Who Is the Next Victim?

Vulnerability of Young Romanian Women to Trafficking in Human Beings

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Mission in Romania

WHO IS THE NEXT VICTIM?

VULNERABILITY OF YOUNG ROMANIAN WOMEN TO TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

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IOM International Organization for Migration

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The number of young Romanian women aged between 15 and 25 years old found to be at a higher risk of being trafficked is between 6-12 per cent of the total number of 15-25 years old girls living with their families. Vulnerable girls come mostly from single-parent families living in medium-sized towns—between 30-100,000 inhabitants—in regions in Romania such as Transilvania and Moldova. Those at the extreme ends of the 15 to 25-year old cohort are at less of a risk than the others. Vulnerable girls are more likely to have abandoned school before their high school graduation. In terms of ethnic background, it appears that young Roma women are more exposed to trafficking in human beings than the rest of the population.

Vulnerability to trafficking is primarily shaped by a strong desire to seek a job abroad and also from a propensity to break official and informal rules. The description of the vulnerable group in terms of values and attitudes evidences that these girls are rather independent and risk-takers able to cope with uncertainty. They do not feel close to their family and do not believe that the family is the most important thing in one's life. They also do not value education as the means to achieve success and tend to think that money would justify the acceptance of any job. There is a lower than average trust in public institutions, although the Church, the media and the school remain at the top of the most trusted institutions.

Although some parents consider education important for their children's future, they usually neglect to inform themselves of their vulnerable daughter's performance in school. Vulnerable girls, however, do not view education and human capital as resources relevant to achieving success. Instead, they tend to attach value to their ability to work hard, and to having the money with which to buy what they want and which would label them a social success.

It is apparent from the study that vulnerable girls come from an abusive family environment where there is domestic violence and where children are neglected. There is also an obvious lack of communication between

parents and children on important personal issues. Furthermore, vulnerable girls are weakly integrated in social circles and they usually lack parental guidance and control. This weak social integration oftentimes produces psychological disorders and feelings of abandonment.

It is not only the push factors within the family and the community environment that result in the group's strong desire to move to another country. There are also pull factors, such as the model of a successful migrant from among circles of acquaintances, or someone who has actually proposed a job abroad to the vulnerable girl.

The data supports the fact that vulnerable girls come from a family with a strong culture of mobility. The girls are likely to have been socialized to make their own living and to the idea of working or getting married in a foreign country. Their families are not extremely poor, but they perceive themselves as poor. There is a wish for money and success that is passed on from the parents to the daughters.

Knowledge of the conditions of travelling and staying abroad is rather poor among the entire sample group, with the exception of a few basic elements. However, vulnerable girls tend to be better informed than their non-vulnerable counterparts on issues related to travelling and staying abroad.

While the parents of vulnerable girls are more aware than the average parent of the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings, particularly trafficking in women, the vulnerable girls are actually less aware than other girls their age. It seems that given their strong desire to seek opportunities abroad, they usually deny or tend not to listen to cases of deception and exploitation because they want to maintain a positive outlook so that to be able to continue to nurture their dream of working abroad.

The collective imagination has apparently created a number of stereotypes about how a trafficker may look or act. Young vulnerable women are indeed familiar with the portrait of the typical trafficker. But when a person that breaks the stereotypes proposes a job to the

vulnerable girl, the risk that she would become a victim of trafficking increases.

The research was conducted in April-August 2003, in two stages. A quantitative survey was conducted 8-17 May 2003, on a sample of 854 persons from households with at least one unmarried daughter aged between 15 and 25 years and living with the family. The subsequent qualitative phase consisted in eight focus groups conducted 1-7 August 2003, in three locations in Romania: Bucuresti, Pascani and Sighisoara.

2. INTRODUCTION

Trafficking in human beings is a complex phenomenon. Shedding light on it calls for a number of different approaches: there is a law enforcement approach aiming to dismantle trafficking networks, but there are also economic and social approaches that focus on assisting the victims.

This report assesses the vulnerability of young Romanian women to trafficking in human beings and their awareness of trafficking, as well as the level of awareness among family members.

Romania is one of the main countries of origin in South Eastern Europe for victims of trafficking, most of whom are trafficked primarily for the purposes of sexual exploitation (IOM, 2001). The number of cases of trafficking and their dynamics in Romania over the last few years speak of a reality that has already settled in. The magnitude of the problem is reflected both in the gravity of its consequences and in the number of people directly and indirectly affected by it.

Every year reports are released by different agencies and the media about victims of trafficking in various regions of the world. It is like one deals with a serial killer, when new victims are discovered around the city, and one is asking oneself: "who is going to be the next victim?"

Trafficking can strike just as randomly and specifically as a serial killer, leaving in its wake victims sharing one common thing: their particular vulnerability profile. Could anybody become a victim of trafficking? Is just any woman a potential victim of trafficking? Is a woman as vulnerable as the next one? The answers to these questions are not a shortcut to the criminal networks, but they can be useful instruments to fight trafficking from the ground and to organize prevention efforts. And knowing who the potential victims are can also assist the law enforcement with the profiling of traffickers after their victims.

To answer the question "which group is the most vulnerable to trafficking in human beings?" one should understand that trafficking is

essentially linked to migration. People are looking for jobs, higher wages, opportunities for personal fulfillment, and they do not only look around their neighbourhood. They sometimes look hundreds of miles away: they read international job ads, they watch TV and media, and they talk to friends who have been abroad. Their desire to leave their native community or even the country in pursuit of happiness is sometimes so strong that they will psychologically take any risk to go "out there".

When there is a high demand of jobs, several suppliers will soon crowd to satisfy people's dream. But not all suppliers are bona fide merchants. Some of them are just in the right place at the right time to take advantage of a dreamer. They do not sell jobs, but human beings. They promise young women to fulfill their dream of a well-paid job in a rich country abroad. Instead, they just transport migrants to a destination where they easily become victims of sexual exploitation. This is the sad story of all victims of trafficking around the world.

It is a fact that many people are on the move nowadays, in search of a safe job or a good salary. Statistics show that only a small number of these migrants end up as victims of trafficking. Most of them manage to find the job they want, they work for a while in the foreign country, and they can choose to return to the country of origin, or they may be able to settle in the host country.

Victims of trafficking do not have the liberty to choose: they are forced to do work they never wanted to do, they usually get no payment, and they almost never can say " I'm going home now".

Who are these unlucky migrants? Who are those women who end up in a trap as forced prostitutes? Are women more exposed to the risk of trafficking than men? If yes, why? What exactly makes one person more vulnerable to trafficking than another?

This paper will try to provide answers to these questions. It will look not only at individual attributes, but also at environmental factors – the family and the community, since the way young women grow up or the

way school and family instil values and attitudes in the young are crucial for their future success or failure.

3. DEFINITIONS AND FRAMES OF ANALYSIS

There are various approaches to trafficking in human beings, which either emphasize its economic side, or treat it as a criminal activity. The former presents trafficking networks as business organizations, while the latter underlines its judicial consequences (Salt, 2000). The lack of adequate counter-trafficking legislation or the underground character of trafficking makes it difficult to monitor, prevent and stop its illegal transactions. The broad pool of potential victims out of the wide category of irregular migrants, ranging from 15 to 30 million people worldwide, reveals the profitability of the trafficking and smuggling sectors. The association of trafficking with migration and organized crime has often led to the perception of the trafficked migrants as criminals. This view ignores the reality of those migrants trapped into a trafficking network and forced to commit illegal activities (Zimic et al, 2003).

"Trafficking" and "smuggling" are terms that have often been mistaken one for the other, their meaning and use being in many instances infused with a degree of confusion. A distinction between the two was made in 2000 by the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

The Protocol emphasizes exploitative work and violation of human rights as inherent elements of trafficking. *"'Trafficking in persons' shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or a position of vulnerability, or of the giving or receiving of payments to achieve the consent of a person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum the exploitation of 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."*

By contrast, smuggling means the facilitation of border crossing by using illegal means. Another difference comes from the consent of the migrant to illegally cross the border, or to perform a certain job at the

destination (Salt, 2000). However, the distinction might often lose its discriminatory character. Undocumented migration is sometimes hard to be distinguished from trafficking due to the ambiguous character of the negotiation between the migrant and the intermediary, and therefore of the supposed coercion/deception practice. More, the same smuggling channel or network can also perform trafficking functions. Trafficked girls may be transported together with other migrants, separated later and sent to a different destination.

This study proposes to investigate specific aspects of trafficking. First, it refers to trafficking in women, more specifically to trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Secondly, the analysis is a sociological assessment and it deliberately ignores the economic and judicial frames. However, these approaches are not mutually exclusive and a comprehensive research should include all three perspectives. This is impossible to accomplish without conjugated efforts and findings from various fields of study. Thirdly, the emphasis is on the socio-demographic factors shaping women's vulnerability to trafficking and their decision to accept risky migration options.

It is imperious at this point to make a distinction between prostitution and trafficking. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, prostitution is "the act or practice of indulging in promiscuous sexual relations especially for money." It does not necessarily imply the coercion and trapping of the individual in an exploitative situation as does trafficking.

Following the opening of Romania's borders after 1989, the first migration networks to appear began to send young Romanian women to Turkey for prostitution. This migration phenomenon was perceived by the general public as an "export of prostitutes" and created the background for the confusion between trafficking and prostitution in late 1990's.

The difference between prostitution and trafficking is not always easy to ascertain because of the informal nature of the contract between the intending migrant and the trafficker, or of the impossibility to assess the degree of victim's awareness of the type of work she accepted.

Nevertheless, even cases of prostitution could sometimes be cases of trafficking when violations of human rights occur: restrictions on an individual's freedom of movement, often achieved through passport confiscation; violence and other forms of abuse; or the treatment of human beings as commodities, or as unpaid or slave labourers.

The following circumstances will assist in distinguishing between prostitution and trafficking, and in highlighting the latter's main elements:
- The existence of a recruiter who promises a job and/or the facilitation of safe border crossing;
- The conclusion of a written or informal contract between the trafficker and the intending migrant who agrees on the conditions of her departure based on information that she considers satisfactory and sufficient (kidnapping cases are not considered in this study);
- Transport arrangements and/or the procurement of documents necessary for border crossing involve an organized crime network that often includes actors from more than one country;
- Traffickers arrange the transportation of the recruited women over several borders; the victims are sold to various buyers;
- The trafficked women's previous information about the work conditions abroad proves to be entirely or partially false. Upon arrival in the destination country, which is often different from the destination specified in the contract, they are constrained by the persons who "own" them to unwillingly perform a specific job or to work for very low payment. Victims are thus treated as commodities: sold, bought and evaluated in accordance with market demand and expected profits.

Estimates show that some 50 percent of the 175 million migrants worldwide are women (IOM, 2003). We have previously mentioned that trafficking in women has a migration dimension. International migration is often analysed in relation with development as it involves the transfer of human, financial, and social capital. Circulatory migration is the best-fit phrase for this particular kind of transfer: "repeated movement between a primary residence and a secondary residence, and back" (Nam, 1994). In this context, trafficking in women should be seen as "failed circulatory migration" (Lazaroiu, 2000) as the transfer and

conversion of capital is interrupted due to the slavish nature of the victims' work and to the occult interests of the trafficking networks at play.

The following chapters elaborate on the importance of the social, psychological, and demographical features that underlie migrant vulnerability to trafficking. An overwhelming majority of the Romanians who become victims of trafficking are young girls seeking a job in a Western country. They tend to lack the human and social resources and the ability to manage difficult situations, and can be deceived by recruiters or members of organized crime networks. The girls are promised a job in a foreign country, but they end up instead in a trafficking situation and exploited for sexual purposes. Although vulnerability is not directly linked with the girls' desire to migrate, this desire is an important prerequisite for a trafficking situation to emerge.

Another condition for young women to become victims of trafficking is their inclination to break rules or social and community norms (Lazaroiu, Ulrich, 2003). Victims' social isolation and remoteness from their community and family reinforce the personal initiative to leave the country, which can be the starting point of a trafficking process. The propensity to break rules in order to accomplish specific goals is an aggravating factor.

4. METHODOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The study was based on quantitative and qualitative research aiming to offer a comprehensive understanding of the determinants of women's vulnerability to trafficking. The study outlined the potential victim's profile by revealing the influence of various factors behind women's intention to resort to risky migration options. The investigation explored the degree of vulnerability in relation to: individual characteristics; the social status of the victims; the intention to migrate; awareness of risks associated with migration; previous migration experience; perceived migration opportunities; values and attitudes; level of trust in strangers; family environment.

4.1 Quantitative research

The research was conducted by the Institute for Marketing and Polls (IMAS) in May 2003 on a nationwide representative sample of households with at least one girl aged 15-25 years old. For this phase of the research 854 interviews were conducted with unmarried girls living with the family. In the same household one of the parents, preferably the mother, was interviewed. The "Parent" and "Daughter" questionnaires were applied on the same day, without a time interval between interviews. The presence of any person who had been interviewed previously or who was to be interviewed later was not allowed during the individual interviews. In order to allow for a separate analysis, a disproportionate sample was designed with a large number of cases from Moldova, a region documented to be an important source of victims of trafficking.

4.2 Qualitative research

In the second stage of the research, 8 focus groups were conducted, 4 with vulnerable girls and 4 with mothers of daughters identified as vulnerable. The subjects were selected based on the quantitative research. The focus groups were conducted in three different cities:

Bucharest, Sighisoara, and Pascani, and were designed to refine the understanding of the reasons behind a departure abroad for the purpose of seeking employment, and of the influence of the family environment in taking an eventual migration decision.

The focus group reports support the interview findings. The main factors found to determine the decision to migrate are the lack of opportunities at home and the positive expectations associated with working abroad. The potential victims appear to be most willing to resort to informal networks in order to leave the country. At the same time, their strong desire to migrate makes them disregard risks even when they are aware of them.

4.3   Main stream of analysis: the "vulnerability" concept

The vulnerability of young Romanian women to trafficking in human beings is an operational concept, resulting from interviews with this target group. Statistics show that of the total number of unmarried Romanian females aged 15-25 years old, 85 per cent live with their parents. Trafficking data evidences that the risk of becoming a victim of trafficking is higher for females in this age category, who have not established their own family and continue to live with their parents.

Of course there are a number of unmarried young women who live alone or with school or work mates, or living in institutions, but this accounts for only 15 per cent of the total number of the 15-25 years old unmarried Romanian females. This small category is even more vulnerable to trafficking, in comparison with girls who live with their parents, as former research points out (Galat et al, 2001). This disproportion is the rationale for limiting the target group to those young women who live with their parents.

There were specific indicators regarding vulnerability prerequisites: the recruitment situation and the propensity to break rules.

As regards vulnerability by recruitment situation, the survey question referred to the typical conditions for recruitment, i.e. a person offering a

job to the vulnerable girl and assistance in transporting her to the desired destination.

Table 1
Vulnerability by recruitment situation

If a <u>*trustworthy person*</u> *(A) / If somebody (B) offered you* <u>*a well-paid*</u> *job abroad and promised to make all the* <u>*necessary arrangements*</u> *for you to get there, how willing would you be to accept it?*

Base: total sample (854)		Percentage A "Trust"	Percentage B "No trust"	All sample
Valid	Very little	31	35	33
	Little	11	15	13
	Much	**24**	**22**	**23**
	Very much	**14**	**7**	**11**
	It depends on the job offer	8	9	8
	It depends on the person	7	7	7
	DK/NA	5	5	5
	Total	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: IMAS, 2003

The question was phrased differently for each half of the sample. For the first half, the question mentioned a trustworthy person (situation A), while for the second half the question purposely omitted the words "trustworthy person" and replaced them with "somebody" (situation B). This type of experiment was designed to discover the role of trust in accepting a job.

The data shows that trusting the intermediary increases the rate of acceptance by **9 percentage points,** as compared with the situation when the relationship is not necessarily based on trust. **Thirty-eight per cent would accept the job in situation A, whereas only 29 per cent would accept the job in situation B**. The widest gap between situations A and B is the intensity of acceptance: **7 per cent when no trust is involved, compared with 14 per cent where the relationship involves trusting the intermediary**.

Two other answers were considered for the question: "it depends on the job" and "it depends on the person." The interview operator, however, did not read these aloud to the respondents, as people would prefer to choose one of the two rather than express a more discriminating opinion. A low percentage of respondents came forth with the comment: 8-9 per cent for "it depends on the job", and 7 per cent for "it depends on the person". In the first case, no difference was expected between the two situations. In the second, there was still no difference between situations A and B. That means that in potential recruitment situations, the profile of a non-trustworthy person will not be questioned more than those of a trustworthy person. The invariance of the answers shows that processing information about the recruiter is an attribute in the profile of the potential migrant.

For the second condition of vulnerability the research used a set of indicators for the propensity of young females to break laws or social norms. Rule breaking appears to be a means to reach an important goal.

Table 2
Vulnerability and propensity to break rules

How willing would you be to accept one of the following situations in order to obtain what you most want in life?

Positive percentage (much and very much) *Base: total sample (854)*	Percentage
To disobey rules	28
To get married to a person I do not love	**3**
To lie about something	**8**
To leave my parents and brothers for a long period of time	35
To leave for good the person I most love	**7**

Source: IMAS, 2003

The table above evidences that the indicators above have different discriminating abilities. The "strong" indicators of rule breaking are related to intimate life, such as leaving the loved ones for good (6,5 per cent), or getting married to somebody that one does not love (3,1 per cent). The other three indicators are rather weak, although lying about something seems to be the least discriminating (8,1 per cent). Leaving

relatives for a long period of time or breaking the rules are the most discriminating indicators as there are more positive answers to these questions (35 per cent and 27,8 per cent).

Overall, the number of those who answered "much" and "very much" is an index of the propensity to break rules and social norms. The results show that no one accepted all five indicators, only 1 per cent accepted four indicators, 5 per cent accepted 3 indicators, 14 per cent accepted 2 indicators, 36 per cent accepted one indicator and 45 per cent rejected all indicators.

In order to determine vulnerability to trafficking, the indicator expressing the first condition (propensity to accept a person's work offer abroad) was combined with the index of propensity to break rules. The result shows that there is a <u>high risk</u> of trafficking for those young women who:

- Would accept a job from an intermediary, no matter whether that person is trustworthy or not, as this can depend on the victim's subjective assessment or on the trafficker's ability to manage others' impressions of him/her, and who

- Are willing to choose at least two improper means in order to achieve important goals.

There is a <u>moderate risk</u> for young women willing to accept a job from an intermediary and who chose only one of the listed means.

Finally, there is a <u>low risk</u> of trafficking for women who either would not accept a job offer or who would not choose any of the listed means to achieve important goals.

The distribution of risk among the three groups is as follows:

High risk	9%
Moderate risk	15%
Low risk	76%

The subsequent analysis considers only the group defined as being at high risk. The analysis will compare the vulnerable (high risk) group with the average population, aiming to describe the vulnerable group's profile, and to answer questions such as: who are the vulnerable girls in terms of their values, attitudes, and behaviour? What is their family environment like?

5. VULNERABILITY FACTORS

5.1. Individual factors

The demand for low wage labour and the existence of gender specific employment sectors generate a segmentation of the migration labour market. Labour opportunities appear to be more numerous and better regulated for male migrants. Female migrants seem to have to resort to unofficial channels. Classified ads seeking female labour often publish criteria that have less to do with professional skills, and much more or exclusively with the applicant's physical appearance or age.

As vulnerable girls do not always have access to official channels or qualify for formal job opportunities, they will mainly resort to risky employment options, where they believe they would be accepted more easily.

5.1.1. Potential victims of trafficking seen as social innovators

The post-communist transition in Romania has been a disruptive process fostering an insecure socio-economic environment. The mercantilist economy has been gradually replaced by market economy, with important consequences on a formerly immobile society controlled and regulated by the state. Privileges and status were no longer dependent on party loyalties but mainly on competence. As the equalitarian principles became obsolete, educational and professional experience have become important employment criteria. Unfortunately, it can be difficult for young people to meet these two criteria.

The pressure generated by modest means of subsistence and the frustration springing from the gap between expectations and reality, and from the perception of other people's social status as a success story to be copied, are some of the reasons pushing people to try to find solutions, even illegitimate or dangerous ones, in order to survive in a disruptive environment. As the fall of the communist regime was followed by the opening of borders and the exercising of the right to

freedom of movement was no longer restrained, one solution was to leave the country in search of employment.

As migration cycles and benefits such as remittances have become visible in new life styles, international mobility became a means for upward social mobility. From this perspective, the victims of trafficking and migrants in general could be considered as "social innovators" (Lazaroiu, 2000). However, innovative strategies are not always successful. Risk acceptance, which is common in youths, may generate failure when people lack the ability to manage new or unexpected social situations. The following sections analyse the extent to which individual and social factors influence the success or failure of the individual migration strategy.

5.1.2. Values and attitudes

Describing the vulnerable group in terms of values and attitudes indicates that these **girls are more independent, rather open to experiments, and willing to accept uncertainty and risk**. It is clear that they do not feel close to their family and that they do not believe that the family is the most important thing in one's life. They do not value education as a means to succeed and they think that more money can justify any job. It has been shown previously that vulnerable girls have a high propensity to break rules. This trait, together with the willingness to accept illegitimate solutions to achieve goals, consolidates the possibility for these girls to make risk-laden options in order to be able to leave the country.

METHODOLOGY NOTE:

Column "all sample" in the tables below describes the opinions of the average girl aged 15-25, while the column "vulnerable group" describes the opinions of the vulnerable girl aged 15-25 according to the definition of vulnerability.

Table 3
Values and attitudes of vulnerable women

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?
Percentage for agreement:

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	Vulnerable group
A young girl my age should manage on her own	49	**64**
Young people should not depend too much on their parents	64	**78**
It does not matter what you do for work if you can earn a lot of money	16	**19**
While young, it is good to experiment with as many things as possible	76	**89**

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?
Percentage for disagreement:

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	Vulnerable group
Family is the most important thing in a person's life	5	**10**
Only those with a higher education background can really do something in life	60	**65**

Source: IMAS, 2003

Table 4
Risk aversion and risk acceptance by vulnerable women

Would you ordinarily refer to yourself as a person who…

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	Vulnerable group
Likes adventure and uncertainty	26	38
Is rather cautious and conservative	70	**61**
DK/NA	4	**2**
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: IMAS, 2003

Vulnerable girls are confident in their ability to succeed on their own. They believe that the only things that one needs in order to succeed abroad are language skills or having enough money to rent a flat. Even those stating that it would be fine to live at an acquaintance's place while abroad, declare that they count on their own ability to find a job, as relatives would not always be so willing to help.

> *"It is not the perfect situation, as relatives do not always help you. (…) One should have enough money to leave and a place to go to. When you get there you only need a place to sleep and something to eat; if you have these, everything is very easy. You do not really need somebody to help you. You can go and look for yourself; you only need to find some job offers." [girl, A., Pascani]*

> *"[…]I would see to my own business by myself, so I am not afraid. All I need is to be determined and to trust myself. If you are scared however, anything can happen to you." [girl, M., Bucuresti]*

> *"It is our first experience as an adult. We have always lived with our parents. When they are near us they help us whereas when you live abroad you are on your own. It is a kind of a test for you." [girl, O., Sighisoara]*

A general wish to make money and achieve success characterizes the group of vulnerable girls. The vulnerable girls are more likely to wish for things that would improve their financial situation and success in life. The findings below reinforce this conclusion. A job and a professional career seem to be important means to achieve this objective, should the golden opportunity fail to come up (33 per cent for all sample and 40 per cent for the vulnerable group).

Table 5
Goals in life and vulnerability

If any of your dreams could come true, which would it be? (Most frequent answers)

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	Vulnerable group
I would like to be appreciated for my moral qualities, for my virtues	36	**32**
I would like to have enough money to buy all that I want	34	**37**
I would like to be appreciated for my intelligence	17	**12**
Success in life	1	**5**
Health	2	**0**
Happiness	1	**3**

What do you most wish for in life?

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	**Vulnerable group**
Job, career	33	**40**
Family, love	11	**8**
Happiness	13	**18**
Health	14	**8**

How difficult do you think it is for a girl like you to succeed in life?

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	**Vulnerable group**
Very easy/easy	19	**26**
Difficult/very difficult	79	**74**

Among your qualities, which ones do you think will really help you succeed in life? (Multiple answers)

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	Vulnerable group
My education	65	53
The fact that I am hard working and serious	65	70

Source: IMAS, 2003

There is a greater number of these girls who wish to be happy, as compared with the average 15-25-year old Romanian girl (18 per cent of the vulnerable group and only 13 per cent of all sample). Vulnerable girls seem to be more optimistic than the average girl about their success in life and they count more on their being hard working (70 per cent) than on their education (53 per cent).

It seems that vulnerable girls are more likely to fear death (22 per cent) and professional failure (14 per cent). Also, the fact that the most unpleasant event that has happened to them up to this point in life usually refers to emotional stress (31 per cent) might be a sign of the hostile environment in which they live, be it the family or the community environment.

Table 6
Personal fears and vulnerability

Which is the thing that you would never want to happen to you?

	All sample	**Vulnerable group**
Rape, aggression	12	**8**
Death	22	**27**
Being a loser/ unemployed	10	**14**
Illness	18	**12**

Which is the most unpleasant thing that has happened to you up to this point?

	All sample	**Vulnerable group**
Death of a relative, close friend	13	**9**
Emotional stress	21	**31**

Source: IMAS, 2003

It appears that the family, which should have been an important protection factor against trafficking, has actually created the very circumstances for the girls to wish to resort to rapid and risky migration strategies. The fact that they wish to be happy and that they fear emotional stress and death more than the average girl point to the absence of a supportive family environment. This has also engendered their willingness to count on their own abilities to succeed and to be suspicious of or reject help from relatives.

5.1.3. Human capital

Education is an important individual factor of vulnerability. As a socialization institution, its purpose is twofold: first it shapes the professional abilities necessary in the labour market; secondly it is a control institution imposing specific rules and norms, contributing to people's social integration and enticing the formation of group affiliations. In this context it is obvious that the higher the degree of education and the longer the period spent in school, the more education constitutes a protection factor against trafficking.

The vulnerable girls view education as a useless or valueless strategy for succeeding in life. Focus group discussions with this category revealed that studying is not seen as a means for achieving high status in Romania. They consider it hopeless to try to get a job based on university education because employers make past experience an important employment criterion. Moreover, should girls with a university degree try to get a job, they encounter problems other than

mere lack of experience; they usually need to know the right person who can help them get hired or who has the money to pay to get them hired.

> *"Well, she is first of all interested in the money she can make there. I have met people here who could not find a job in spite of their university degree. I heard that no matter the profession you are trained for, be it being a lawyer or a notary public, you either need a lot of money or a connection with the right person if you want to get a job. You also hear how much money other people make abroad…"* [girl, R., Bucuresti]

> *"Some girls have only graduated from high school or have recently finished a vocational school, so they can only work in a shop or a factory where they are poorly paid. Therefore they try to find a contract abroad and go there to work…"* [girl, A., Sighisoara]

This is obviously part of the corruption problem in Romania. Rarely are vulnerable girls hired and when they are, their salaries are unsatisfying. The younger girls who have not yet graduated from high school or those with a secondary school degree find it difficult to get employed given the high job deficit on the Romanian labour market. The wages for the jobs these girls would be able to perform are indeed low. This can easily lead the girls into thinking that working in the native country is not worth their while, if they want to have a better future and be able to manage by themselves.

This pessimistic view on education and on spending time and money on it, may be a factor in the girls' decisions to drop out from school in order to look for a job abroad, even one below their training. Young people feel frustrated to see that their education efforts have been in vain, when somebody performing a low wage job abroad makes a whole lot more money.

> *"In Romania you need a diploma in order to find a job whereas you can always work abroad even though you are only 15 or 16 years old. If you have a relative there or if you know somebody there they will definitely help you."* [girl, R., Pascani]

"Well, what is the point of going to the university if, after you invest money in education, doors are shut right in your face? You need to have a lot of patience if you really want to get a job here and you need to try in various places too. It is different if you know someone abroad and my guess is that everybody does…" [girl, D., Pascani]

Families with vulnerable girls vary in some respects. Data shows that the parents of these girls do pay attention to their daughters' education, but there are discrepancies as regards the amount of time spent with the children. Some spend between 3-6 hours a day (45 per cent), while others spend 10 hours or more (15 per cent), which probably creates a sense of dependency and a more restrictive environment.

The main reasons for vulnerable girls' school absenteeism include: being asked or made by the family to do domestic work (24 per cent); the family believes education does not pay off (9 per cent); children are too tired (13 per cent) or they have not done their homework (15 per cent). There is also a large sub-category of parents who ignore education and their children's performance in school. As compared with the average household, there are more families with vulnerable girls who are not in contact with the school, except for parents' meetings (38 per cent), or at all (18 per cent).

Table 7
Parents supervising the education of vulnerable girls

How much time do you usually spend with your child/children (children aged between 15 and 18 years) *every day?* (hours)

Base: total sample (854)		All sample	**Vulnerable group**
Valid	0-2 hours	9	**8**
	3-6 hours	36	**45**
	7-10 hours	23	**12**
	10 hours+	8	**15**

Why does your child sometimes skip classes/not go to school? (Multiple answers)

	All sample	**Vulnerable group**
I send him/her to work, to bring money for the family	8	**24**
He/she did not do his/her homework	4	**13**
We consider him/her too tired to go	3	**15**
School (education) serves for nothing nowadays	2	**9**

During the last school year how often have you been to school to ask about your child's situation?

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	**Vulnerable group**
Only to attend parents meetings	30	**38**
Never	10	**14**

Source: IMAS, 2003

5.2. Social environment

5.2.1. Family care and education

The focus groups showed that parents view education as a useless tool for succeeding in life, and equally worthless as an employment strategy. Investing in acquiring a higher level of knowledge is seen as a waste of time and money. Parents of vulnerable girls tend to think that if a girl finds a job in Romania, it is likely that the salary would be below expectations and needs, or that the job would not match her training. This does not necessarily mean that all parents of vulnerable girls advise their children not to go to school or to disregard their studies, but the pessimistic view is certainly creating an incentive for their children to leave and to seek opportunities abroad.

"There are no jobs here. Girls having a baccalaureate diploma and those graduating from college will still have no jobs." [parent, L., Bucuresti]

"Salaries are awfully low even for those who have a university degree." [parent, E., Bucuresti]

"My elder daughter graduated from the journalism university. Three years ago when she worked for a newspaper in Cluj, she had a salary of 2,000,000 lei and we still had to help her. [...] It is unacceptable that her studying and hard work were not enough for her to be able to provide for herself here". [parent, M., Sighisoara]

It is apparent that there are different views about the education of boys and girls in families with vulnerable girls. This might give a sense of gender discrimination although the data does not support this. The survey did not include indicators testing the gender discrimination hypothesis; the indicator here ("boys and girls should be differently educated") is rather weak for such a conclusion but it does reveal a difference in parents' expectations for the two gender categories. However, it is obvious from the data that parents of vulnerable girls pay little attention to the girls' personal problems. There is a higher probability that these parents should not know whether their daughter has a boyfriend or not. There also seems to be a lack of communication between parents and daughters regarding the girl's intimate problems. There were more parents of vulnerable girls than parents of average girls to provide answers such as "we don't talk with our daughter about her problems" (39 per cent as compared with 23 per cent), or "we seldom or never discuss sexual matters or intimate problems" (23 per cent as compared to 13 per cent).

Table 8
Parents-children relationship and vulnerability

Do you believe that…

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	**Vulnerable group**
Boys and girls should be similarly educated	54	**49**
Boys and girls should be differently educated	44	**49**
DK/NA	2	**2**
Total	100	**100**

How often do you or your husband talk to your daughter/daughters about her/their personal life (e.g. problems related to sexual relations)?

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	**Vulnerable group**
Very seldom / never	13	**23**
Seldom	27	**28**
Often	42	**39**
Very often	17	**9**
Total	100	100

When you speak with your daughter about her personal problems, how does it usually happen?

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	**Vulnerable group**
Our daughter comes to us and tells us about her problems	55	**51**
My husband/wife or I ask her from time to time about her problems	39	**35**
We do not discuss her/their problems	5	**14**
Total	100	100

Are there any places where you forbid your daughter to go alone (e.g. discos, bars, restaurants, etc.)?

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	Vulnerable group
Yes	55	**52**
No	32	**38**

Source: IMAS, 2003

The lack of communication between parents and their vulnerable daughters is confirmed by the interviews with the young women. It appears that they are more prone than their average cohorts to talk to a friend about something important rather than talk to their parents and relatives (30 per cent of the vulnerable girls, 16 per cent of average girls). This estrangement from the family is a factor that might diminish the parental control and which also feeds the sense of isolation and lack of affection that the girls feel.

It is rather difficult to identify the parents' caring attitude from the focus groups statements. When asked what their daughters should do in order to avoid being trapped in a trafficking network, the parents of vulnerable girls mainly expressed their wish that their girl be good, honest, serious, hard working, and cautious. This might lead to the conclusion that these parents care about their children's well-being abroad. We should not ignore, however, that this question can easily generate desirable answers. A more appropriate caring measure would be preventing their daughter from resorting to risky migration strategies.

"If I were not able to ask the help of a sister or of a daughter-in-law whom I could trust, I would not let my daughter live in Italy or Spain. I would by no means ask the help of a friend I once had a coffee with or smoked a cigarette with because she might very well promise to help my kid and later leave her in the street. I would not count on anybody. (...) I would only trust a very close friend, somebody who helped me in the past or whom I helped and who cannot refuse me now. Otherwise, I would never send her abroad. I would tell her: "Bad as it may seem to you, you should stay here with your mother until things get better." [parent, E., Pascani]

5.2.2. Financial situation of the family

The lack of financial resources is generally considered one of the most important push factors for migration. Nevertheless, empirical data show that intending migrants do not usually have a very low financial status. It is interesting to note that in terms of an objective measurement of income there is no difference between families with vulnerable girls and the average household. This means that the hypothesis of an objectively poor environment as a characteristic of vulnerability should be rejected. The only significant difference in objective measurement of income is the source of income. Here it seems that vulnerable girls come from households where the main source of income is a pension (34 per cent of vulnerable girls compared with 25 per cent of average household). That might be indicative of the family structure; it is likely that there are more vulnerable girls from families with an elderly or retired person.

The subjective measurement of wealth does differ between the average family and the families of vulnerable girls. It seems that the parents of vulnerable girls are more likely to perceive their current financial situation as unsatisfactory (30 per cent as compared with 21.5 per cent).

Table 9
Income and vulnerability

Including all of its sources, could you estimate the total value of your household income in April this year (in thousands Romanian lei)?

	All sample	Vulnerable group
Mean per capita (thousand lei)	1,288	**1,290**
Mean	4,904	**4,865**
25% of income group	2,100	**2,500**
50% of income group	4,000	**4,000**
75% of income group	7,000	**6,000**

How satisfied are you with your current financial situation?

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	Vulnerable group
Not satisfied at all	22	**30**
Not very satisfied	47	**43**
Quite satisfied	29	**24**
Very satisfied	2	**3**

Source: IMAS, 2003

In terms of basic consumption behaviour, the data supports the hypothesis that the families of vulnerable girls are not extremely poor, but that they do have a difficult time maintaining a decent standard of living. One can see, for instance, that more families of vulnerable girls report a shortage of money for daily shopping (40 per cent as compared with 32 per cent) and that they were unable to afford to buy children what they want (40 per cent as compared with 35 per cent). However, they could afford basic goods and sometimes bought clothes from a used clothes shop. When compared with the families of non-vulnerable girls, there was a significant difference in the number of families with vulnerable girls that reported not having enough money for food (42 per cent as compared with 36 per cent), or having to buy things on credit (59 per cent as compared with 51per cent).

Table 10
Household expenditure and vulnerability

How often did any of the following happen to you last year?

		All sample	Vulnerable group
Not having money for your daily shopping / spending	Seldom/very seldom	29	**30**
	Often/very often	71	**70**
Not being able to afford to buy basic goods for your children	Seldom/very seldom	37	**35**
	Often/very often	63	**65**
Not being able to afford to buy	Seldom/very seldom	25	**25**

your children the things they want or other things you would like them to have	Often/very often	75	**75**
Borrowing money in order to manage in the days to come	Seldom/very seldom	35	**43**
	Often/very often	59	**57**
Not having enough money to buy basic food supplies (bread, oil, sugar, fruit)	Seldom/very seldom	58	**60**
	Often/very often	42	**40**
Asking the shopkeeper to put it on your account and to pay for your shopping later	Seldom/very seldom	65	**64**
	Often/very often	35	**36**
Buying second-hand clothes for you and your family	Seldom/very seldom	62	**57**
	Often/very often	37	**43**

Source: IMAS, 2003

Like their parents, vulnerable girls perceive the family financial situation as rather poor. As we could see in the data above, there is no statistical difference between the money that households with vulnerable girls make in one month and the average household's figures, which means that it is more of an aspiration for higher standards than objective poverty, which differentiate the two.

In comparison with the average girls, more vulnerable girls considered that the financial situation of their family was "quite bad" (18 percent than the 10 per cent in the average girls group). Given their independence and sense of doing things on their own, the vulnerable ones are much more inclined to think that they should make more money to help their family (35 per cent vulnerable girls versus 27 per cent for all sample).

Office mates and a job environment also influence the life of the vulnerable girls living with their families. They report they have jobs they do not like and that they are not satisfied with the money they get (Massey, 1993). This might explain their strong wish to seek a job abroad. The main reasons are related to the job itself and the money they earn (9 per cent are not satisfied with the job in comparison with 3 per

cent of the average girls). They are, however, pleased with the physical conditions of their work, their colleagues and their employer.

Table 11
Job satisfaction and vulnerability

How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your job? (Question for girls who have a job.)

		All sample	Vulnerable group
The physical conditions of your work	Very unsatisfied/unsatisfied	3	**4**
	Satisfied/very satisfied	10	**13**
The money/salary you earn	Very unsatisfied/unsatisfied	7	**14**
	Satisfied/very satisfied	6	**3**
The relations with your colleagues	Very unsatisfied/unsatisfied	2	**3**
	Satisfied/very satisfied	11	**12**
The relations with your boss / employer	Very unsatisfied/unsatisfied	8	**4**
	Satisfied/very satisfied	11	**13**
The job you have	Very unsatisfied/unsatisfied	9	**9**
	Satisfied/very satisfied	10	**8**

Source: IMAS, 2003

5.2.3. Reported family abuse and violence

Questions about family abuse and domestic violence are always a sensitive issue to ask about in questionnaires. However, the small figures and intensity or frequency of these events could indicate under-reporting or that answers are purposely downgraded. In families with vulnerable girls there are signs of abuse, even though these are not immediately obvious; there are reported arguments between husband and wife (48 per cent), reported arguments about the children's school performance (44 per cent), and some verbal offences (8 per cent). Physical violence appears to be significantly more intense or frequent in families with

vulnerable girls. (7 per cent of the parents of vulnerable girls report to have physically abused their children in comparison with only 2.2 per cent of the average parents). The data also indicates that there is a higher probability that vulnerable girls come from single-parent families (8 per cent).

Table 12
Domestic violence and vulnerability (parents' perspective)

How often…		All sample	Vulnerable group
Do you have an argument with your wife / husband?	Seldom/very seldom	66	**64**
	Often/very often	18	**16**
You had an argument with your child/children because they obtained some bad marks/unsatisfactory results in school	Seldom/very seldom	76	**80**
	Often/very often	17	**13**
You had a serious argument with your adult children because they don't have a job	Seldom/very seldom	58	**44**
	Often/very often	6	**10**
You beat or physically punish your child/children for some reason	Seldom/very seldom	93	**92**
	Often/very often	2	**7**
You offended your child/children when you did not agree with something he/she said	Seldom/very seldom	93	**93**
	Often/very often	3	**4**

Source: IMAS, 2003

Comparing figures on family abuse and violence as reflected by the interviews with the vulnerable girls, it seems that the findings are consistent with the parents' reports. Even though this is a sensitive issue to talk about with the operator, which actually makes one suspect under-reporting, there are differences in the experiences of vulnerable girls as compared with the average 15-25 –year old girls living with their families. In almost all listed examples of family abuse and domestic violence, the number of vulnerable girls answering „yes" was almost double the average percentages. This means that they live in hostile family environments, which might explain their sense of isolation and

strong desire to move. This lack of integration can make them even more vulnerable when traffickers try to take advantage of their situation.

Short-term solutions such as leaving home or staying at a friend's house are usually the first attempts to escape a hostile environment. Should this alternative prove viable it may be assumed that there is a lower possibility that these girls become trapped in a trafficking situation. Nonetheless, as some of them leave home at an early age, their possibilities to achieve success are low; the fact that they abandon school and the lack of professional experience place them in another hostile environment, which may finally become a stronger push factor for a risky migration strategy.

Table 13
Domestic violence and vulnerability (children's perspective)

Has one of the following ever happened to you? (Percentage of affirmative answers)

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	**Vulnerable group**
Having to leave home because your parents were having a serious argument or hitting each other	8	**11**
Having to leave home because your parents were having an argument with you, or were hitting you	6	**8**
Having to miss school for more than a week because your parents wanted you to work at home	2	**5**
Having to leave home and the native area by yourself for a long period of time (for example 2 weeks or more) without your parents' agreement	3	**6**
Having to live at a friend's house or with another relative because you did not want to stay with your parents anymore	3	**6**
Having to witness your parents' arguments / fights	19	**29**

5.2.4. Social life and integration

The vulnerable and non-vulnerable girls present different degrees of social integration. There is no statistical difference between the two

groups in some respects, such as having a boyfriend or a circle of friends to go out with and with whom the girls share similar values. Communicating and having fun are the most important things to do within a group of friends.

There is a significant difference, however, in terms of the finer aspects of social integration. There are more vulnerable girls who reported having felt abandoned by the people around them (50 per cent vulnerable, 38 per cent average), or that life is not worth living (50 per cent vulnerable, 30 per cent all sample). Given that the percentages are higher for this category, this can be rated as a factor of instability and vulnerability. It is interesting to note here that vulnerable girls do not have a very close relationship with the Church they belong to. As compared with their average counterparts, more vulnerable girls reported that they did not have a religious confessor (55 per cent vulnerable, 39 per cent all sample).

Table 14
Social and emotional environment and vulnerability

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	Vulnerable group
Do you have a boyfriend?	53	**56**
During the last year have you ever felt abandoned by the people around you?	38	**50**
During the last year have you ever felt that life is not worth living?	30	**50**
Is there a group of friends or colleagues you are part of?	87	**91**
Is there a priest you usually go to for confession?	61	**45**

Source: IMAS, 2003

5.2.5 Socio-demographic dependencies

Most of the vulnerable girls come from the Transilvania and Moldova regions. The Moldovan counties are typical for their poverty niches (especially in the east). Harsh living conditions and the lack of opportunities constrain people to adopt extreme survival strategies. The

younger population tends to resort to internal or international migration as one such survival strategy. Transylvania is not a homogenous region. Well-institutionalized and well-established labour migration networks in the north act as a protection factor against trafficking. In the rest of the region, where migration networks are much weaker and do not support circulatory labour migration, this survival strategy is risky.

Vulnerable girls come mostly from medium-sized towns of 30-100,000 inhabitants. They tend to come from single-parent families and they are aged between 15-25 years old. The margins of the age interval (i.e. 15/16 and 24/25) show a lower trafficking risk. There is a high probability for young Roma women to be vulnerable to trafficking, as well as for those girls who abandoned school before high school graduation. Even if they have graduated from school, vulnerable girls are usually unemployed. Those having a job usually work in a private company.

5.3.   Migration and mobility

5.3.1. Migration strategy

Picking the formal or informal network as the agent to apply a migration strategy is also related to the vulnerable group's attitude towards risk, or to the level of trust. Sometimes trust is not an exclusive condition; the girl will make a rational choice, balancing the costs of her staying versus the costs of her leaving. Should the staying look too expensive in comparison with the leaving, the vulnerable women will be likely to ignore the risks even when they are aware of them.

There is a general tendency among vulnerable girls to avoid official or formal channels to find employment. Instead, they resort to friends, acquaintances (31 percent), and relatives (11 per cent) for help. From the table below it seems that there is high probability for vulnerable women to use informal connections and recommendations from other people (11 per cent prefer to ask a relative for help, and 31 per cent prefer to ask for help from a friend, in comparison with the 8 per cent and the 24 per cent non-vulnerable girls who would do the same thing). This general tendency is risky, as the job offer abroad may come from a trafficker or

recruiter.

Table 15
Job-finding strategies and vulnerability

What do you generally think is the best thing to do when you want to find a job?

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	Vulnerable group
To read the job ads in the newspapers	13	**14**
To go to the labour office	24	**18**
To ask a relative for help	8	**11**
To go straight to the employer and ask him to help you	13	**14**
To go to a labour agency	10	**11**
To ask help from one of the people I know/ one of my friends	24	**31**

Source: IMAS, 2003

The focus groups also supported the conclusion that vulnerable girls tend to resort more often to the help of a relative or acquaintance in order to go abroad. These girls would rather use informal migration networks rather than the services of an institution or a certified agent. Media reports on trafficking or previous migration experiences in the family are partly responsible for the vulnerable women's lack of trust in labour exchange companies. They have either seen media reports accusing such companies of trafficking in human beings, or they have heard of someone who was cheated by the very company with which s/he negotiated a labour contract.

> *"One cannot always trust agencies as many bad things are related to their activity. It is useless to deny it, I have seen it on the TV." [girl, Sighisoara]*

> *"My father resorted to an agency for leaving. He signed the contract and worked in Germany for six months. When he came back the company disregarded the provisions specified in the contract and did not pay him the entire amount of money that was due to him. Moreover, the family should have been given the*

minimum salary each month and we did not get this money. We sued the company but it went bankrupt so we lost the money…" [girl, O., Sighisoara]

"I have friends who went to their friends abroad; they helped them; they sent them money to have a passport made and to have enough resources for leaving." [girl, A., Pascani]

"I would leave if I knew someone who lives there and who comes to Romania once in a while; I would leave with her/him when she/he goes back. This way we would be certain that we are in good hands" [girl ,R., Pascani]

"I went to a travel agency but I was asked for too much money and I did not actually trust them. I was supposed to be hired as a dealer in a casino but they checked my hands and legs to see how I looked. I did not like this attitude and I gave up (…) We have some family friends who left for Germany many years ago; they come and visit us twice a year and they suggested that we should go there." [girl, R., Sighisoara].

The women interviewed consider those who left for jobs abroad as role models and success stories and as trustworthy sources of information. The people most girls expect help from are not recent acquaintances but rather relatives or friends they trust. They are willing to accept a job offer coming from these people. Leaving with the help of such informal networks is also considered an easier way to secure accommodation and boarding until they find a job. The Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity is hardly seen as a viable agency to facilitate departures. This may be either due to a lack of information, or to a preference to resort to informal channels based on the age, language, education, and experience criteria required to get legal employment abroad.

Compared with the average girls, vulnerable girls would prefer to remain abroad rather than come back (34 per cent). Although the majority of the vulnerable girls declare that they would like to come back, the probability that they would leave for good is higher than in the group of average girls. They would also prefer to use personal connections and

contacts abroad rather than formal channels in order to find a job in a foreign country (41 per cent).

Table 16
Migration and job seeking strategies and vulnerability
If you left to work abroad…

Base: respondents who would leave to work abroad (647)	All sample	Vulnerable group
Would you think of staying there for good?	21	**34**
Would you work for a while and then come back?	73	**62**

If you were to go abroad, whom would you prefer to ask for help?

Base: respondents who would leave to work abroad (647)	All sample	Vulnerable group
A person living in Romania	38	**29**
A person living abroad	27	**41**
A company	21	**22**
It does not matter	10	**7**

Source: IMAS, 2003

Unlike the survey, the focus groups revealed a preference for circulatory migration. This might be explained by the fact that some of the persons interviewed did not come from an abusive family. Their declared intention was to leave to make money and buy a house in Romania upon return, or to help their family.

> *"They might stay there for a longer period but in the end they would come back because the money they make over there means much more once back in Romania. They want to have a better life here and they go abroad only so as to make the necessary money." [girl, A., Pascani]*

> *"I would not like to go abroad because my family is here.(…) I would go however, but only to work for a while and come back. I would not stay there. Maybe I would find it satisfying. I have a cousin who's been to Spain, to Greece; she travelled a lot but she*

never stayed there. Life is different here and all the family is here." [girl, A., Sighisoara]

When asked about the institutions or other actors the youths should appeal to in order to leave the country, the parents named: the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity; a job-placement agency that could be trusted based on other migrants' success stories; and relatives or acquaintances. Parents know that acquaintances can be deceiving, but they strongly believe they have the capacity to differentiate between a trustworthy person and a possible recruiter.

The empirical data presented above clearly shows that both the vulnerable girls and their parents would resort to an intermediary and that this person would be a relative or an acquaintance. The development of migration networks is usually seen as a positive factor. The networks may include family members or friends that can help the girls upon arrival in a completely new environment, by offering housing and mediating employment. However, the ability of both the girls and their parents to judge the validity and security of the networks remains unreliable.

One of the most important factors increasing the girls'/migrants' vulnerability is their resorting to illegal migration strategies (Koser, 2000). There is a strong association between this and the restrictive migration policies. The more restrictive the migration policies, the stronger the irregular networks (Massey, 1993) and the propensity of the migrant to resort to them. The underground market fosters migrant exploitation. Migrants' lack of resources and their indebtedness to traffickers add to their being under physical or psychological strain and limit their options to escape from the trafficking network. Migration networks in general and trafficking networks in particular thrive on prohibitive legislation. Inappropriate or lax anti-trafficking legislation, as well as porous borders, facilitate the perpetuation of the "trafficking business" (Salt, 2000).

5.3.2. Knowledge of migration requirements

In order to assess the girls' level of knowledge and information about

travelling abroad, the questionnaire included a section of "true/false" questions. This tested the young women's knowledge about the legal conditions and documentation implied by migration. By and large, everyone in the group tested knew that crossing the border requires a passport. However, most of the respondents thought that only adults could be issued a passport (60 percent all sample, 50 percent vulnerable group). Vulnerable girls were slightly better informed about this matter. Thinking that only adults can carry a passport might put some girls at high risks.

Table 17
Knowledge of migration requirements and vulnerability

I will read you a few statements. Please tell me whether you think they are true or false.

		All sample	Vulnerable group
One needs a passport in order to cross the Romanian border	TRUE	99	**99**
	FALSE	1	**1**
Only Romanian citizens over 18 can have a passport	TRUE	43	**38**
	FALSE	50	**60**
Romanian citizens need a visa in order to travel to the European states (with the exception of Great Britain)	TRUE	50	**50**
	FALSE	38	**45**
One can legally stay as a tourist in one of the European countries for a six-month period	TRUE	27	**29**
	FALSE	45	**46**
One needs a labour contract in order to work legally in a foreign country	TRUE	89	**90**
	FALSE	6	**3**

Source: IMAS, 2003

The majority of Romanian girls think they need a visa to get to a EU country. Again, the vulnerable girls are better informed on this matter. They have a fair level of knowledge of the legal conditions for working abroad, 90 per cent being aware of the fact that one needs a labour contract in order to work legally in a foreign country. However, the level of information regarding the legal period for staying abroad as a tourist

was poorer. 46 per cent of the vulnerable girls consider that one can legally stay as a tourist in a European country for up to a six-month period. By and large, vulnerable girls are better informed about the travel requirement, and this may be a protection factor. It is clear that their intense desire to go abroad has made them search for more information. Nonetheless it must be noted that the information is unequally distributed in the group of vulnerable girls.

5.3.3. Motivation for migration

The investigation of the migration plans and experiences points to a strong desire to seek work in a foreign country (73 per cent). It is in a foreign country that the vulnerable girls envision themselves succeeding. They would prefer to go abroad even if they were offered a similar job in Romania (76 per cent). The main reason for preferring the job abroad is related to money.

Table 18
Migration abroad and vulnerability

Where do you think it is easier for a young girl like you to succeed in life?

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	Vulnerable group
Here, in this county	23	**6**
In another county in Romania	30	**18**
Somewhere abroad	39	**73**

If you were to choose between a job here in Romania and a job in a European country, which one would you choose?

Base: total sample (854)	All sample	Vulnerable group
The job in Romania	42	**11**
The job abroad	45	**76**
It depends on the job (option not read to respondents)	11	**11**

Source: IMAS, 2003

Girls participating in the focus group discussions also specified money as a main reason for choosing to leave to work abroad. The state of the domestic labour market, the low wages, the pointlessness of investing in education, the pessimistic outlook as regards a better life and future in Romania, seem to have led to the perception that almost any foreign country would offer more opportunities than Romania. For the vulnerable girls, the magic of going abroad and the magic of foreign countries as lands of "milk and honey" is still a pull factor.

> *"One can make three times more money than here. A year's income here can easily be earned there during one month."* [girl, C., Bucuresti]

> *"I think it is for the money that they leave. They have terribly low salaries therefore they choose to leave. There might be young people who would like to go to college but they do not have the money to do so. Everything is expensive here and wages are low. It is only normal for them to leave when they get the first chance. They borrow some money, have a passport made, see to all other things they might need and then they leave. When they come back they might return with some money. Anyway it depends on how they manage there; it is even better for them to have relatives over there."* [girl, A., Pascani]

> *"Some girls have only graduated from high school or from a vocational school. They can get a job in a shop or a factory but they will have low salaries. Thus, they sign a labour contract and go to work abroad. Those who want to stay there for good do so, but the ones who do not get used to living over there come back. With the money they made there they buy a flat."* [girl, A., Sighisoara]

The most favoured destinations for working abroad are Italy (17 per cent), Germany (14 per cent), France (10 per cent), and the USA (15 per cent). It is likely that these vulnerable girls would prefer any country (14 per cent). The specified destinations are the usual destinations Romanian young people dream of, and some of them are actual favourite destinations in particular regions of the country (IOM, 2001). The fact

that they would accept to go to no matter what country is another indicator of their wish to simply go abroad, which impairs their ability to make a safe decision or to assess recruitment situations.

It seems that the difference between vulnerable girls and non-vulnerable girls looking for a job abroad is that the former are more oriented to low skilled jobs. This means that either they want to leave very soon, before they complete an educational cycle, or they have completed it and do not wish to further their education. A successful migration strategy is influenced by the nature of the job abroad: the lower the human capital required for performing a certain job, the higher the probability that the migration strategy fails and the migrant becomes trapped in a trafficking situation. It is more likely that vulnerable girls already have a connection abroad (84 per cent), one that might serve as a success model (94 per cent). A success story is a pull factor for migration. It is not just an acquaintance working abroad, but someone who the vulnerable girls view as a successful migrant.

Any job abroad is seen as satisfactory. Any migration option is considered better than staying in Romania. The vulnerable girl would be tempted to leave without any arrangements, and to take all risks involved. It is not what they do abroad that is important, but rather the money they can make. Their preference for low wage jobs might be explained by their awareness of their own limitations. The fact that they did name a few jobs requiring higher skills can be explained through their association of such jobs with better earnings, or may result from their lack of information about employment realities abroad. This whole perspective is a factor that raises their vulnerability to trafficking.

> *"I do not believe they really know [what job they will have abroad]. I know many cases (…). They leave without any arrangements and they try to find something there. It is all right." [girl, A., Pascani]*

> *"If one is desperate and needs money, one is willing to do any job. Well, maybe I would not work as a dancing girl or anything similar, but I would do any decent job that would not make me feel ashamed." [girl, D., Sighisoara]"*

Parents are informed about the jobs their daughters might access abroad. They mainly named low wage jobs such as babysitters, nurses, and waitresses. However, some of the parents seem to have higher expectations from their girls if they are to leave; they would like them to be journalists, public notaries, or vets. This might be the result of a preference for naming jobs involving a higher status, or because the interviewed parents have not paid much attention to migration details. Information about what a girl should do in order to manage abroad is rather scarce. Parents indicate language skills as a primary condition to succeed.

Another push factor is the parents' desire that their girls leave to work abroad. The family might induce the girl to migrate by constantly telling her about how other girls have managed to make a living working abroad. Not only abusive family environments influence the girls' decisions to leave, but non-abusive parents thinking that migration is a viable strategy to succeed in life.

> *"Even though I know very well that I can face the same dangers here as abroad, I am afraid to leave. For years, my mother has been telling me to go and work abroad as a babysitter but I do not want to go. (…) My mother is always telling me: "Look, I have some colleagues who went abroad to make money."[girl, A., Sighisoara]*

The group of vulnerable girls included a higher percentage of individuals declaring to have been contacted by someone from abroad (42 per cent), and that they have decided (52 per cent) or are about to make a positive decision to go abroad in the short term (33 per cent).

Table 19
Migration experience and vulnerability

Has someone abroad proposed you to go to work abroad?

Base: respondents who have a close friend / relative who left to work abroad (619)	All sample	**Vulnerable group**
Yes	28	**42**
No	72	**58**

If "yes", have you considered accepting or rejecting the job offer?

Base: respondents who had a proposal to go to work abroad (174)	All sample	Vulnerable group
I have been thinking about accepting it	42	**52**
I have been thinking about rejecting it	35	**16**
I have thought it over but I have not yet reached a conclusion	21	**33**

Source: IMAS, 2003

The mothers participating in the focus groups elaborated on three main reasons for leaving abroad to work: first, they showed a strong tendency to blame the system; secondly, they spoke of the girls' desire to prove that they can manage by themselves; and thirdly, they pointed to the youths' naivety or lack of responsibility. It is the victim who is usually blamed when things go wrong and when the girls end up recruited for prostitution. These considerations are further analysed below.

Parents of vulnerable girls see Romania as a country where opportunities to succeed do not exist. The lack of jobs, the low wages, the consideration that education cannot serve the purpose of achieving higher status and income, the catch-22 of having on-the-job/professional experience as a pre-condition to get a job, the extreme poverty yielding the highly pessimistic outlook of a starving Romania, have all been identified as factors shaping the girls' decision to seek employment abroad.

Moreover, foreign lands are perceived by parents and daughters alike as places where such hardships and scarcity are absent, and where the youth have more opportunities. Directly or indirectly, there is encouragement by parents that their children should leave the country, either because of personal feelings of frustration and deprivation, or because of the perception of successful migrants as role models to be followed.

> *"There are almost no possibilities for a young woman to succeed in this town. There are few companies here and the wages are extremely low, especially for those girls without a university*

degree. Even those with a college degree find it difficult to get a job here." [parent, I., Sighisoara]

"My daughter knows some girls who went abroad and worked there for about 6 months up to a period of 1 year. Twenty years would not have been enough for them to earn here the amount of money that they made over there in only one year." [parent, L., Bucuresti]

"It is because of the lack of money and because they cannot find a job here that they leave. They have no experience, so nobody hires them. They are not paid enough so they move on, trying to solve their problems abroad". [parent, E., Pascani]

The attitude lacking hope, which regards Romania as a place where youths cannot possibly have a future, and the perception of the country as an insecure environment, leads to nostalgic statements about the ex-communist regime. Parents resort easily to the common pattern of blaming the state for the situation.

"It is unacceptable that the youth should wish to leave and work abroad, in no matter what trade, and to have to disregard their professional training or their choice for a profession. It is intolerable that they should have to go there and nurse for others. The state should get involved, to regulate this situation and provide some jobs in the country for all girls, irrespective of what their level of education may be. Why should the girls have to go abroad in order to manage by themselves and to be able to support a family? (...) 30, 25 or 27 years ago when we got married, one had the possibility of getting a job; one could make it through the day and even make plans for the months to come. Now, one cannot even make both ends meet, so it is normal for the young people to wish to leave. They realize they have no job therefore no possibility to contribute with some money to the household's daily necessities. (...) This is the naked truth; the youngsters leave because the state does not provide jobs for them in the country where they were born and where they studied." [parent, M., Sighisoara]

Parents consider that the girls' wish to be independent and to manage on their own might be another reason for their decision to emigrate. This supports a conclusion drawn previously, regarding the high ranking of such values in the vulnerable girls' personal scale of values.

> *"They want to prove that they can manage on their own abroad. Here they kind of depend on us, and they want to prove to us that they can provide for themselves. We tell them they will not be able to manage abroad but they would reply: 'But I will!'"* *[parent, E, Sighisoara]*

When referring to trafficking situations, parents mainly blame the victim. Failures are deemed to be caused mainly by the girl's irresponsible actions, by her refusal to listen to her parents, or by her inappropriate choice of models of success. It is her credulity and lack of experience that makes her fail in avoiding the recruiter.

> *"They are easily tricked, they copy the others' behaviour and they do not listen to their parents. I am aware of a few cases when parents tried hard to convince them that they were wrong, but they just wouldn't understand. They leave without their parents' permission and only later, when they come back, do they realize that they were wrong."* *[parent, M., Pascani]*

5.3.4. Mobility culture and socialization

In terms of experience and contact with a foreign country, the data shows that there is no difference between vulnerable and non-vulnerable girls. They have the same level of experience, no matter their purpose for travelling abroad.

Table 20
Migration experience and vulnerability

Have you ever been abroad? (Multiple answers)

	All sample	Vulnerable group
Yes, for work	2	2
Yes, for study	1	2
Yes, for tourism	7	9
Yes, to visit relatives	3	4
No	87	78

Source: IMAS, 2003

The socialization of children within the family environment is very important for the decisions they will make once they grow up. This is why it is worth studying what the parents of the vulnerable girls consider good or bad for their children as far as children's decisions are concerned. It seems that vulnerable girls are not encouraged to stay, but are rather encouraged to leave their place of origin, not just their family but also their native region and country.

There are more parents of vulnerable girls than there are parents of "average girls" that do the following: encourage their daughters to find a job abroad (48 per cent); encourage daughters to get married abroad (34 per cent); or discourage them from staying in the region (45 per cent) or locality (78 per cent). There is also a culture of mobility within the families of vulnerable girls, which can function as a model or even as a push factor. It is interesting to note, however, that when compared with the average household, families with vulnerable girls are more inclined to say that children should study (25 per cent as compared with 19 per cent) and take care of their health (9 per cent as compared with 5 per cent).

Table 21
Mobility culture and vulnerability

Which of the following is better for your daughter to do?

		All sample	Vulnerable group
Find a job in this very region	It would be good for her to do this	55	**44**
	It would not be good for her to do this	38	**45**
Complete her education	It would be good for her to do this	84	**85**
	It would not be good for her to do this	8	**3**
Find a job in another region of Romania	It would be good for her to do this	43	**38**
	It would not be good for her to do this	49	**52**
Find a job abroad	It would be good for her to do this	37	**48**
	It would not be good for her to do this	47	**44**
Get married in Romania.	It would be good for her to do this	55	**46**
	It would not be good for her to do this	32	**34**
Get married abroad	It would be good for her to do this	19	**34**
	It would not be good for her to do this	67	**48**
Stay with us here	It would be good for her to do this	29	**18**
	It would not be good for her to do this	62	**78**

Source: IMAS, 2003

Having relatives that have worked abroad can have a significant effect on the girls' decision to migrate. Successful migration experiences contribute to the formation of positive expectations related to Western countries and acting as a pull factor. The hypothesis that the vulnerability rate is enhanced in a family with a mobility culture is supported by data concerning the respective households' history of migration. For instance, in households with vulnerable girls, it is more likely that one member of the household should have worked abroad

since 1990 (21 percent for vulnerable group, and 13 percent for the average group). Even where there is no statistical difference as regards the experience of moving to another region, there are differences as regards the quality/ frequency of such movements. For example, there are more households with vulnerable girls that have moved 4 times or more (18 percent versus 5 percent). Also, the data on migration plans shows that households with vulnerable girls are more prone than the average household to move to a different region or country in the next five years.

Former mobility experience, as well as having a relative located in a foreign country, can be important factors for parents to accept as valid the option that their children worked abroad. Focus groups revealed that they would resort to kinship networks to make arrangements for safe travel and for lodging abroad. The existence of such contacts is considered a protection factor for the girl intending to leave. However, parents' consistent indication of migration as the best option increases the daughters' vulnerability, especially in combination with other factors.

5.4. Trafficking awareness

5.4.1. Common representations about trafficking in human beings

There are insignificant differences between the target group and the average sample households with respect to their awareness of trafficking in human beings when referring only to forced labour or low wages. The data reveals, however, that parents of vulnerable girls are more aware of cases of trafficking in women. The main source of information seems to be the media, as it is for the average households as well. There is a higher percentage of parents of vulnerable girls who have a better understanding of trafficking in women (79 percent for vulnerable, 75 percent for all sample). When asked about the causes of trafficking, most of the parents of vulnerable girls tended to blame the system, the poverty in Romania, the lack of money (56 percent for vulnerable, 51 percent for all sample), or the lack of employment opportunities. The same parents tended also to blame the victim more than did the parents in the average

household (10 percent for the vulnerable group, 6 percent for all sample).

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Table 22
Awareness and opinions about trafficking in women

</div>

Why do you think these trafficked girls ended up in this situation?

Base: total sample (854)	Parents' perspective		Girls' perspective	
	All sample	Vulnerable group	All sample	Vulnerable group
Poverty, lack of money	51	**56**	41	**38**
Education, family problems	15	**9**	7	**4**
Naivety, trust in strangers	11	**10**	17	**20**
Stupidity, irresponsibility	6	**10**	4	**3**
They had it coming	3	**2**	2	**2**

Which of the following statements best explains trafficking in women?

Base: total sample (854)	Parents perspective		Girls perspective	
	All sample	Vulnerable group	All sample	Vulnerable group
Women who are prostitutes abroad	6	**8**	3	**6**
Woman who are in the contraband business	2	**2**	2	**3**
Women sold abroad and forced to become prostitutes	75	**79**	84	**84**
Women who go abroad to work	7	**4**	7	**7**

Source: IMAS, 2003

To investigate parents' awareness of the risks implied by the youth' decision to work abroad, the research used the description of a migration strategy involving a three-stage process: the stage preceding the actual journey and involving the identification of intermediaries; the actual movement; and the arrival in the destination country. The parents of vulnerable girls are mainly aware of the risks involved in the first and

last stages, and it is in these two stages that they consider the girls to be vulnerable to traffickers: easy to deceive and unable to control disrupting unplanned events. The parents identified the following as the problems most likely to be encountered by the girls: aggression, kidnapping, rape, forced prostitution, and breach of contract by intermediary companies. There is a lower awareness of risks that could appear during the journey. In the travel stage, parents are mainly afraid of travel accidents.

> *"There is the risk that she is promised to be hired as a waitress in a bar or in a restauran,t while she will actually be sold for prostitution." [parent, E., Pascani]*

> *"I am afraid of those companies promising to provide contracts for working abroad as entertainers, or even as nurses or waitresses, while they actually recruit girls for prostitution. They have not become prostitutes on their own free will. That is what I am afraid of." [parent, A., Bucuresti]*

> *"She might be lied to, recruited and forced to do something against her will. She might not have the possibility to provide for herself unless she finds a job (...) I think there is a high risk for a girl to take a train or a bus and to seek a job abroad. One never knows where you have really arrived, what kind of people are around you, and what you may find over there." [parent, M., Sighisoara]*

There is a contrast between parents of vulnerable girls and their children as far as their awareness of trafficking is concerned. As discussed earlier, the parents of vulnerable girls are more aware of trafficking in human beings than the average parents. But in the case of vulnerable girls, the data reveals the opposite. Vulnerable girls reported less awareness about trafficking in human beings than the average girls, but the perception of reasons as to why some women become victims of trafficking is not different between vulnerable girls and the average sample. Again, in contrast with their parents, vulnerable girls are more likely than the average to have difficulties in defining or recognizing trafficking. Six per cent of the vulnerable girls defined trafficked women as "women who become prostitutes abroad" and 3 per cent as "women who are in

the contraband business", as compared to only 3 per cent and 2 per cent of the average girls group.

It is interesting to note however that the focus group findings show that vulnerable girls are very informed about migration risks. The same set of questions referring to the three migration stages was used to interview the vulnerable women. As in the case of the parents, they are more aware of the risks in the period preceding the departure and upon arrival in the destination country than they are regarding the problems that might arise during the journey. The risks identified include: being lied to by intermediaries; being kidnapped and taken to a different destination than the one chosen initially; being sold and forced to become prostitutes; being held against one's will while having one's passports taken by the employers; getting paid below expectations or below initial agreements; and being cheated and deceived by the very acquaintances one had trusted. During the journey, they are mostly afraid of accidents. Their awareness of risks deriving from resorting to an informal network can act as a protection factor. But again, it is interesting to note that although they know of the risks, the girls still want to leave by resorting to the same channels and means. They may deliberately avoid considering these issues in order to be able to stick to the initial decision to leave.

> *"She might not even have her passport anymore. It might be taken from her when she gets there. Somebody else hires her and holds her passport. She will by no means be allowed to keep it". [Girl, A., Pascani]*

> *"There is a risk that you will be forced to do something they want you to do. (...) Although you have lost your money while travelling you do not need to resort to just any job when you get there. It is different, however, if they have taken all your money and they forced you to work for them. You have no choice unless you manage to escape. I have seen it on TV. It has never happened to me. I have seen quite a lot of cases. They would not give them food and water and they were physically abused. They took their money and identity papers. They were locked in a room and forbidden to return home." [Girl, O., Sighisoara]*

"Misinformed means that a person living abroad promised you that you would be taken there and you believed her or him. You suddenly realize that you arrived at a place that is totally different than the promised one, because you have been lied to". [Girl, M. Bucuresti]

"I cannot understand this. How is it possible to buy a ticket to go to a certain country and to find yourself in a totally different place? I cannot imagine the risks involved; maybe it is just a matter related to identity papers." [Girl, O., Sighisoara]

"She might be followed. Although she planned on doing a specific job abroad, they might force her to do something else, to take a totally different job. Should she wish to come back they will not allow it, especially if they make good money on her. They are afraid the police might find out and that their business would be ruined." [girl, P., Pascani]

5.4.2. Perceived profile of the trafficker

The trafficker is perceived most often as a young, rich, unmarried, good-looking, male stranger. Vulnerable girls, however, sometimes perceive the trafficker differently than the average girls. They believe he or she is poor (26 per cent) and married (36 per cent) They also have a higher tendency to believe that the trafficker is a good-looking male (60 percent of the vulnerable group versus 53.3 percent of the total sample). Should a trafficker not match this typical profile, the risks for the vulnerable girl to accept a job offer will increase.

Figure 1
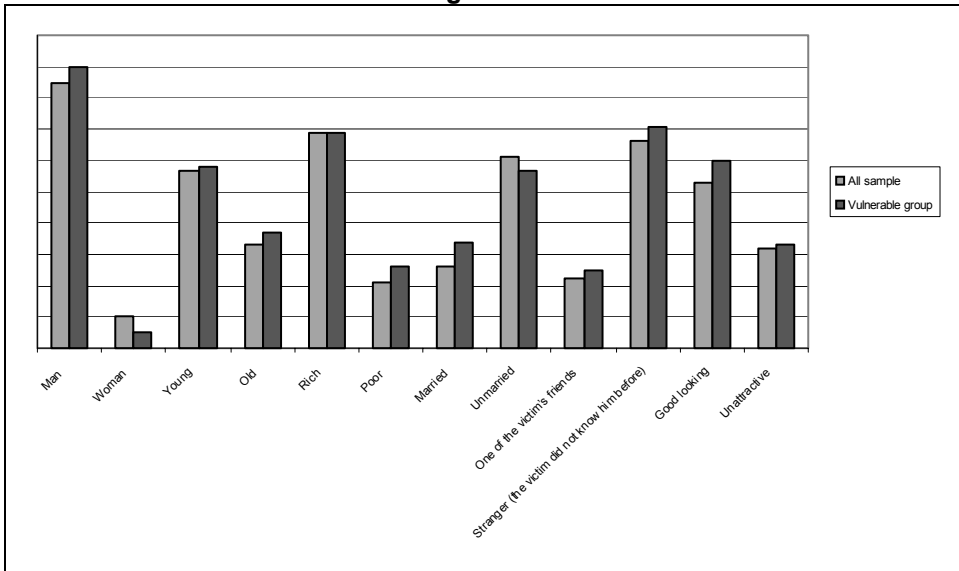
Trafficking networks have recently become increasingly flexible, managing to adapt to various situations and changing faces to adjust to the different possible routes, depending on the agents available. Their decentralized nature allows them to rapidly respond to law enforcement measures and possible competitors (Van Impe, 2000). Also, it would be erroneous to consider trafficking as being related to organized crime alone. Surely, most trafficking networks do belong to international criminal syndicates. However, individual perpetrators can also be important agents (Skeldon, 2000).

The trafficker may be a young handsome boy, according to the "boyfriend scenario" (Popov, 2002, in Zimic, 2003), or a woman appearing trustworthy, especially because of the gender biased perception. It is actually a fact that victims of trafficking can become traffickers themselves in order to escape from forced prostitution (IOM, 2000). The victim's profile determines the trafficker's profile. Thus, traffickers may use a legal facade, such as a marriage agency, or a travelling or modelling agency. Others resort to more informal means: the girl is contacted and offered help by a relative, a friend or an acquaintance, and enticed with attracting stories about opportunities abroad.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Trafficking in women is just a side effect of migration. When people have a strong desire to leave their country because they feel they have no opportunities at home, when finding new opportunities across the border is difficult due to the absence of formal channels or due to restrictive migration legislation, they run the risk to get caught in the greedy hands of traffickers.

Migration is about push and pull factors, but these factors can act in a variety of ways. When push factors are strong, it is likely that individuals will choose any possible means to leave their community/ family. Abusive parents and poverty-laden environments could lead young women to accept any job offer irrespective of the risks involved.
The scheme below captures the main findings of this study.
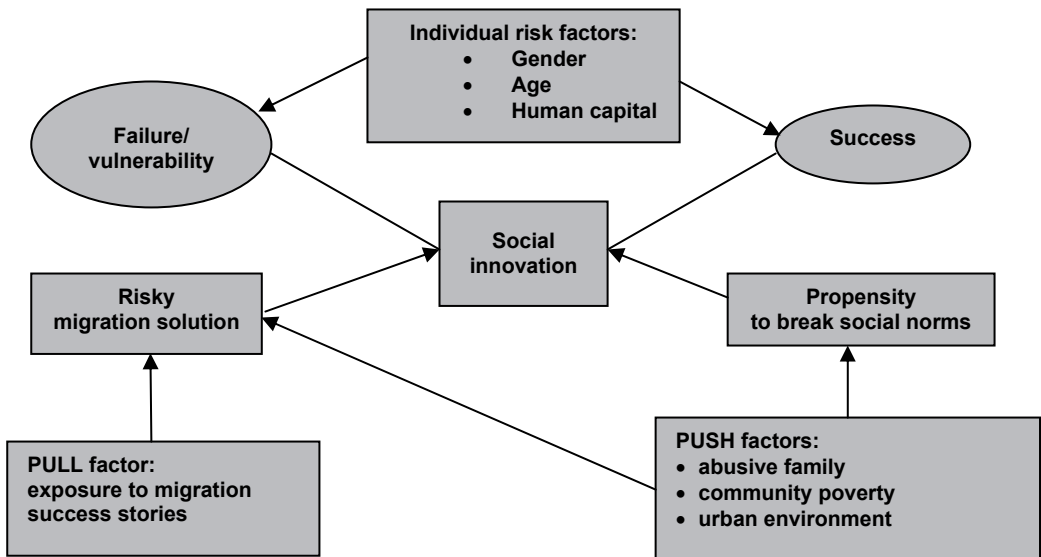
Pull factors can also mould people's desire to migrate in strange ways. Exposure to migration success stories can mislead new migrants: they tend to consider the outcome (successful return, possession of the means to build a house or to buy a fancy car) and to ignore other aspects. Overall, young women are willing to take the risk thinking that "it

cannot be worse than it is now". They could be considered social innovators because in fact they are in search of solutions to escape from a hostile environment. The solutions are not always in accordance with society's definition of legitimate means, but they are solutions nevertheless and sometimes even highly innovative ones.

Some social innovators succeed; some others fail. It is not just a matter of luck. Why male migrants have better chances than women migrants? It could be that there is a gender discriminative setting and also that women are more vulnerable than men. They could be kidnapped or forced into slavery and they usually do not have the resources or stamina to withstand such adversities. They are often socialized to accept hardship and male domination. Data evidences the mobility culture as an important determinant element in a migration decision: young people are encouraged to find their way to success outside their community or even outside their country, irrespective of how they manage to achieve their goals.

It is not only gender that makes people vulnerable to trafficking in human beings. It is also the age. Young women are more inexperienced in dealing with difficult social encounters. They sometimes trust people they should not trust; they sometimes believe new stories they never heard before. Women above 25 are less likely to become victims as they might have their own families – children and husbands, and this is a strong social integration factor. Education and other cultural assets acquired through socialization play an important role in determining the success or failure of migration actions. Women that are more educated are more able to decode and discriminate different signals from the environment. They can understand risk better and they can protect themselves better using institutions and formal channels. They would have enough information to begin with to assess risks and chances and to recognize deceivers.

All in all push and pull factors are basically determining the decision to migrate, but individual characteristics are crucial in the carrying out of a migration cycle. Social and environmental factors can interfere with each and every individual characteristic and determine the rate of success or failure of the migration action.

APPENDIX

Research methodology

1. Quantitative survey

Research organization	The Institute for Marketing and Polling (IMAS) Bucharest	
Timeframe	8-17 May 2003	
Methodology	Structured questionnaire	
Sample	Nationwide representative sample 854 interviews	
Applied only in households with at least one unmarried daughter aged 15-25 year and living with the family.	The Parent Questionnaire	• 823 mothers, 6 stepmothers, 1 foster mother, 8 grandmothers, 2 aunts. • 11 fathers, 1 stepfather and 2 grandfathers
	The Daughter Questionnaire	Unmarried girls aged between 15 and 25 years and belonging to the same family
Operators	90 female field operators from the IMAS permanent network Trained and experienced in face-to-face interviewing.	
Quality control		
The regional supervisors and the personnel of the Field Operations Department of IMAS directly checked the quality of 80% of the interviews.		
The quality control procedure included the verification of:	• The fact that the interview took place and that its main sections were filed in • The accuracy of the sampling procedure • The fact that the main series of questions were asked • The interview duration • The general impression of the respondent about the operator • The respondent's comments on the questionnaire	

Non-response	9%
The most frequent reasons for non-responses were:	- Lack of time - Not interested in polls - General suspicion concerning the use of polls and especially about their confidentiality - Events in the family prevented participation
Note	*15 interviews made in Buhusi, county of Bacau, were annulled because of a misjudgement of the selection conditions. Those interviews were redone.*
Selection of sample	
The list of localities and sample points was established in coordination with IOM.	
Operators applied steps 1 and 2 in the given sample to identify the households where both Parent and Daughter questionnaires could be applied.	1. If the questionnaires cannot be applied in the next household, the operator will proceed to find a household where both questionnaires can be applied. 2. If the questionnaires can be applied in the next household, the operator will continue.
Notes on the survey instrument and application:	*The respondents understood all the questions, but it was necessary for interviewers to persuade the respondents of the necessity to discuss their answers in private and without pauses between interviews.* *During the interview, the presence of any person from the same household who had been interviewed already, or was to be interviewed, was not permitted. This condition was particularly difficult to be met in a number of cases.*

Sample structure by region, county and town/village

Region	County/ Bucharest District	Town/Village		Number of interviews	%
BANAT	Caras-Severin	Village	VALIUG	12	1.4
		Town	CARANSEBES	11	1.3
	Timis	Town	TIMISOARA	11	1.3
	Total			**34**	**4**

CRISANA-MARAMURES	Arad	Village	COVASINT	16	1.9
		Town	ARAD	11	1.3
	Satu-Mare	Village	CAUAS	15	1.8
		Town	SATU MARE	12	1.4
		Town	CAREI	12	1.4
	Total			**66**	**7.7**
DOBROGEA	Constanta	Town	CONSTANTA	12	1.4
	Tulcea	Village	IZVOARELE	11	1.3
		Town	TULCEA	12	1.4
	Total			**35**	**4.1**
MOLDOVA	Bacau	Village	SASCUT	14	1.6
		Town	BACAU	13	1.5
		Town	ONESTI	10	1.2
		Town	BUHUSI	15	1.8
	Botosani	Village	VARFU CAMPULUI	14	1.6
		Town	BOTOSANI	13	1.5
	Galati	Village	MASTACANI	14	1.6
		Town	GALATI	12	1.4
	Iasi	Village	PLUGARI	14	1.6
		Village	PODU ILOAIEI	14	1.6
		Town	IASI	13	1.5
	Neamt	Village	DULCESTI	14	1.6
		Town	PIATRA NEAMT	12	1.4
		Town	ROMAN	12	1.4
	Suceava	Village	BOGDANESTI	14	1.6
		Town	SUCEAVA	12	1.4
	Vaslui	Village	SULETEA	14	1.6
		Town	BARLAD	12	1.4
	Vrancea	Village	CORBITA	15	1.8
		Village	MERA	14	1.6
	Total			**265**	**31**

Sample structure by region, county and town/village

Region	County/ Bucharest district	Town/Village		Number of interviews	%
MUNTENIA	Arges	Village	UDA	12	1.4
		Town	PITESTI	14	1.6
	Buzau	Village	GREBANU	12	1.4
		Town	BUZAU	14	1.6
	Calarasi	Village	UNIREA	12	1.4
		Town	CALARASI	11	1.3
	Dâmbovita	Village	BRANISTEA	12	1.4
		Town	GAESTI	12	1.4
	Ialomita	Village	VALEA CIORII	5	0.6
		Town	SLOBOZIA	11	1.3
	Teleorman	Village	TALPA	13	1.5
	TOTAL			**128**	**15**
OLTENIA	Dolj	Village	CASTRANOVA	13	1.5
		Town	CRAIOVA	15	1.8
	Olt	Village	ICOANA	13	1.5
		Town	SLATINA	11	1.3
	Vâlcea	Village	BERISLAVESTI	12	1.4
		Town	DRAGASANI	11	1.3
	TOTAL			**75**	**8.8**
TRANSILVANIA	Alba	Village	BISTRA	12	1.4
		Town	ALBA IULIA	17	2
	Bistrita	Village	MONOR	14	1.6
		Town	BECLEAN	12	1.4
	Brasov	Village	MAIERUS	13	1.5
		Town	BRASOV	17	2
	Cluj	Town	CLUJ-NAPOCA	17	2
	Covasna	Village	POIAN	13	1.5
		Town	SF.GHEORGHE	16	1.9
	Mures	Town	IERNUT	13	1.5
	TOTAL			**144**	**16.9**

BUCURESTI	Ilfov	Village	BERCENI	14	1.6
	Bucuresti	Town	SECTOR 1-6	93	10.9
	TOTAL			**107**	**12.5**
TOTAL				**854**	**100**

Sample structure by region and urban/rural breakdown

Region	Urban/Rural	Number of interviews	%
BANAT	Rural	12	1.4
	Urban	22	2.6
	Total	**34**	**4.0**
CRISANA-MARAMURES	Rural	31	3.6
	Urban	35	4.1
	Total	**66**	**7.7**
DOBROGEA	Rural	11	1.3
	Urban	24	2.8
	Total	**35**	**4.1**
MOLDOVA	Rural	141	16.5
	Urban	124	14.5
	Total	**265**	**31.0**
MUNTENIA	Rural	66	7.7
	Urban	62	7.3
	Total	**128**	**15.0**
OLTENIA	Rural	38	4.4
	Urban	37	4.3
	Total	**75**	**8.8**
TRANSILVANIA	Rural	52	6.1
	Urban	92	10.8
	Total	**144**	**16.9**
BUCURESTI	Rural	14	1.6
	Urban	93	10.9
	Total	**107**	**12.5**

TOTAL	Rural	365	42.7
	Urban	489	57.3
	TOTAL	**854**	**100.0**

2. Qualitative research

Research organization	Centre for Opinion and Market Analysis (CSOP) Bucharest
Timeframe	1-7 August 2003
Methodology	Focus groups
Locations	
• Cities between 30,000 and 100,000 inhabitants	1. Sighisoara: 2 focus groups 2. Pascani: 2 focus groups
• Other	3. Bucharest: 4 focus groups
Respondents	
64 respondents selected based on the quantitative research	• **Girls** identified as vulnerable to trafficking in human beings • **Mothers** of daughters identified as vulnerable to trafficking in human beings
Pascani 2 focus groups	**Female high school students** Age: 15-18 Group size: 8
	Mothers Age: 37-54 Group size: 8
Sighisoara 2 focus groups	**Unmarried girls** Age: 20-23 Group size: 8

	Mothers Age: 40-56 Group size: 8
Bucharest 4 focus groups	**Female high school students** Age: 15-18 Group size: 8
	Mothers Age: 37-50 Group size: 8

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Could anybody become a victim of trafficking? Is just any woman a potential victim of trafficking in human beings? Is a woman as vulnerable as the next one?

This report assesses the vulnerability of young Romanian women to trafficking and their awareness of it, as well as the level of awareness among family members. The number of young Romanian women at risk is between 6-12 per cent of the total population of 15-25 years old girls living with their families. Vulnerable girls come from single-parent families living in medium-sized towns in regions in Romania such as Transilvania and Moldova. Vulnerability of young Romanian women to trafficking in human beings is shaped by a strong desire to seek opportunities abroad. It also comes from a propensity to break official and informal rules - these girls are rather independent and risk-takers, able to cope with uncertainty. They do not feel close to their family and do not believe that the family is the most important thing in one's life. They also do not value education and tend to think that money would justify the acceptance of any job. They display a lower than average trust in public institutions, although the Church, the media and the school remain at the top of the most trusted institutions.

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