs
- Quite often, these questions are neglected





Qualitative research

- Advantages
 - General benefits of utilizing qualitative methods in criminological research
 - Benefits in the study of human trafficking
 - Advantages in Balkan-focused research





Qualitative research methods

- Case studies
- Interviews with identified and presumed victims
- Interviews with prosecuted traffickers
- Interviews with other stakeholders
- The semi-structured interview





Regional approach

- Southeast Europe
 - Seems optimal for the human trafficking analysis
1. It is easier to compare data coming from countries which are relatively similar
 - geographical similarities
 - institutional similarities





Regional approach

2. It could give a more complete picture of the phenomenon because organized multi-ethnic and cross border crime groups in the region efficiently cooperate
3. It is more likely that it would include larger parts of the trafficking network





Research Challenges

- Sampling
- Access
- Operational definition of THB
- Risk of revictimisation
- ...



Thank you for your attention!



BALKAN CRIMINOLOGY

www.balkan-criminology.eu • k.ressler@balkan-criminology.eu