

## HUMAN SECURITY IN SOCIAL MEDIA - JUST A CLICK AWAY -

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### Abstract

*Social media or communication systems from online environment are trendy, whether we are talking about the phenomenon “Facebook”, “Twitter”, “Instagram” or communication via e-mail, “chat”, “video chat” or any other existing online communication platform. It's a trend, and if you want to have an active social life you must be connected at these platforms. When used incorrectly, Social Media becomes the best market for recruitment of victims of human trafficking, one that has no borders, is not limited by geographical location, nationality or culture. Whether we like it or not, Social media is part of a great ocean of information where more controversial information can be found in the virtual realm and used in a symbiotic, demonic like feature, called the Deep Web, which we'll detail in what follows.*

**Key words:** *online security, social media, human trafficking, recruitment techniques, Internet*

### Introduction

*We live in a world where everything is just a click away. You can have instant communication via a simple click, you can have access to all the information you need through a simple click and you can stay connected with your friends through a simple click. It is that easy!*

*It is also equally easy for criminals, operating in online environments, to purposely commit offences, all through a simple click. This can be viewed a "the other side of the coin" in terms of the use of new technologies. Criminals can have instant communication with victims through a simple click, they can access vital information through a simple click and they can connect to security systems through a simple click. We could say that they are just one click away from the lives of future victims.*

**George-Marius Șinca**  
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*All these systems with full access to information provide new opportunity to traffickers who are willing to exploit those willing to give their information. Traffickers are becoming more and more effective each day, using advances in technology to become more efficient and therefore becoming a greater predator.*

**The definition of human trafficking**

According to the Convention of the Council of Europe on The Fight Against Trafficking in human beings, article 4 (a) The “*Expression human trafficking*” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, lodging or receipt of persons, by threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, deceit, abuse of authority or of a position of vulnerability, or by offering or accepting payment or benefits to obtain the consent of a person having authority over another person for purposes of exploitation.

*Exploitation shall include, at least, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to it, the taking of organs;*

*(c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, lodging or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in human beings” even if it doesn't involve any of the means set forth in paragraph (a) of this article;<sup>1</sup>*

When we talk about trafficking in human beings we use terms such as human trafficking or slavery.

We find these definitions in the Romanian Penal Code in CHAPTER VII, *Traffic and exploitation of vulnerable people*.

Kevin Bales, in his book “*Ending Slavery: How We Free Today's Slaves*”, “describes the traffic of human beings as having three main features “*control through violence, economic exploitation and loss of the will.*”<sup>2</sup> in other words, human trafficking is making a person do something against their will in order to make profit and to win something out of it.

**I. Types of trafficking in human beings**

As a typology, trafficking in human beings is structured according to the method of exploitation used.

According to The New Criminal Code updated in 2015 - Law 286/2009 in Romania “*exploiting a person means:*

- a) submission to the execution of a work or performance of services, forcibly;*
- b) keeping in a state of slavery or other similar deprivation of liberty or servitude;*
- c) forcing into prostitution, pornographic manifestations in the production and dissemination of pornographic materials or other forms of sexual exploitation;*
- d) compelling to practice begging;*
- e) sampling of organs, tissues or cells of human origin, unlawfully.”<sup>3</sup>*

*Forced prostitution*

In this case the main victims are women or children who are forced into prostitution. They are constrained to prostitution through various techniques, including kidnapping, being the ideal partner (*where partner is faking love only to be able to manipulate the victim*), family betrayal or offering fake jobs.

Once the victim's will is broken, they are introduced into both national and international prostitution networks. Victims can be forced to maintain relationships with 5-50 clients a day. Many victims end up having a very short life due to the violence they are forced to endure, sexually transmitted diseases or other crimes.

*Forced marriage*

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<sup>1</sup> Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, 2005, Art 4, a,c;

<sup>2</sup> Bales, K., *Ending Slavery: How We Free Today's Slaves*, „University of California” Press, London England, 2007;

<sup>3</sup> The New Penal Code updated in 2015 – Law 286/2009, CHAPER III, Common provizion Art. 182;

**HUMAN SECURITY IN SOCIAL MEDIA**  
**- JUST A CLICK AWAY -**

- a) a particular person is promised or given in marriage without consent or and without having the right to refuse, in exchange for a payment in money or payment to the parents, guardian, family or any other person, or another group of people;
- b) the partner, family or the clan have right to succumb to another person, whether for payment or for a title or any other way;
- c) the woman, upon the death of her husband, may be transmitted to other person;
- d) any institution or practice by which a child or a teenager, who is less than 18 years of age, is given away by one or both parents or their guardian to another person, in exchange for money or not, with the purpose of exploitation of the child or the adolescent or the work done by him.<sup>4</sup>

*Forced labour*

The International Labour Organisation Convention (ILO) No. 29 defines forced labor as “any work or service which is claimed to be from any person, under threat of punishment and for which the person has not been volunteered”.<sup>5</sup>

Here we are talking about any kind of work or service that a person must perform under threat, without being paid adequately, or even at all.

Most often traffickers will use debt bondage and violence in order to keep people enslaved. Debts are formed when a trafficker tells a person how much food, clothing and shelter costs for the victim. Victims are then forced to work to pay this amount back. Of course the debt

Domestic labour is also a form of enslavement. The victim is promised the opportunity to work or study broad but ultimately ends up without anything. Rather she is forced to work long hours and most often hidden from the eyes of the world, thus rendering it more difficult for them to escape.

*Begging*

This is very well organized and the victims are required to obtain a certain amount of money that they must have by the end of the day in exchange of food, clothes and maybe the right to life.

Children are mostly illiterate. The money that a beggar makes, end up in the pockets of their boss heads or trafficker.

*Organ harvesting*

In this case, the person undergoes an organ removal operation against his/her own will, or sometimes without even realizing it. One or more organs are taken then sold on the black market to the one that offers the best price. Following this operation, the victim either can survive or not. The victim does not receive money.

*Other*

As mentioned in the beginning, organised crime cannot be readily classified and traffickers are always inventive and continually creating other ways for work to bring profit. Here enter all “others”.

And so we have trafficking pregnant women and surrogate mothers, child trafficking for the purpose of illegal adoptions, the use of children as soldiers.

For example, it has been heard about a children's farm, where girls are forced to remain pregnant, and when the child is born, the child is taken away and given for adoption. Adoptive parents don't have the slightest idea of where the baby actually came.

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<sup>4</sup> Mihaela Vidaicu, Igor Dolea, *Fighting human trafficking (Cours: Material and procedural right)*, „Nova Imprim, Chişinău” Publishing House, 2009, p.29;

<sup>5</sup> Proiect BRISEIS, <http://naoatrafico.pt/ro/>, accessed today 16.11.2015;

## **I. Recruitment techniques**

Knowing the major types of trafficking in human beings we now can enter into a study on recruitment techniques used by traffickers.

### *1. "Loverboy"*

The Loverboy is one of the most widely used techniques. A charming young man shows interest in a certain young girl, usually a minor, in order to seduce and to bring her into prostitution networks. He will do so by putting pressure on the girl, her family and friends (through the girl), and controlling her so that she will listen only to what he dictates to her. Loverboys are trying to monopolize mainly young teenage girls as it is the period in which they are trying to discover themselves and want to make their own decisions. Loverboys are predators and have good connections with the underworld, but also some key relationships in local authority structures. They present themselves to future victims as the ideal partner, through techniques of manipulation and control. The victims will actually fall in love with this character without realizing they are controlling them. Eventually he will invoke a financial problem that can be resolved only if she maintains sexual relations with another man for a small sum of money. For the girl that means to save the love of her life by surrendering herself and make that sacred sacrifice. Note that the victim is usually not at an age that has reached maturity, does not have clearly defined discernment in regards to human relationships, especially involving sexual relations and emotions. In this case, the victim processes all experience through the spectrum of the adolescent emotions that would lead to supreme sacrificial acts to save partners from problems, but for him is just a business.

#### *The "loverboy" technique*

The Loverboy is operating through certain techniques. Imagine the impact of the following upon a girl.

They target young girls – Usually, they choose girls who seems more solitary and do not really have confidence in themselves. Every girl dreams of a Prince charming, but when the false Prince reaches them, he fulfils that dream in a surreal manner, unusually having a hidden agenda.

They are attractive - Loverboys have a pleasing appearance and have a nice wardrobe. They seemingly pose as persons to whom these girls can only dream, and when they show up and hit on her, the victim thinks that all her dreams have come true, nothing else matters.

They buy expensive gifts – The "Lovers" have access to an abundance of impressive sums of money as a result of their affairs and use it to make expensive gifts to the girls. It also creates an emotional connection, providing greater credibility to the imagined relationships. Being enchanted by the charm, excitement and the opulence of boyfriends, victims find it hard to relinquish such a man. Without judging the defective system of values of these victims we can conclude that this 'package' offers everything that is perfect and ever wanted.

Expensive life – Loverboys have expensive watches, expensive cars, expensive clothes.

Controlling behaviour – Loverboys intentionally create a co-dependent relationship, one in which only the victim will do anything for them. They make use of the emotions of the girl to control her. She is not mature enough to understand that what is actually happening. What she sees as love is him controlling her.. The victim is very much attached, she needs him, is actually dependent on him but in a wrong way. Because of her young age and emotions, she cannot understand what is going on. So she stays with him, and after a long time in prostitution, feels too ashamed to return to her family, or talk to her friends. He totally controls her. And she is stuck for a long time.

#### **1. Fake jobs**

Everybody has a dream, a dream for a better life. Traffickers prey on this by finding vulnerable people and promising them the world. You see this everyday in countries that are still developing or where work is hard to find. People in poorer countries see (*via the internet*) all that comes with living in the west and dream to have that for themselves and their families

## *HUMAN SECURITY IN SOCIAL MEDIA* *- JUST A CLICK AWAY -*

some day. So they study hard, work hard and do their best. But that is usually not enough.

The traffickers know there are many young people with hopes and dreams, looking for a better a life. So they promise them the world. They promise them a job in a western country and claim to take care of all the details, like getting passports and plane tickets together. “*Don't worry about the cost,*” they say. “*We know how to get things done. You can pay us back when you're working.*”

It is a typical method to promote human trafficking through offers for a job. They also have announcements in local newspapers. Sometimes it's difficult to figure out the real company from the invented one. They make ads for hairstylists, fashion models, housekeepers or others of this kind. These are punishable offences by the Romanian Criminal Law with imprisonment for 1-3 years according to CHAPTER VII - *Traffic and exploitation of vulnerable persons*, Art. 212- *submission to compulsory or forced labour*, and that where there is competition offences.

### 1. Grooming

One of the new crimes facilitated by the digital environment and social media is grooming - a special form of harassment minors online.<sup>6</sup> By this it is meant that the pimp will take care of the minor with the purpose of prostitution. He earns the victims's trust, he shows care, and psychologically manipulates the victim ready for a life of prostitution. The target are girls, usually 11-12 years old, used to be sold for sex. Pimps do not care about these girls, for the trafficker they are just a source of income, they are just a means by which they can obtain status and money. Grooming is part of the actions of the "loverboy" mentioned above.

Victims of the sex industry are mostly young people who run away from home; they are approached within 48 hours on the street since leaving home. These victims are girls and boys who grew up under the influence of domestic abuse. But it is important to know that children from healthy families are also a target. “*Basically no child is safe*”, says the Council of Europe Convention *on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse*, with direct reference to Article 23 - *Solicitation of Children for Sexual Purposes*. This article bothers some existing organizations which lobby for enactment of incest, pornography, necrophilia, etc.

### 1. Family

It's a horrible thought, but it is a sad reality and also present. Many children are trafficked by members of the family or family friends. It's incredible to believe that a person would even sell a family member into the sex industry. Maybe it is a daughter, a wife, a niece or a nephew.

### 2. Social Media

Social media is a new technique used by traffickers. Traffickers are working through networks and the profit generated by this business is enormous, this being a \$32 billion-a-year industry<sup>7</sup>. So traffickers are always looking for new techniques and methods of handling recruitment to attract as many victims and to increase its profits. As the evolution of technology evolves so is how they work and how they improve their methods.

So the Internet is becoming the biggest market for the buying and selling of sexual services. In our own day to buy sex online is as easy as you buy a TV.

Trafficking business is conducted online and on mobile phones.

According to a report from the USC Annenberg Center on Communication Leadership & Policy (CCLP) in the USA, it has been shown that social networks and mobile devices are the primary method of recruitment among minors.

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<sup>6</sup> Ioana, VasIU, Lucian VasIU, *Criminalitatea ăn cyberspațiu*, „Universul Juridic” Publishing House, București, 2011, p.248.

<sup>7</sup> <http://arkofhopeforchildren.org/child-trafficking/child-trafficking-statistics>, accessed today 18.11.2015.

**George-Marius Șinca**  
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According to Ambassador Luis CdeBaca, the U.S. State Department – “*Globalisation and technology offer traffickers the possibility to operate in a way that they could not operate so far. Whether it's for a specific site or other social networks, the pimps can sell online women and children all over the world.*”<sup>8</sup>

### **I. Deep web & dark web**

I start this section with a recommendation not to access an unknown area of your virtual space. If you access portals such as those found in this article then it's at your own risk. All these types of trafficking of human beings are made typically in traditional arrangements listed above, but many aspects of such offences can be found now in the virtual zone, on-line. How? Searching through other means of navigation on the Internet such as Google, Bing, etc. can pull to the surface outlets (small or large quantities) and monopolized market of organized crime groups. We start this section with the recommendation of not accessing unfamiliar areas/sites in virtual space. In case of accessing the portals found in this article, you do it on your own risk.

#### **1. ONION**

If you think about the word „onion” (*from the English language*) not many things come to mind that are related to human trafficking or navigating through the deepest corners of the Internet but at the moment the expression of cybercrime is very common.

To strengthen those described above, I will expose a pattern of many portals **.onion**, which under the name of a search engine directs you to criminal networks of drug trafficking, child pornography, money laundering, one of which <http://auutwvpt25zfyncd.onion/?cat=3>. Of course to have access to sell, buy or investigate the phenomenon, it requires use of secure connections (VPN) and the application Tor/Tails,I2P, freenet, different configurations of connectivity and repeatedly various permits access, of course for your personal protection and the place from which you access these sites, done very carefully as it is a real crime hob where you can become a victim very quickly. These sites are not indexed by search engines such as those already popular as Google, Bing or Yahoo, so they do not occur in a simple search.

Using the Agora network, the so-called “darknet market” through Tor network, dedicated to the sale of different products, both legal and illegal, an incredible underground market is developed that uses as currency and allow Bitcoins and allows payments online almost instantly and of course under a total anonymity when performed correctly. The primary objective of the market is the pharmaceutical and chemicals, but also other categories of existing products as well as human organs or various offers of trafficked human beings in various forms (sexual exploitation, slavery, forced labour, begging, etc.). One of these sites is <https://www.reddit.com/r/agmarketplace>. I offered these examples because they are monitored continuously being found close to the surface of the deepweb, near the tip of the “iceberg”.

#### **1. Tor**

The term Deep Web was launched in 2000 by Mike Bergman and refers to World Wide Web content that is not indexed by standard search engines, such as Google, Yahoo or Bing Search. A lot of information on the internet is hidden in dynamically generated sites, which makes it impossible to accessing them with standard search engines (*some experts are of the opinion that they can access only 1% of all the information that is actually online*). Search engines use „*crawlers*” to find the link on a web page. Thus, if the administrator of a page doesn't want to be found, will not provide a direct link to it. Without the link, the page will not be indexed and will not appear in any search result.<sup>9</sup> Well, here comes Tor<sup>10</sup> named

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<sup>8</sup> Neal Conan, *Amb. CdeBaca Combats Sex Trafficking in U.S.*, „*Talk of the Nation*”, NPR, 2011, <http://www.npr.org/2011/04/28/135808703/amb-cdebaca-combats-sex-trafficking-in-the-u-s>, accessed today 18.11.2015.

<sup>9</sup> Bogdan Cozmescu, [www.monitorulcj.ro](http://www.monitorulcj.ro), “The unseen side of internet. “*Deep web*” – canalizarea rețelei”, [http://www.monitorulcj.ro/actualitate/49649-partea-nevazuta-a-internetului\\_-%E2%80%9EEdEEP-](http://www.monitorulcj.ro/actualitate/49649-partea-nevazuta-a-internetului_-%E2%80%9EEdEEP-)

## *HUMAN SECURITY IN SOCIAL MEDIA - JUST A CLICK AWAY -*

by the National Security Agency (NSA) from United States "*the King strong anonymity and security with low latency*". The securing is so strong because of the process used by the program called "OnionRouting". Surrounded by mystery, is a fancy sketch solution for those wishing to obtain information, material goods or to access the networks of traffickers or whatever else. Say "fancy sketch" because of its dual utility, this tool is rather controversial but used worldwide in excess without a limit or boundary. You can smuggle lots of people on the big black market but at the same time, some of these movements are carefully monitored, with some substantial costs; this is a fact acknowledged even by Memex<sup>11</sup>.

### *1. Memex*

DARPA<sup>12</sup> created Memex with a primary goal to stay at the forefront line in terms trafficked persons. Trafficking of human beings is a factor in most investigations either military, criminal investigations, information gathering with a significant presence in virtual environments to attract customers, comes somewhat like a package; sex sells well with almost anything. Obviously going from the assumption that 100% security does not exist and we can understand that a 100% effective solution for the detection of perpetrators, victims or offenses of the DARK WEB / DEEP WEB does not exist. I tend to think that no matter how much effort it would be made in public by the private sectors to create a secure virtual environment or to ensure a particular virtual environment, the doers, the true cyber hijackers are one step forward, and they have been since the dawn of the Internet.

Of course, this offers an advantage but does not confer the title of winner of the war, improperly said the cyberwar. The struggle accompanied by significant collateral damage and the progress maintained by these two warring sides will continue.

### **I. Statistics**

- At any time, *2.4 millions of people* suffer repercussions of this degrading and humiliating crimes;<sup>13</sup>
- 76% of sex transactions with minor girls take place on the internet;<sup>14</sup>
- According to ILO (*The International Labor Organization*) *1.2 millions of children* are trafficked every year;
  - 20% of the trafficked victims are children;
  - 70% of children victims are sold for sex online;<sup>15</sup>
  - 63% have been sold via Internet at one point during the trafficking;
  - 62% had mobile phone access during the trafficking;
  - 42% had Internet Access during the trafficking.<sup>16</sup>

### *Facebook*

Recruiting through social networks like Facebook, Twitter or other social platforms is a harsh reality today and is a tool so easy to use in the hands of traffickers. All you need is a

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[web%E2%80%9D-%E2%80%93canalizarea-re%C5%A3elei#sthash.hXuZ8kO6.dpbs](#), accessed today 18.11.2015.

<sup>10</sup> TOR, <https://www.torproject.org/>, accessed today 18.11.2015.

<sup>11</sup> MEMEX, <https://www.fbo.gov/utills/view?id=32c351ba7850360e140a29f363819052>, accessed today 18.11.2015.

<sup>12</sup> Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, <http://www.darpa.mil/about-us/about-darpa>, accessed today 18.11.2015.

<sup>13</sup> Yuri Fedotov, head of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime -

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/9185811/2.4-million-victims-of-human-trafficking-worldwide-says-UN.html>, accessed today 18.11.2015.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.f-4-c.org/slavery/facts.asp>, accesat astăzi 18.11.2015. <http://www.f-4-c.org/slavery/facts.asp>, accessed today 18.11.2015.

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/25/sex-trafficking-in-the-us\\_n\\_5621481.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/25/sex-trafficking-in-the-us_n_5621481.html), accessed today 18.11.2015.

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.wearethorn.org/child-trafficking-statistics/>, accessed today 18.11.2015.



*George-Marius Șinca*  
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computer and an Internet connection. We look at a new effective method, allowing criminals to remain anonymous and operate globally through the online market.

Facebook plays an important role in the grooming of victims. These networks allow criminals to directly contact victims to pretend to be their age to gain their trust and then reaching them to the moment of being sold and exploited.

There are countless cases where a fraudster pretends to be a cute, funny teenager heart conquering girls online. He understands what the girls go through during this difficult time of adolescence, claims that he cares, that wants to help. Most often this girl will become a victim in the hands of traffickers.

*Romanian cases*

Bianca (pseudonym) is 15 years old. Like any teenager of her age, she spends more time online. At a given moment Alex (trafficker, 45 years) using a fake profile pretends to be a teenager and sends a friend request; she does not know him, but he looks cute, so Bianca accepts the friend request. They start talking, become friends and their virtual relationship becomes closer. At one point Alex tells her that he is sick with a serious illness. Shortly after Bianca receives a message from Alex's dad saying that Alex died and would very much enjoy if she could come to the funeral. Bianca went to run her last respects for her virtual boyfriend straight into the trap of traffickers. What's sad is that Bianca's father was the one who took her to the funeral without knowing what will happen.

This is just one example of the thousands of cases that occur daily in the virtual world. A clear example of what ignorance does with people's lives.

*Online job announcements*

The ads for jobs online are another source used by traffickers for recruitment. Given the economic factors and the current financial situation, people are desperate to find a job. So an advertisement appeared on the Facebook profile appears to be a solution to financial problems.

How is the recruiting process developed specifically? The director of the Foundation "Open door" Monica Boseff - honored by the US State Department for fight against human trafficking, an award that only 10 people worldwide receive annually - explains in an interview on RFI that "initial talks start with a friendly tone, non-invasive. Later, the discussions pertain to detail. The reasons for not being happy are being exposed: "I look for work, can not find it! I am upset that I have no money, etc." The trafficker provides immediate solution "But as a girl so clever, cute, does not find work? Look, I know a lot of girls here who came from Romania, and now are rich...". From here, things go at a speed difficult to follow. The victim realizes that she will never work in a hotel as a housekeeper only when reaching the destination. At the time, trafficking starts.<sup>17</sup> Such offenses fall under the law by Chapter VII of the New Criminal Code - *Trafficking and exploitation of vulnerable persons*, Art. 210. *Trafficking*.

*Sextortion*

*Sextortion* – is a form of sexual exploitation through blackmail in which an individual threatens that he would publish pictures of a person with sexual content if the person concerned does not fulfil a list of requirements. Trafficker may obtains those images by various means. He can access an unauthorized storage device of such data or to save an image without the consent of the blackmailed person.

In some cases the image can be sent by victims even unknowingly. Regardless of how the image was obtained, if it was distributed without the consent of the person in the picture, we're talking about an act of abuse with intimate images that traffickers uses to exploit the victim.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Mircea Oprea, Rețelele de socializare - platforme de racolare a victimelor traficului de persoane, <http://www.rfi.ro/social-74875-re-elele-de-socializare-platforme-de-racolare-victimelor-trafficului-de-persoane>, accessed today 17.11.2015.

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.wearethorn.org/child-sexual-exploitation-and-technology/>, accessed today 18.11.2015.



## **HUMAN SECURITY IN SOCIAL MEDIA**

### **- JUST A CLICK AWAY –**

An example of this form of exploitation are the online games. The teenager starts playing a game online, networking with thousands of users worldwide. At one point he needs money online to pass to the next level. One of the users is offered to help him with the money in return for provocative pictures with him. After the teenager sends the image, the user is proving to be a trafficker and blackmails him with the sent picture. The send trafficker threatens that he will send the picture to the parents and will publish it online if he does not do what he says.

Statistics say that 42 % of victims of sexual blackmail via the internet traffickers have met online.<sup>19</sup>

These are just some of the methods and techniques used by traffickers to recruit victims. And after recruiting them, they end up being sold online as an object, again and again and again. “*People are posted and sold online several times a day, says Asia , a survivor of sex trafficking. As the announcement posted with me ... it's like looking for a car online ... I had a picture, a description and a price.*”<sup>20</sup>

In terms of the Criminal Code of Romania<sup>21</sup>, in accordance with Chapter I - *Offences against public order and peace* in art. 374, offenses and penalties are specified with general aspects as well as penalties regarding *child pornography*.

#### ***Safety on social media***

##### ***1. Privacy settings***

Make social media account as secure as possible. Select the safest options. You can control who sees your posts. Make sure that you only see postings of friends.

Also review your choices often enough as they can change from day to day.

##### ***2. Do not post personal information***

If it is personal, then let it be personal. Think twice before you post your birthday, phone number, address, details about yourself or your family, education or work.

##### ***3. Disable the option with your location when you post online***

So you can avoid being located by traffickers

##### ***4. Accept friend requests only from people you know personally***

Think twice before you accept friend requests from people you do not know. Traffickers can hide behind some pretty pictures and profiles.

##### ***5. Do not meet with an „Internet friend” in real life***

The key word is „at all”. But if you choose to, meet in a public place, do not go alone, take a friend with you, tell someone where you are going and why. There is always the possibility to go straight into a trap of a trafficker..

##### ***6. Everything you post on social media is permanent***

Think twice before posting online. Do not make pictures in front of the house, in front of the car, at school, on vacation or anywhere else that might show your location.

##### ***7. Do not post online or send provocative pictures of you (sexting)***

*Sextingul* - refers to the sending of SMS, pictures, erotic videos or via internet or the mobile phone.

They can be used as blackmail (sextorsion) or put online on sites with sexual content without your permission.

##### ***8. Ask for help***

Report suspicious things. If you feel that something is not right ask for help, contact the authorities. Where you see any activities related to human trafficking, sexual exploitation or content that exploits minors – use the HOT LINE number or the green number available

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<sup>19</sup> <https://www.wearethorn.org/child-pornography-and-abuse-statistics/>, accessed today 18.11.2015.

<sup>20</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/25/sex-trafficking-in-the-us\\_n\\_5621481.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/25/sex-trafficking-in-the-us_n_5621481.html), accessed today 19.11.2015.

<sup>21</sup> New Criminal Code of Romania

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in any country, for example in Romania the competent authority is the National Agency Against Trafficking of Persons (A.N.I.T.P.) and can be contacted at 0800800678.

But there is good news. The same methods are used to combat trafficking. “*We change tactics regarding traffickers. As they use technology and the Internet to exploit victims, so shall we use technology to stop them*”<sup>22</sup>.

### **Conclusions**

Information is the solution against this phenomenon, because information is power! Trafficking is based on lack of informing the general public, on the ignorance displayed in public, without being aware of the dangers. We must fight this lack of information! In this context we find technology proper in the use of spreading information that could save lives.

### **Proposals:**

1. Organizing preventive and awareness-raising campaigns about human trafficking through the online Abolition course. Abolition made available a free online platform <http://www.abolition.org/how> by which a subscriber may receive an email daily for 30 days through which he receives training regarding the human trafficking and what he can do to protect himself and to help combat these phenomena.
2. Awareness about the dangers of online danger using the Abolition film “How to be safe on social media” both in the online environment and through schools and other environments <https://vimeo.com/160350929>.
3. Create an online platform with the hashtag # 505 – a secret code used by the victim for the signaling traffic situation.
4. Setting up an online network of “abolition-ers” to cooperate, to work together, to supervise, to share resources and to report any suspicion in the online environment.  
Only by working together we can make a difference!

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**HUMAN SECURITY IN SOCIAL MEDIA**  
**- JUST A CLICK AWAY -**

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