

Review of the Media Framing of Human Trafficking in Latvia

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Summary

As skills of professionals from law enforcement institutions to recognise crimes of human trafficking improve, so human trafficking becomes more covered by media. The media pay attention to campaigns of preventing human trafficking, follow the police work and seek to explain strategies of human trafficking prevention policy to the society.

By reflecting matters related to human trafficking, the media have the option to affect how the society perceive them. The attitude formed by the media can affect important matters: how assistance is organised for victims of human trafficking, how successfully they can integrate in the society, how serious attention is paid to human trafficking by policy-makers.

In researches of media contents, the main attention is paid to quality of human trafficking coverage – problems of understanding causes, diversity of information sources and professional ethics, when reflecting representatives of vulnerable groups. Therefore, the researches of media content mainly assess the place of human trafficking on the media agenda, and framework of this matter or how the problem has been defined, how its causes have been determined and what solutions are offered.

The research, having analysed the framework of human trafficking in Latvian media content from 4 January to 5 May 2019, has detected that journalists and media editors of Latvia consider human trafficking to be a significant topic. It constantly remains on the media agenda, the media assesses in particular detail the crimes related to Latvian nationals, mainly labour exploitation and involvement in prostitution or sham marriage. Constant attention in the media is paid to indicators of human trafficking during movement of migrants. Within the framework of human trafficking, the Latvian media highlight human rights, explain human trafficking as slavery or involvement in prostitution. In media messages, the most attention is paid to analysis of particular events, migration and coverage of human trafficking politics.

Human trafficking has been mostly covered by media news; journalists, however, comparatively seldom offer analysis of this problem, broader material about victims or comments on explanation of the situation. Information in the media about human trafficking is mainly provided by national or international officials, NGO representatives and professionals who provide assistance to victims of the crimes. Only in certain cases, the victim's story or an explanation by the offender, who committed the human trafficking, is available to the media.

Journalists see human trafficking as a criminal event, assess manifestation of the crime, are aware that these cases should be reflected precisely. Therefore, media publications express neutral attitude towards victims of human trafficking, they are not blamed or stereotyped. Likewise, the language of publication is generally neutral, only in certain cases the media sources by emotionally tinted language create negative or positive notion of the victims of human trafficking crimes.

Most of titles in the media (65%) precisely reflect the content of the publication; however, with the aim to draw the audience attention, 25% of publications frame one aspect, mainly by sensationalising and dramatizing the message. Having analysed the visual material of publications on human trafficking, it has been detected that more than half of images are associative, they do not reflect the particular event or problem. This practice creates quite a withdrawn notion about this crime and hinders its understanding.

Similarly, as it has been detected in researches of foreign media practice, also Latvian media professionals rarely assess the causes of human trafficking crimes and fail to analyse critically the work done by officials and policy-makers.

Upon covering human trafficking, journalists consider that their main task is explanation of this type of crime to the public with the aim to protect potential victims and prevent new crime. The media professionals are aware of their responsibility and seek to protect victims of the crime from secondary victimisation, but the media lack resources to carry out projects of investigative and analytical journalism regarding human trafficking issues and constantly assess human trafficking causes.

2. Literature description: researches on human trafficking in social sciences

Human trafficking is a significant topic of research both in social sciences and in humanities. However, the media work in covering human trafficking has not fallen into the range of attention of the major part of the researches. The main research directions are related to criminal law and its drawback, trying to prevent human trafficking violations facilitated by migration and other causes. (Surtees, 2008; Goodey, 2003; Bjelland, 2017). Interdisciplinary researches on human trafficking combine analysis of sociology, forensic, social work and social culture aspects. While the media content draws increasingly more attention to human trafficking, this problem has been reflected in many communication campaigns, new political initiatives have been carried out and laws have been amended, there are comparatively few researches that provide sufficiently substantiated data and conclusions (Weitzer, 2014).

Having compared the main factors facilitating human trafficking and data in the European Union (EU) member states for a longer period of time, academic studies have detected that a higher risk of human trafficking is present in countries where immigrants comprise the largest number of population, the country has access to the sea, the gross domestic product level is low and unemployment rate is low (Tallmudge and Gitter, 2018). Likewise legalisation of prostitution increases the risk of human trafficking in the particular country.

Authors of researches on human trafficking, by stressing relation between sex trafficking and prostitution, evaluate this issue in the traditions of gender or feminism studies. These researches analyse understanding of sex trafficking, attitude towards victims (Gulati, 2010, Serie et al., 2018). The researches reflect a situation where human trafficking (mainly sex enslavement or labour trafficking) has attracted attention of many international organisations, policy-makers and activists, by seeking to show the economic and legal causes of human trafficking.

New problems of human trafficking have come to the centre of attention of the public and researchers after collapse of the communism in the Soviet Union and many Eastern-European countries, significant aspects to the issue of human trafficking were added by the world-wide processes of economy globalisation, where a significant position was

taken by international sex industry and sex tourism. Human trafficking prevention activist NGOs tried to include these aspects in the range of attention of policy-makers and international organisation at the beginning of the 90s of the 20th century (Gulati, 2010). During the last 30 years, the definition of human trafficking has been specified, by linking it with regulatory enactments that regulate the character of sex crimes and emphasise relation of human trafficking with observing the rights of refugees and asylum seekers (Gulati, 2010).

The academic literature stresses analysis of human trafficking problems from the human rights perspective that expands the previously criticised narrow view (Gulati, 2010, Gulati, 2011, Serie et al., 2018) which interpreted human trafficking mainly as transportation of women and children for sexual exploitation, failing to observe enslavement of men and other expressions of human trafficking. These researches that focus on issues of human rights allow understanding that human trafficking is an international problem facilitated by operation of criminal networks as well as by poverty, social inequality and lack of economic opportunities in the developed countries.

Economy liberalisation of many new democracies has created new forms of inequality (Gulati, 2010) that facilitate human trafficking. Globalisation changes the economic landscape and facilitates economic and political instability in many countries, causing in the meantime a demand for cheap labour force in many Western countries, thereby meaning also a demand for servants and nannies in the countries where population has succeeded in the area of gender equality (King, 2004). *Gilbert King* considers that globalisation processes have increased Western men's demand for women from Eastern Europe, Asia and Latin America (King, 2004). Upon stressing that globalisation, economic and political transformation affected women more severely, the researchers conclude that government representatives, police and border guard officials are related to facilitation of sexual exploitation of women (Mendelson 2005), likewise family members and friends have been involved in sale of children and relatives to human trafficking.

2.1 Researches of human trafficking in communication sciences and media studies

Having assessed human trafficking in the context of work of the media, journalists and communication professionals, several research directions have been observed in literature. The researches mainly assess quality of the problem coverage and the potential effect in various media and communication campaigns. This have had results, for example, documentaries covering the stories of human trafficking victims can affect and change the state policy and draw attention of officials and organisations to human trafficking (Chattoo and Jenkins, 2019). However, by dramatizing and simplifying the human trafficking reality, a documentary (Sharapov and Mendel, 2018) can draw attention away from human exploitation as daily practice.

Communication researches have assessed the content and purpose of social campaigns for elimination of human trafficking. Still, the researches mainly analyse the campaign advertising techniques (Szablewska and Kubacki, 2018), whereby the vulnerable social groups are revealed to the public, however, the attention has not been drawn to the effect and results of the human trafficking prevention campaigns. Involvement of celebrities in these campaigns has been assessed quite contradictory in these researches (Majic, 2018, Haynes, 2014). Well-known people help drawing attention of the media and policy-makers to the problem because they are portrayed as the ideal saviours of the human trafficking victims (Haynes, 2014); however, part of the attracted celebrities cannot correctly reflect the seriousness of the problem. Although participation of actors, Demi Moore and Ashton Kutcher, provided broad recognition to the human trafficking prevention campaign, both heroes have promoted “individual responsibility” as a problem-solving norm (Majic, 2018), by decreasing the significance of the structural factors of human trafficking causes.

The researches have critically assessed campaigns that go against the sex trade problem in the Eastern European countries (Andrijasevic, 2007) because visualisation of the human trafficking victims objectivises women’s bodies and confirms the existing stereotypes about the inhabitants of the Eastern Europe: the women are shown as passive victims, and men as criminals. Another research has detected presentation of a woman as a victim (Isgro et. al, 2012), assessing prostitution as a problem that features human trafficking. It has been used to feature the reality of post-communist countries (Suchland, 2013), stressing that prostitution and migration related to human trafficking explains consequences of collapse of the previous socio-economic system in the Eastern European countries.

2.2. Coverage and framework of human trafficking in media

Researches of media content analyse coverage of human trafficking thereby meaning various research approaches to assessing the media texts - to determine their agenda, framework, narrative or discourse analysis. Attention has been paid to several territories (third countries – India, Latin American countries, for example, Peru and Chile, USA, Eastern European countries, Baltic States) and topics – sex trade, human trafficking and crime related to migration.

Together with researches that address the varied aspects of this crime, human trafficking as a topic has been included in the results speaking on coverage by migration (Valenzuela – Vergara, 2019) or prostitution in the media. The researches stress the media task to reflect this problem exhaustively, giving floor also to those groups that, together with politicians and officials, have not been sufficiently covered by the media content (Gulati, 2010). A research analysing how the USA, Great Britain and Canada media reflect human trafficking, applies content analysis. Having assessed the content six quality newspapers from 2000 to 2005, it has concluded that the media content has a limited range of opinions. When speaking about human trafficking, the opinions and decisions by policy-makers have been legitimised and alternative views and criticism have been marginalised. Having studied publications in the media writing in English regarding human trafficking for eleven years in the Baltic States (Sobel, 2015), similar conclusions have been made, namely, the media could, but they have not drawn sufficient attention to this problem.

Several researches show that human trafficking has been reflected in the media mainly through opinions of officials, policy-makers and organisations involved in eliminating consequences of these crimes (Papadouka et al, 2016; Rosas-Moreno and Ganapathy, 2019); likewise, coverage of the variety of human trafficking crimes is insufficiently wide, the media generally show it by the help of reflecting the organised crime and sex trafficking, simplifying and stereotyping victims (Gulati, 2011; Houston – Kolnik et al., 2017).

Despite the insufficient variety of sources, the media is very important to draw attention to human trafficking. These conclusions have been made by *Meghan Sobel* (2014), who assessed whether after signing international treaties the media of India, Thailand and

the USA had increased the rate of information devoted to human trafficking, she concludes that after adopting political decisions the media contains more publications about human trafficking, journalists offer analysis of causes and consequences, as well as solutions to the problem. The media reflect human trafficking victims in a less negative light than before; however, they show this issue mainly from the point of view of crime investigation and the police (Sobel, 2014). The publications on human trafficking mainly analyse the local events and topics, paying less attention to human rights or issues of public health. The main drawback of the media contents is variety of views and topics because the media bases on the information provided by official sources but fail to use sufficiently human trafficking victims and offenders as information sources. This conclusion has been made in several researches (Denton, 2010, Gulati, 2011), stressing that the media select only separate topics to cover the human trafficking.

Part of researches devoted to human trafficking coverage in the media researches how sex trade has been assessed in the publications. For example, when covering sex trade the media has not delved into causes for the actions taken by the offenders and pays little attention to studying the cases when men are the victims of sex trade (Denton, 2010). The USA media mainly qualifies sex trade incidents as criminal episodes (Johnston et al., 2015) and does not offer any solutions to the problem. Most publications use official sources as sources of information. Victims of sex trade and their defenders form the smallest part of information sources chosen by the media. A broader framework of this crime would comply with the media obligation to carefully monitor the processes affecting the public and reflect them variously (Johnston et al., 2015). The increase in media coverage has helped the public and policy-makers to better understand problems of human trafficking.

Literature about human trafficking framework indicates that the media marginalises alternative opinions and criticism of the current policy on prevention of human trafficking. As a result, the dominant opinion of the problem of human trafficking becomes legitimised, as well as the dominant approach to its elimination. Having analysed the research data about human trafficking, it can be observed that human trafficking is mainly framed as sex trade and prostitution; the media mainly uses officials as the source of information, including representatives of the foreign policy elite, and activists of the network of restricting the human trafficking policy. In the

framework of the media, a cause of human trafficking mainly is the organised crime or other criminal activities. The main types of human trafficking, in the media view, are related to defining the policy issues, including improvement of regulatory enactments, protection of human trafficking victims, and popularisation of the campaigns to eliminate this type of crime. In the media, human trafficking is mainly understood as transportation of people across borders for sexual exploitation, enslavement and migrant smuggling to other countries (Gulati, 2011).

Having analysed the USA newspapers for a longer period of time (Sanford, 2016), it has been detected that indirectly the media play a very important role by restricting the number of alternative opinions about the human trafficking and determining the manner of public discussion of alternative problem solutions. As *Rachealle Sanford* stresses, the media representation in the USA media was led by those who should have been monitored by the media, stressing the role of officials and policy-makers in the media content. Author of the research concludes that the cause of inadequate and non-representative coverage of human trafficking in the media is the media organisational routine that restricts the journalists' opportunities to show opinions which oppose the notions in the publishing houses about the essence of the problem. The necessity to be objective makes the media to rely even more on the official sources, thus including also those notions that are represented by the main used sources (Sanford, 2016), in the case of this research - the USA State Department and the United Nations Organisation. The journalists who worked on articles about migrant smuggling were located in capitals, where information was obtained from embassies and consulates that likewise receive information from the governmental press services. As the journalists' view coincided with the official opinion, then they had no necessity to search for an alternative view or to criticise the offered version on human trafficking. Thus, the journalists ignored sources or opinions that criticise the position of the main institutions, neither offered solutions to decrease human trafficking being expensive and would cause dissatisfaction of the audience. It must be understood how complicated it is to cover the human trafficking problem which is very complex and exists in the unseen area, off-stage. In the meanwhile, the journalists must make their material easy to understand for a large audience; this limits the offer and variety of analytical visions. For this reason, the journalists avoid offering messages that do not comply with the dominant narratives or include information contradicting the principal structure of the article. The

journalists have insufficient information to understand this multi-layered problem. Likewise, insufficient funds for investigative journalism projects can be one of reasons why human trafficking has not been adequately covered by the media.

The framework researches stress the limited framework designated for the crimes. For example, human trafficking in Slovenian newspapers is included in the framework of “criminalisation”, “nationalisation”, victimisation and regulation (Pajnik, 2010) that mainly helps to see human trafficking as crime. At the same time, the media invites to make stricter policies to limit this crime, close the borders and protect victims. The media coverage is too narrow, it does not help the public to understand the causes and amount of the human trafficking problem.

Authors of researches that criticise the media because if they draw too much attention to sexual exploitation and prostitution and ignore the labour trafficking that is related to illegal immigration. Analysis of the quality media content in the USA, Great Britain and Canada (Gulati, 2010) shows that the media mainly follow those governmental activities in each country that are related to prevention of human trafficking. This means that the media publications mainly include the political agenda. The content is dominated by prostitution and sex exploitation coverage (54%), 20% of the publications tell about labour trafficking, 1/3 of the publications frame human trafficking as immigration problem. The majority of the analysed publications of over 800 did not offer any discussion about solving the human trafficking problem. The ones that spoke of solutions, stressed that a more strict regulation or reforms are needed, stressing the human rights perspective. The media included in the research, for its content, used mainly the dominant actors as the sources, **in essence they failed to offer a critical assessment of the official notifications and positions.**

However, the media content is gradually changing. Recently, the discussion on human trafficking has turned to suggestions focusing on the necessity to protect victims. Upon summarising tendencies of the media framework and critically assessing the narrow view to human trafficking detected in the media practice, it can be concluded that the media have created a stereotype of the “ideal victim” (Rodriguez – Lopez, 2018). This practice that have a simplified vision of the complex and varied human trafficking causes situations that part of the victims remain without protection and support. The media stereotypes have determined the content of human trafficking prevention laws

(Rodriguez – Lopez, 2018), meaning thereby that the “white slave trade” in the understanding of the media and legislators mainly correspond to prostitution, migration and organised crime.

3. Finding regularities in media agenda

The media determine the main topics that are offered for public discussion, ensuring the unique public self-monitoring function (Luhmann, 2000) and offering a wide range of opinions and ideas. Journalists’ professional obligation makes them cover events from a variety of aspects and in a well-balanced manner; however, the media and journalists’ options are limited by resources, editorial values and priorities (views about professional roles, perception of the audience, education etc.). By adopting many decisions during information selection, assessment and presentation, events and their participants are selected, and they obtain a place in the media content. In the meanwhile, content of each publication is affected both by media environment features (media system, media format, professional culture of journalism, political influence) (Hallin, Mancini, 2004) and by the understanding about importance of the events, education and knowledge about the particular issue, personal stereotypes of those working in the media. These circumstances determine the content of journalists’ materials, selection and evaluation of sources used in them.

All decisions taken by journalists and editors during collection, processing and publishing information, affect the manner how particular social problems are portrayed and how much attention has been drawn to them. This has been explained by the agenda theory (McCombs and Shaw, 1972; McCombs, 2004) that substantiates how the media affect the public agenda by supplying the news. This agenda is created on the side of the media when the content stresses the most important events (Reese, 1991), and on the side of the audience when people talk among themselves and otherwise pay attention to the news. When discussing the media effect on the public agenda, *Bernhard Cohen* stresses that the agenda created by the media makes people think about the published information, but the media can rarely determine what people think about the events (Cohen, 1963, 13). However, further researches proved that the media can determine both the events which draw attention and the public assessment about the

events selected by the media (McCombs, 2004, 19) because the attention paid by the media include also some meaning and allows the audience to assess the events.

The researchers distinguish three agendas: media (priority events and problems), public (changes to its knowledge and opinions), and the political (suggestions by politicians and changes) agenda. The media observe the public, they want to provide useful information and speak to it, therefore they adapt their agenda to the public agenda or problems and events that the public wants to discuss in the media opinion. By selecting events, the media agenda is created. However, selection by the media depends also from the external environment, and a significant role is plaid by the decision-makers, persons who determine the public development processes. The political priorities and political ideas are verified during the communication process, thus politicians influence both the media and the public agenda.

The media form the agenda because each social system has its priorities. The media determine what problems or events are worth discussion (Dearing and Rogers, 1996). The agenda is created between events, public values and media attempts to attract the audience attention. Walter Lippmann has called this process a pseudo environment that arises in the public perception while affected by the media and “pseudo reality” occurs (cited at (McCombs, 2004, 22). The researchers stress that the agenda is created at two levels: at the first level the media stresses the event itself being important, at the second level the publication content highlights particular aspects that are related to the event. The highlighted news elements would be considered by the public to be the most important (Lee, 2010, 761). For example, while speaking about crime the media would emphasise measures of its prevention or warn about unsafe environment for living due to increase in crime, then these priorities will occupy a more significant place in the audience perception and can also determine actions, behaviour of the people. In the second-level agenda, the media can include also those aspects that are not significant. However, agenda creation is not simple and direct, it is affected by the level of trust also to the information provider, the level of the audience’s interests, education and material welfare.

4. Media content framework

The framework theory analyses the influence of the manner of presenting media publications on the audience or the mass media effects. The theory is based on an opinion that the media creates a mutually concordant understanding of the reality where communication facilitators, information sources and culture interact. The media creates and forms the framework - the common recognisable principles that are consistent for a longer period of time. The media framework determines how the problem has been defined, how its causes are determined, and what solutions are offered (Entman, 1993).

The media framework (Griffin, 2004, 401) means organising message content by selecting, highlighting, holding back and expanding (Tankard, 2005). Understanding of the framework supplements the explanation of the agenda theory with regard to media content selection because it shows how media information is portrayed (De Vreese, 2005, 53), by interpreting it and adapting to the media employees' notion about compliance of the particular message element with the audience interests (Entman, 1993). The framework is determined by various elements of presenting the messages and presentation steps that make the audience understand and perceive the message (De Vreese, 2005, 53).

Any information is framed (Nisbet, 2009) to reach the targets important for the media, therefore the media can frame one and the same issue differently (Schuck and de Vreese, 2006). The framework can be explained as the central idea whereby the message content is organised (Tankard, 1991), the framework helps to understand the message by selecting its elements, putting them in context, applying highlights, holding back or supplementing some information parts.

The framework theory does not highlight importance of the message, however, it explains how it has been presented to the audience (De Vreese, 2005, 53). The message framework is created by emphasising certain aspects, for example, titles, content structure, visual presentation. Along the entire content, the message is presented or framed in accordance with pre-defined criteria, and so it is perceived. Understanding of the framework is significant to analyse contradictory problems, for example, new laws about abortion, crime, as well as unclear issues that lack information or research data.

Researches by various authors (Tuchman 1978; Schudson, 1980; Gans, 2005) show that instead of creating discussions the media reflect narratives offered by the main parties

of the political processes. Media organisation routines can decrease the number of topics and the range of sources included in the material, namely, can create specific topic frameworks. Professional media take care that upon reflecting social conflicts the dominant opinions would be balanced and sources would be included to represent interests of small, marginalised groups. Nevertheless, researches show that journalists tend to select official sources as more trustworthy, thus applying a different value for the information provided by different sources.

In the research on human trafficking framework in Latvian media 2019, the frameworks have been determined by some of James Tankard's (2005) 11 criteria, assessing the highlights in the media texts, titles, audio and video entries, sources selected by journalists, their attitude towards human trafficking, video and photography content.

5. Short characteristics of Latvian media environment

While assessing the Latvian media environment in the context of the Baltic States, media researchers portray it as environment with constant changes and risks caused by the economic fragility (Balcytiene, Vinciuniene, 2012). In this region, media content quality is affected by high level of commercialisation and the political parallelism or instead of mediating the political ideology the media is used to create it (Rožukalne, 2012b). Although certain media offer high quality journalism (for example, in public media and certain quality media), the common media content quality is affected by clientelism in relations between the journalists and their information sources (Balcytiene, 2009). A significant problem of the media environment is erosion of principles of professional ethics in journalism (Rožukalne, 2013a), as well as instability of the labour market (Rožukalne, 2012a; Rožukalne, 2013b; Jastramskis, 2015). The Latvian media environment represents a paradox of small media markets – on the one hand, there is the liberal media policy and free access to the media market (MPM, 2016) that is beneficial for business development and flourishing of the free press. Nevertheless, the commercial values dominating in such a market affect the variety of content and inevitably lead to cheaper and cheaper media content (Loit & Harro-Loit, 2010). For this reason, journalism quality in Latvia is unstable and vulnerable (Balcytiene & Harro-Loit, 2010; Balcytiene, 2013).

The researchers stress that the media environment of Latvia and other Baltic States disclose co-existence of hybrid professional values and norms (Baerug, 2017), which testifies to the different political cultures; they, in turn, reflect different social structures and public spheres (Habermas, 1989), as well as different discourses (Balcytiene, Vinciuniene, 2012).

A researcher of Latvian journalism, Ilze Šulmane, concludes that journalists' professional identities are unclear and non-found, Latvian journalists lack common professional values. Instead, they adapt political logics of media owners, although they contradict the media business or professional logics (Šulmane, 2011).

Although journalists and journalism in Latvia has been studied quite seldom and in a narrow scope, several researches are available to help judging the situation of journalism / state of the art, professional values and self-censorship sources. During the more than 20 years after restoration of independence, the Latvian journalism has undergone radical changes. This refers to the understanding of professional values, foundation of the media operation and the media system in general. At the end of 80s of the 20th century, journalists and culture media became the main driving force of the idea to restore the national independence. At the same time, journalists enjoy the highest trust of the public, the media experience an extreme popularity, certain media personalities are identified with the main events in relation to restoration of the national independence (Brikše et al., 2002). During this time, the journalists fight for the ideas of press freedom, the opportunity of increasing free activities allows to openly speak of existence of an independent country.

Immediately after restoration of independence, two important processes have been observed. First, during this time the journalism is agitating, unilateral, it contrasts with those principles of Western journalism that it tried to adapt to. Second, the media system faces the shock caused by the free market (Brikše et al., 2002). The media that had existed thanks to funding from the state or communist party, now have to learn to adapt to the market situation. These circumstances help creating a very broad and varied media system where the commercial interests and political connections of media founders are very important.

The media system is built in the context of norms and professional standards. Upon assessing the Latvian media environment, an European Commission project European

Media Pluralism Monitor 2016 and 2017 (MPM 2016; MPM 2017) detected in Latvia medium and high risks for development of pluralism. Latvian democracy audit describes the Latvian media system as hybrid (Skudra et al., 2014), it has features of several models. Efforts to develop the public media reveal indications of the democratic-corporative model; in turn, the political parallelism and influence of political-public relations on the Latvian media content indicate the features of the polarised pluralistic model in the Latvian media system.

In Latvia, media and journalism regulation is liberal. Approach to the labour market of journalism is free, no formal requirements (education, experience, licensing, registration) exist in this field for work in media organisations. The common regulation of the media do not provide for observance of principles of professional ethics, electronic media are regulated more strictly because they have to observe generally accepted professional principles of journalism and have to establish a code of professional behaviour. Self-regulation issue in the Latvian media is complicated. Although two professional journalist organisations exist, they are not influential, approximately 10% of journalists have joined the Latvian Journalists' Union or Latvian Association of Journalists (MPM, 2017).

The Latvian media environment is characterised by three mutually competing journalism cultures that can be distinguished by their attitude towards responsibility. First, there is the traditional Russian journalism that features the media of ethnic minorities. The media that belong to this culture do not separate facts from opinions, they are featured by absence of modernisation, as well as this media culture provides a much easier manipulation towards the authoritarian culture and national identity of Russia (Dimants, 2018, 145). Second, by applying the theory of journalism economics, the instrumental and authoritarian (post-soviet) journalism culture can be recognised. It features the media that is not independent from the political and economic sub-systems of the public. Third, a modern journalism culture has been identified that observes high standards of journalism and maintains editorial independence from media owners to implement corporate social responsibility (Dimants, 2018: 143). This journalism culture highly evaluates responsibility and trustworthiness of a media organisation, in Latvia it is represented mainly by public media in Latvian and Russian, as well as some commercial media organisations.

6. Research methods and description of the data selection

Purpose of the research is to analyse the human trafficking framework in the Latvian media. To carry it out, categories of quantitative and qualitative analysis were set up, as well as a sample analysis structure. The research initiators' category system for assessing the human trafficking framework in various media was supplemented by categories that help assessing attitude, visual message.

Research questions:

RQ No. 1. What is the place of human trafficking content on the media agenda?

RQ No. 2. What is the human trafficking framework in the Latvian media content?

The quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods selected to carry out the research. By the help of quantitative content analysis, location of press or internet media articles and electronic media plot reflecting human trafficking in the media content, topics, number of sources and used information sources, content of the visual material. These data are useful to analyse the place of human trafficking as a topic on the media agenda. The qualitative content analysis has been used to assess human trafficking framework in the media content. To determine the framework, the frameworks suggested in research conditions were used. Partially structured qualitative interviews were used in the research to analyse three various samples and assess the journalists' professional practice when they cover human trafficking.

The data for the media content research were collected from 4 January 2019 until 5 May 2019, by using the media monitoring data of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Latvia by keyword "cilvēktirdzniecība" (human trafficking) and by comparing those with media publications in order to determine location of the content and analyse the visual message. To select content for quantitative and framework analysis, directional selection was applied. This means that from the list of media monitoring original topics were selected, upon choosing them for analysis in various media. Duplicate articles were excluded from the analysis, for example, press releases or messages from news agency LETA published on all news media. Likewise, the analysis excluded the

material that had accidentally been included in the monitoring (for example, articles about humans in a shopping centre) or whose topic did not comply with the research purpose (for example, a formal message about officials of the Ministry of the Interior, where the context includes statistics about the types of crime in Latvia, mentioning crime statistics that is related to human trafficking). Upon selecting the content to be analysed, also media were assessed, and the research excluded sites that create content by copying content of other media texts or aggregators because these sites do not qualify as media due to lack of editorial control and code of professional ethics.

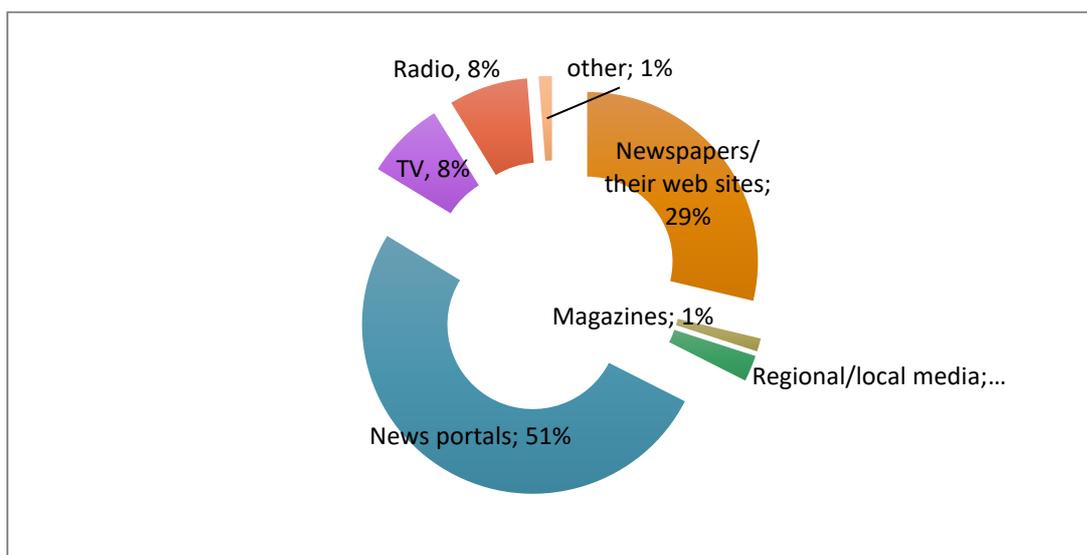
Case analysis and interviews revealed the interest of the media represented by the journalists in the topic of human trafficking, journalists' options to portray it from various aspects and in balance, professional ethics dilemmas and other problems when drafting the media content regarding human trafficking. Interview data were compared with publication analysis on the basis of the following professional quality criteria of journalism: journalist's role, publication aim, selection of sources of information, variety, balance. The journalists were interviewed on 21, 22, and 23 May; each interview took 50 to 60 minutes. To analyse samples in the media content, the human rights topics were selected according to the following criteria: event of human trafficking related to Latvia or its inhabitants, original journalism (namely, instead of a news agency, but the media itself decides to create a publication), originality, to cover the content-wise most different and important events during the particular period of time. Interview respondents were selected in compliance with the analysed samples. The following persons were interviewed: Delfi social news journalist Laura Dzērve (regarding priest Zeiļa's case), journalist from Latvijas Avīze, Artis Drēziņš (litigation about milkers' enslavement in Vaives municipality, Cēsis district) and LNT news journalist Ieva Vārna (regarding enslaving of nationals from Tajikistan for a construction company in Riga).

6.1. Research results

Before carrying out the research, a category system was created to help in the analysis of publications. By following the terms of references, 80 publications of various media were selected (articles, video, and audio stories) that have been published from 4 January to 5 May 2019 in commercial and public media offering content on various platforms: websites, printed material, video and audio formats.

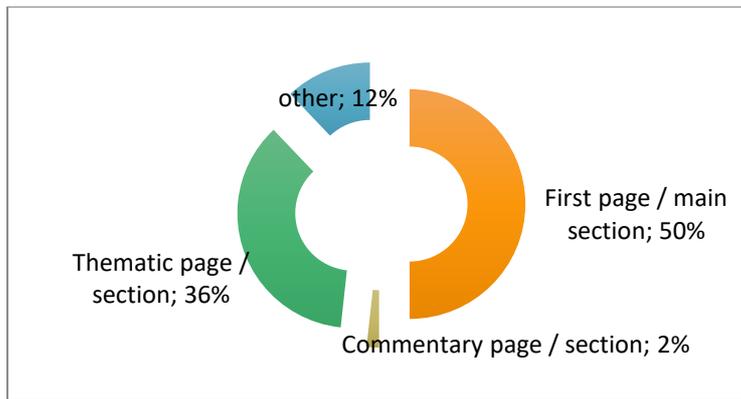
Human trafficking framework has been studied in various media: newspapers and their websites (23), news portals (41), radio (6), TV broadcasts (7), regional or local media (2), magazine (1). The selected media represent both the public media (LTV, LR and LSM), and commercial media (DELFI, Apollo/Tvnet, Diena, Neatkarīgā, LA, LNT), specialised media (ārsts.lv) (image No. 1).

Image No. 1. Structure of the analysed publications depending on the media segment



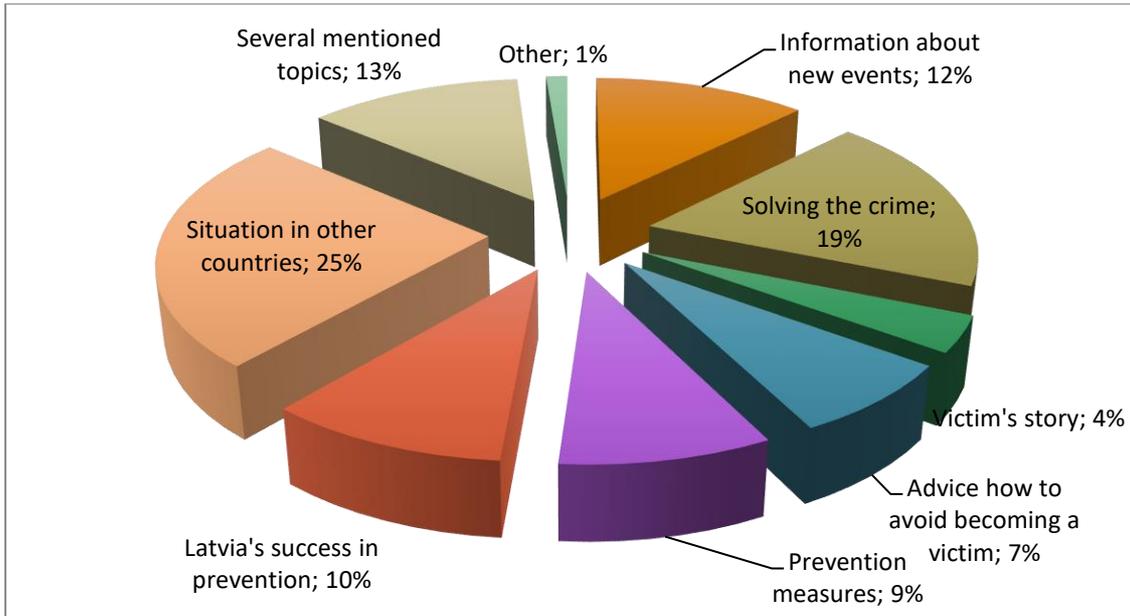
Information devoted to human trafficking from the point of view of the media editors is important as a half of the analysed material (50%) have been placed on the first pages or main sections of portals, large part of the publications has found its place in the thematic sections of the media (36%), mainly in the format for foreign news or criminal events. 12% of the publications were found in other media sections, 2% in the pages of comments and analysis (image No. 2).

Image No. 2. Location of the publications devoted to human trafficking within the media content



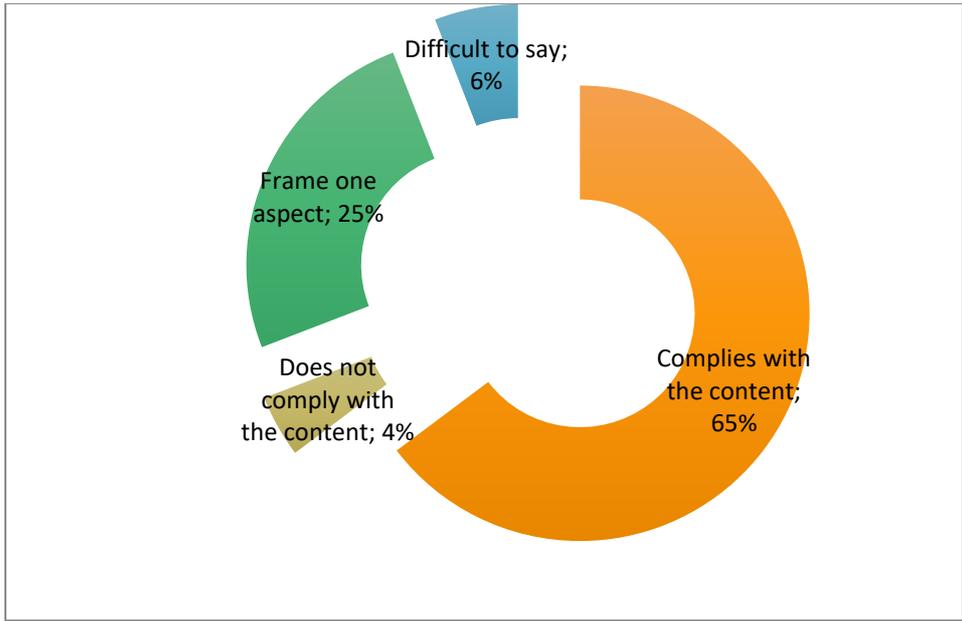
In the media, human trafficking is disclosed variously: a large part of publications reflect the situation in other countries and relate human trafficking with migration issues (24%), 19% of the publications are devoted to disclosing a crime, 12% - to information on new events, 9% - to prevention measures, 10% - to success of Latvia in eliminating human trafficking, 7% - advice how to recognise human trafficking, not to become a victim, several of the mentioned topics were reflected in 13% of the publications. Victims of human trafficking seldom share their stories in media, 4% of the analysed publications reflect the stories of this crime (image No. 3). Topics of articles and audio-visual stories dedicated to the particular question, show the publication structure: the majority is foreign information, the remaining publications are dedicated to cases of human trafficking detected in Latvia, by following the process of crime investigation, human trafficking policy and statistics, as well as practical advice how to recognise and prevent this crime.

Image No. 3. Topics of publications dedicated to human trafficking



Majority of publication titles comply with the content (65%), a part frames only one aspect of the content (25%), for example, highlights some quotation in the victim's story or sees the version of only one side of the human trafficking. Some publications have titles that do not correspond to the content (4%) because they are too general, summarising, 6% of the publications (for example, radio and TV titles cannot be detected) (image No. 4).

Image No. 4. Titles of the publications dedicated to human trafficking



Title samples.

“The Netherlands want to ban buying prostitutes’ services”

These titles were coded as complying with the content because they are informative, also summarising the article, they include the main finding, provide a summary.

Titles that frame one aspect usually include some bright quotation from the information source used in the publication. A task of these titles is to draw attention to the article, make the audience read it, provoke emotions. Some of the titles are too general, they include an encompassing statement.

“Māra Katarska was lucky. One can make pretty money with a white woman in the Arab world.” Apollo/Tvnet.

Delfi - “Больше половины жертв работорговли подвергаются сексуальному насилию” [More than a half of the human trafficking victims suffer sexual violence]. This title highlights an aspect of sexual exploitation determined by statistics, although the article covers more versatile human trafficking problems.

“Slave times in Latvia? A farmer sued for enslaving milkers in Cēsis region”; Latvijas Avīze, Artis Drēziņš.

“Slave times in Latvia? Part II. “I had nowhere to go”. The first title informatively shows the litigation, the other uses a quotation that reflects only one aspect of the problem. The first part of the title “Slave times in Latvia?” generalises the problem in the article and asks a question about its scope.

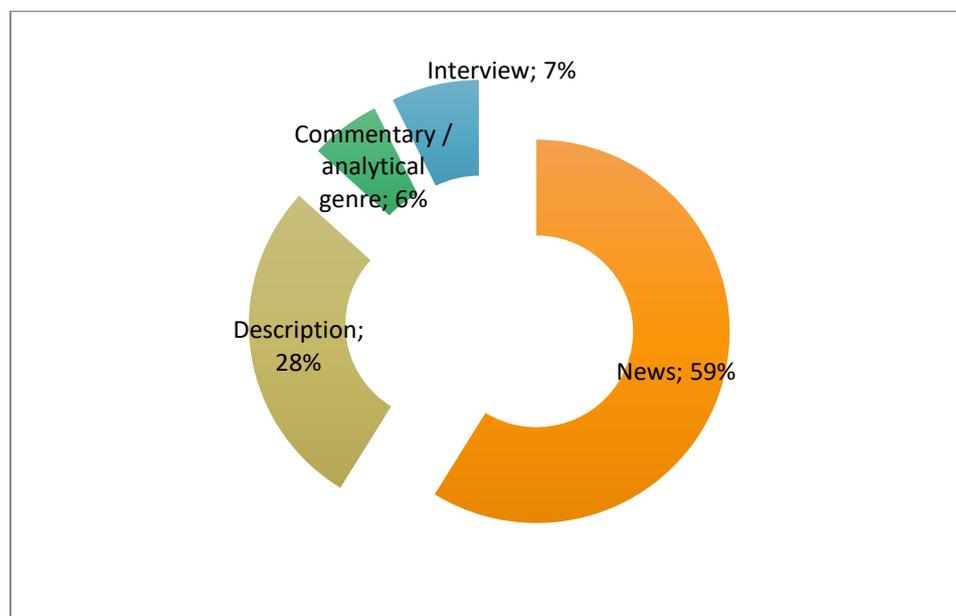
“Promises for the price of freedom” Diena. This title summarises information about labour trafficking, but it is very general and does not allow understanding of the topic.

Titles that do not correspond to the content: «Мы, латвийцы, в Европе, как рабы». Надежды на большие заработки не оправдались [“We, Latvian residents, are like slaves in Europe”. Hopes for higher salaries did not come true] – bb.lv. In this case, the beginning of the title is like a comment, too generalising, although it is a quotation. The title presents an article whose content is dedicated to labour trafficking, but it does not express the essence of the article.

Content of magazine “Klubs”, article “Mafia island chronicles” is a description of a trip to Sicily, but it focuses mainly on human trafficking and migration. The title does not reflect the complicated problems that have been analysed in detail within the article.

The majority of the publications dedicated to human trafficking and selected in this research is news (59%), 28% - descriptions, 7% - interviews, 6% - comments or analytical formats (image No. 5). Analysis of the genre structure shows that human trafficking coverage is determined by following the current events provided by foreign and local news agencies. A broader coverage is offered by descriptions, they mainly summarise events over a longer period of time (for example, priest Zeiļa’s case, singer Māra Katarska’s experience), talk about victims’ experience and combine it with specialists’ comments how to assess human trafficking, how to prevent it. The media is interested in the current events and their participants’ opinions, but human trafficking has not been analysed and assessed in analytical genres, during the researched period only some interviews, comments, discussions have occurred. Some of the analysed interviews reflect discussions with specialists or victims.

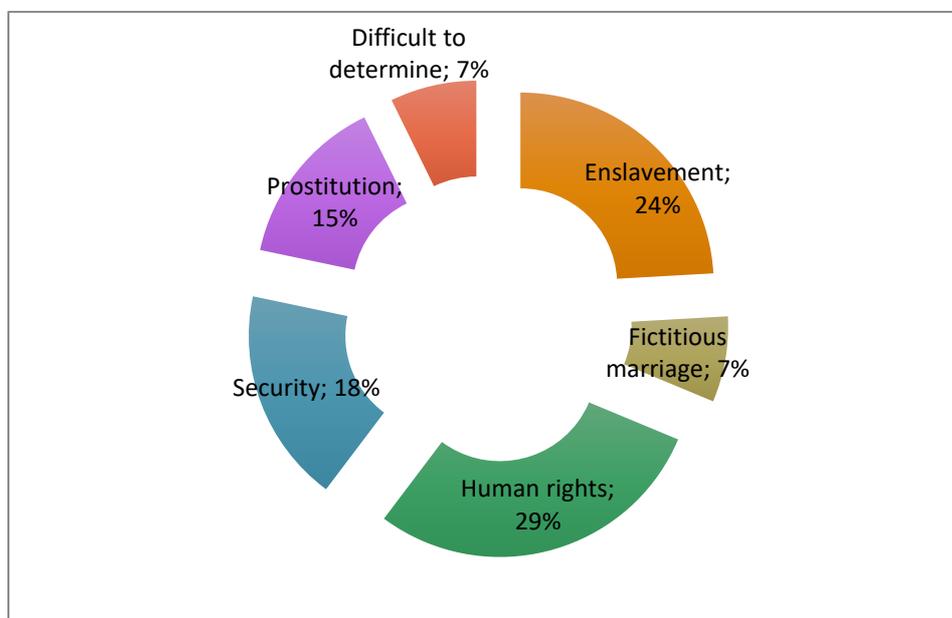
Image No. 5. Publication genres dedicated to human trafficking



The human trafficking framework is affected by the information available to the media about events. As many publications in the beginning of 2019 in the Latvian media were dedicated to the refugee crisis at the Italian shores and the discussion whether certain

refugee ships should be allowed to berth in any of the EU countries, then 29% of the publications frame human trafficking in the human rights context (image No. 6). Foreign news agencies stress that the refugee flow is related to human trafficking and reflect officials' discussions in detail how the refugees' rights to safety, life should be solved. According to the current events in the reviewed period, 24% of the publications frame human trafficking as slavery, thereby linking both the labour slavery cases, and selling to prostitution. 18% of the publications that display development of the policy or advise on prevention of human trafficking, frame this topic together with safety. 15% of the publications frame human trafficking as child and women prostitution, 7% - link it with fictitious marriages, 7% - frame several of the mentioned topics or the framework cannot be detected, for example, the framework cannot be determined in laconic criminal news prepared by the police. The media do not highlight one aspect of human trafficking, it offers frameworks that are related to current topics. As the majority of the publications consists of news, the framework reflects the current media topics.

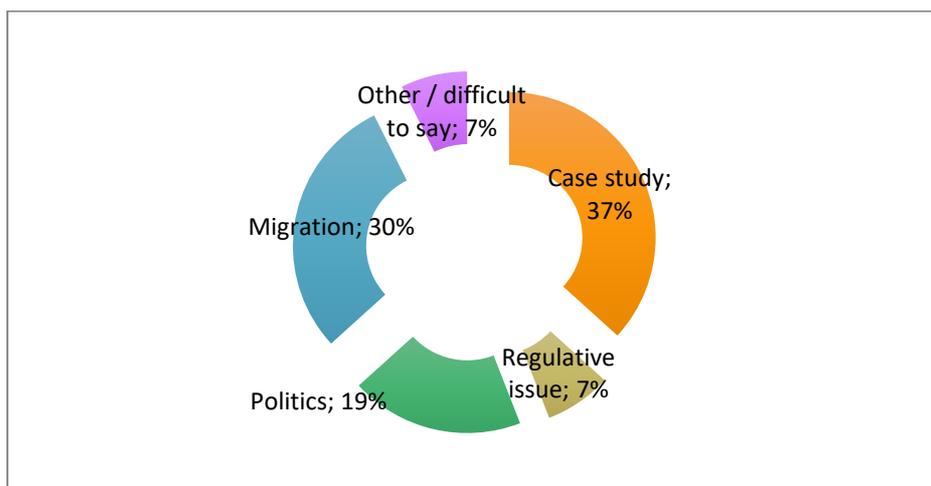
Image No. 6. Framework of the publication message dedicated to human trafficking



By following the news, the media mainly cover particular events (37%) or migration (30%) in the publications (image No. 7). Migration is linked to human trafficking both in the context of the causes for international refugee flow, and by publishing news about illegal immigration in Latvia from third countries. The human trafficking policy has

been mentioned in 19% of the publications, normative view has been reflected in 7%, 7% - mention other aspects, for example, human trafficking is a part of travel experience. If the framework indicates the media attitude because of highlighting certain aspects of the human trafficking topic, then the essence of the publication message reflects the reviewed topic more precisely.

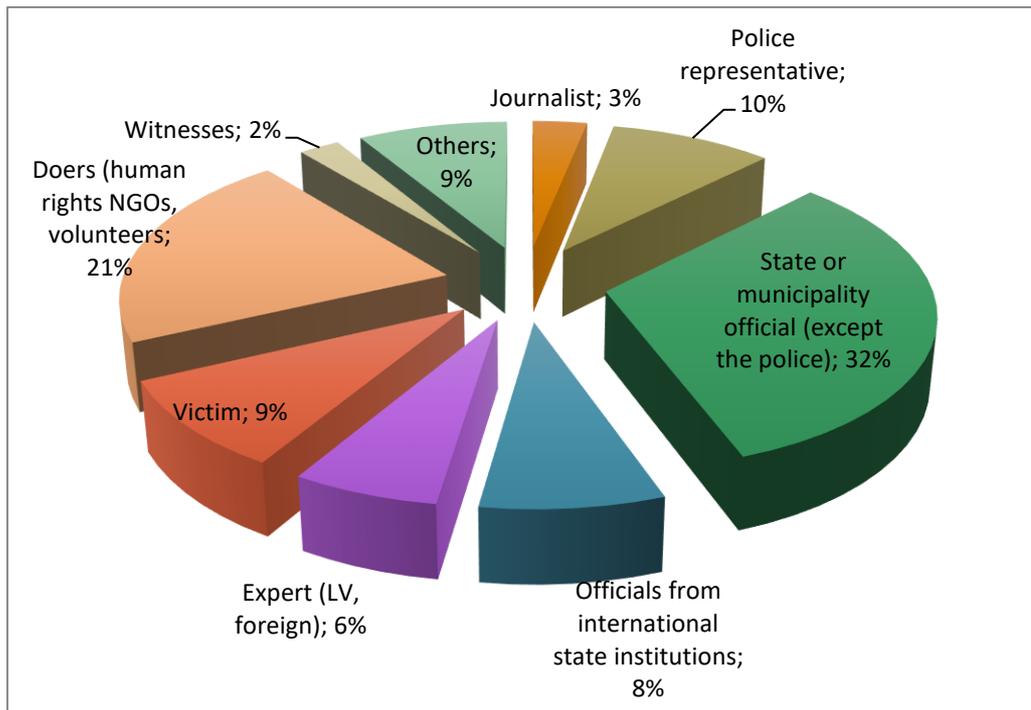
Image No. 7. Essence of the publications dedicated to human trafficking



Human trafficking in the media is mainly covered by state and municipality officials (32%), NGO representatives (21%), police representatives (10%), victims (9%), officials of international institutions (8%). Range of the other sources is small: experts (6%), journalists (3%), witnesses (2%) (image No. 8).

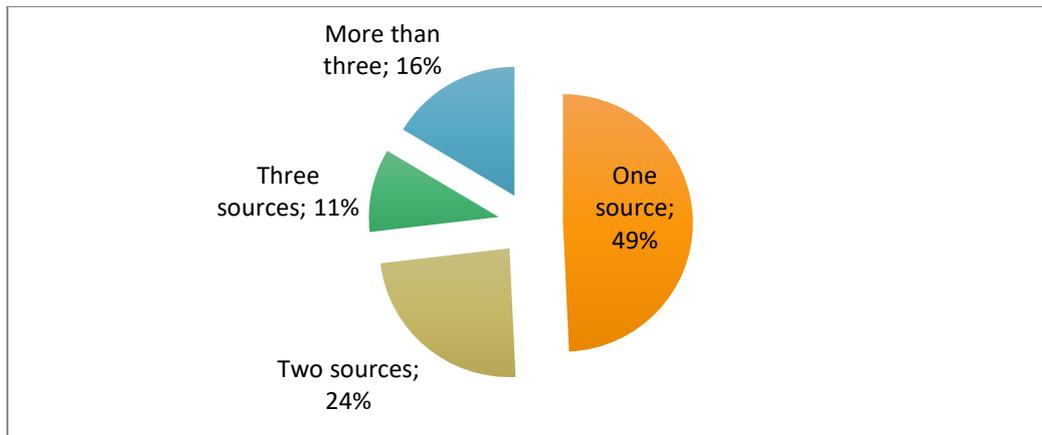
The range of sources reflects the process of creating the message: the media find out about human trafficking cases from the state and law enforcement institutions and NGO representatives who have been invited to provide help. The mentioned sources provide information about cases, inform about the statistics, options to get support, and recognise this crime, avoid becoming a victim of such crime. Interviews with human trafficking victims are possible if someone agrees to share their experience, thus providing the option for the society to get to know human trafficking circumstances in detail. During the research period, there were three such cases, for example, an interview was given by a victim who was sold for sexual exploitation (priest Zeiļa's case) and singer Māra Katarska who herself asked for help and the message in the social media became a mass media message.

Image No. 8. Sources of the publications dedicated to human trafficking



As human trafficking in the media mostly appears in the news, and many of them are news agencies' news, almost a half (49%) of the studied articles have a single source of information, 24% have two sources, 24% have three sources, 11% have more than three sources (image No. 9). A large part of the materials is comprised of news from news agency Leta, which have been prepared as a reaction to information provided by state institutions - mainly this is one-source news. Two or three sources are mentioned in descriptions and radio or TV stories that review the particular issue by attracting specialists, representatives from various institutions, sometimes also the human trafficking victims.

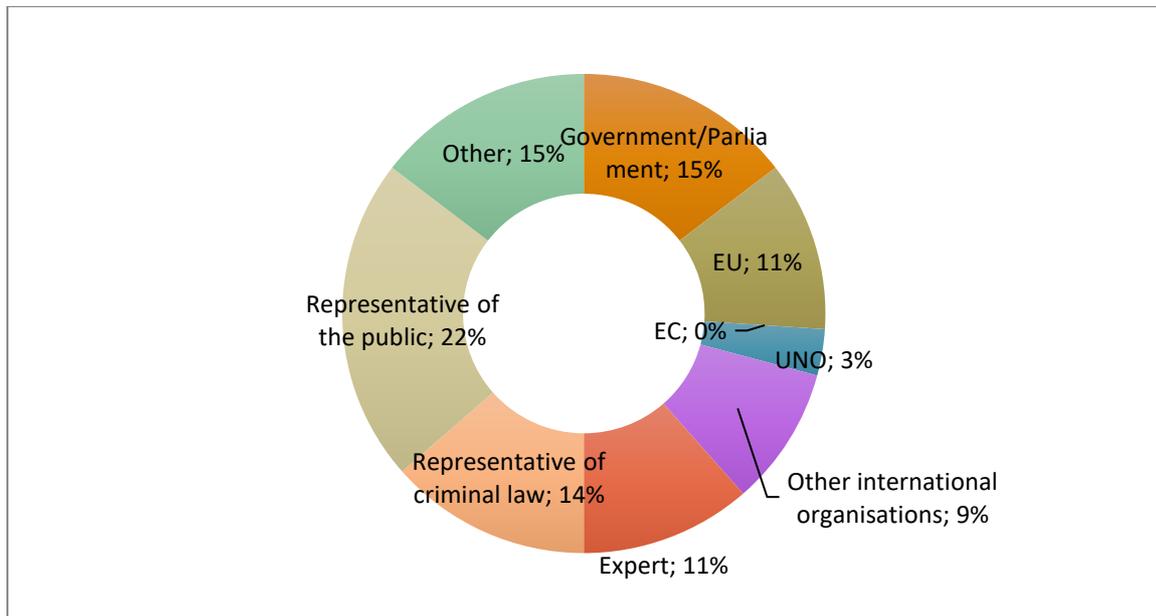
Image No. 9. Number of sources of information for the publications dedicated to human trafficking



The framework can be understood by analysing the power relations to be determined by assessing the organisations mentioned in the publications. A large variety has been observed: NGOs have been mentioned in 22% of the cases, government or the Parliament (*Saeima*) – 15%, the police – 14%, experts – 11%, EU 11% (mainly in the media materials related to migration and refugees), other international organisations - 9% (mainly border protection or international refugee aid providers), other organisations – 15% (image No. 10).

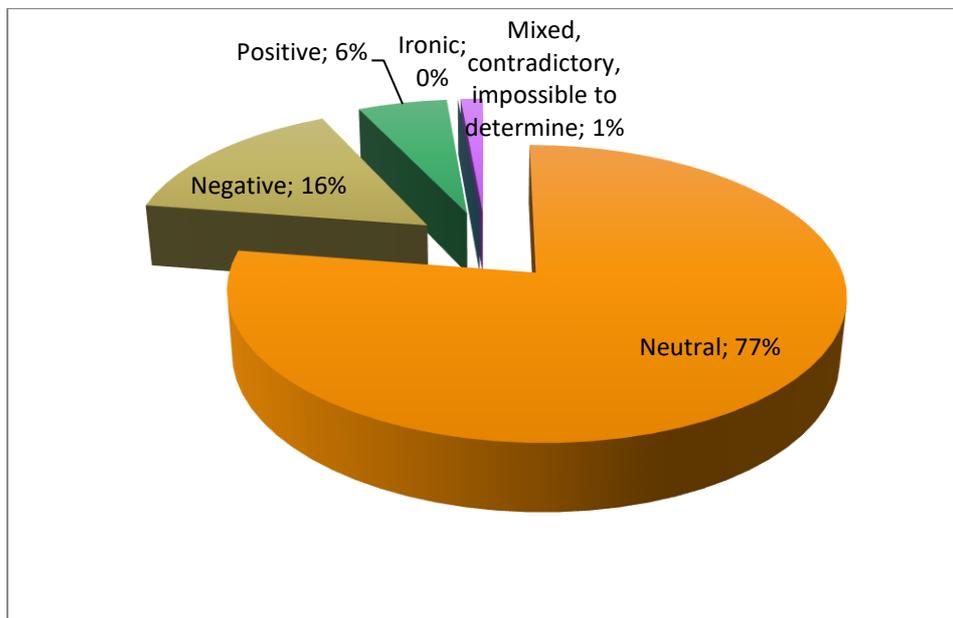
News about Latvian events mainly indicate responsibility of the government and NGOs' contribution, in the international news the media use information about the EU, UNO and work of other organisations in prevention of human trafficking.

Image No. 10. Organisations/specialists indicated in the publications dedicated to human trafficking



Genres selected to reflect human trafficking and structure of the information providers affect the attitude expressed in the publications and variety of the coverage. During the research period, human trafficking has been covered mainly in the news or other materials where information has been explained to the media by officials, providers of help from NGOs and police representatives, 77% of the publications express neutral attitude towards human trafficking, 16% - negative, 6% - positive, 1% - mixed (image No. 11). The positive attitude is usually expressed by NGO representatives who show empathy, explain the social situations and individual's circumstances that can lead or have led to human trafficking. A negative attitude towards the persons subjected to human trafficking has been detected in foreign news agencies' publications about the migrant crisis, where politicians or experts from certain countries express a dismissive attitude towards migrants and situation that these people face having spent large sums of money to come to the European Union. These choices have been criticised by Italian leaning politicians in news, noting the network of international crime and contribution to increase in the number human trafficking cases.

Image No. 11. Attitude expressed by the sources of information of the publications dedicated to human trafficking



Negative attitude has been expressed in the following phrase included in a subtitle in magazine Klubs and mentioned by journalist Jānis Zvērs “End of the welcomist era”, by contemptuously characterising consequences of the migration policy and people who are in favour of supporting immigrants from third countries.

An article from Delfi.rus features ideas and language with negative attitude towards human trafficking victims: “Рабы любви. Муж из Пакистана, любимый из Украины: как латвийские женщины становятся товаром [Slaves of the love. Husband from Pakistan, lover from Ukraine: how Latvian women become a merchandise].

Delfi.rus title: “16-летняя сутенерша и loverboys” [Sixteen-year-old (brothel) madam and loverboys], the language corresponds to the negative attitude because it includes negative connotations that can be applied to people who have been discussed in the publication.

Data about the language used in the publications coincides with the expressed attitude: 62% of the publications use neutral language (image No. 12). It is used by officials, experts, police representatives. In situation explanations, descriptions, 13% of the cases have identified commenting, descriptive language, certain publications provide positive language - 3%, sensationalised language has been detected in 7% of the publications.

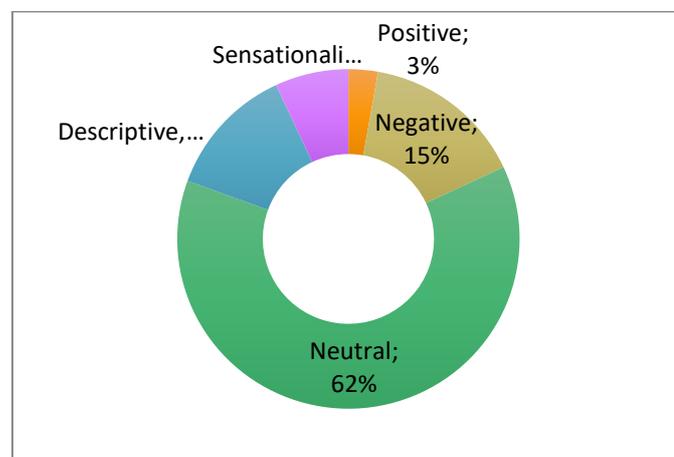
Sensationalism is a usual feature of the titles and highlights in the yellow-press medium kasjauns.lv, and portal apollo.lv.

Negative language about human trafficking has been observed in quotations in international news about USA president Trump's attempts to prevent migration from Mexico. Example: "I will sign [an order on] the emergency state. We speak of invasion in our country by drugs, human smugglers, all kinds of crime and gangs," said Trump. The quote was available at Tvnet.lv news, but it is an expression by the top level politician thereby trying to attract the public and other state politicians' attention.

A positive language, full of empathy, has been used in featuring the event of musician Māra Katarska. LSM.lv publication. By the help of language and provided content, the human trafficking victim has been portrayed as a versatile personality, positive language is used by experts, NGO representatives.

Example: "Māra is a musician. She became known in Latvia after participation in a TV music show. She does not hide – music and travelling is her whole life. She lived and worked in Greece, Thailand, until she went to Egypt, Hurghada in August last year. She was always attracted to Arab countries, until the moment when she came within a hair's breadth of losing her life. The young person does not try to hide - the emotional wounds are fresh. It is difficult for her to speak about the experience - it hurts even more than the bruises still visible on her face. Māra does not hide – she loved the offender very much and, probably, still loves him".

Image No. 12. Language of the publications dedicated to human trafficking



Another example of emphatic language from a discussion at Latvijas Radio: “In relation to human trafficking, it is typical. Because, in order to force a person to do something that he does not want to, he has to be broken, must be influenced somehow. Especially keeping locked-up, rape are those most typical methods to force women to engage later in prostitution,” admitted lawyer Gita Miruškina from association "Patvērums "Drošā māja"" (Shelter “Safe Home”).

Language of sensationalism has been observed in the following sentence that allegedly offers even more horror than rape of the victims of sex trafficking: «Жертва торговли людьми: изнасилование было не самым ужасным, что пришлось пережить» [Human trafficking victim: rape was not the largest horror that was to be experienced].

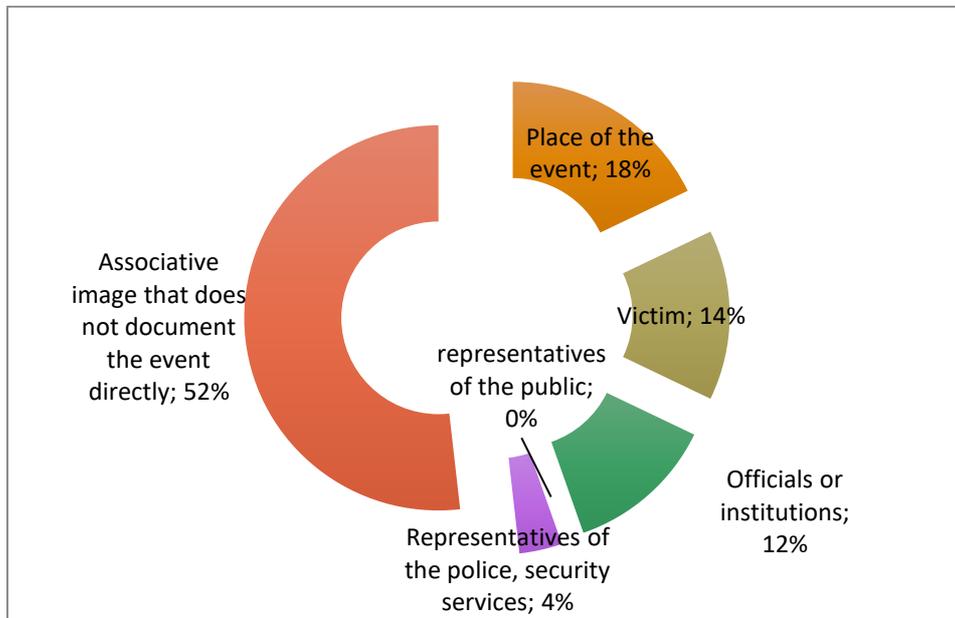
The commenting language can be detected in the following quotation: “Unless a girl has not especially inspected the Arab culture and tradition, studied Islam, and here knowledge of the Middle East is limited to the tourism guidebooks, she cannot foresee what she could face. Thus, commenting the case of Latvian woman, Māra Katarska, who was held captive in Egypt and suffered from the partner’s violence, was said by lawyer Gita Miruškina from association "Patvērums "Drošā māja"" (Shelter “Safe Home”). Although the available information allows concluding what exactly occurred, one, cannot exclude that the woman met someone who “delivers “fresh meet” to a brothel”.

The media reflects the complicated human trafficking issue by association, vaguely (52%), using photos from image banks and trying to create a conditional concept about the publication content (image No. 13). For example, in the context of selling for sex trafficking and prostitution, human trafficking events are illustrated by an image of erotised female legs or showing women in a night club. These images do not speak about the crime, they objectivise the victims, creating an estranging attitude towards their suffering. In the meanwhile, the night club image to illustrate human trafficking creates an impression that institutions of entertainment use enslaved employees.

Associative images in the media have been used also to illustrate international news. For example, messages covering human trafficking at the border of the USA and Mexico have been visualised by the USA flag. In 18% of the cases, human trafficking message images show a place of the event - refugee ship, cattle-shed where the enslaved

employees had been working. In 14% of the cases, the image shows the victim. These are those messages where the victims share their experience, have agreed to have their photo taken (Māra Katarska), or use a partially covered video, whereby the victim cannot be identified. In 12% of the cases, human trafficking has been illustrated by information providers - officials or institutions or the police / safety service (also border guard) representatives' photos - 4%.

Image No. 13. Content of the images (photo or video) in publications dedicated to human trafficking



Human trafficking, as other crimes, are complicated from the point of view of the visual reflection because journalists face ethics dilemma and obligation to protect the victims from new suffering that could be caused by publishing their images. However, it should be noted critically that the so-called lazy journalism that base its content on information given by news agencies, officials and information given by the NGOs fail to critically analyse the events, fail to dispute and assess the expressed opinions. Upon reflecting sex trafficking cases or tendencies, the erotised images rather reveal some taking pleasure or desire to attract the audience's attention, they do not hold any informative

value that helps understand the event or assess the severity of the crime, or the victims' circumstances.

6.1.1. Analysis of the examples

Example No. 1 dean Zeiļa's case

On 4 September 2019, the media obtained information given by the State Police that on 29 August the police detained three persons, including a catholic priest, for sexual abuse of a man in helpless condition. Some NGO had informed about alleged sexual violence. Criminal proceedings on sexual violence and human trafficking were initiated for a group of persons abusing the victim's state of helplessness. Several media (LTV, LSM.lv, Delfi) constantly followed the investigative actions and searched information about this event. Sources of information are various: Representatives from the State Police, Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Latvia, representative from the Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia, representatives from the Roman Catholic Church, including also archbishop Zbigņevs Stankēvičs, representatives from Rēzekne council, politician Jānis Urbanovičs from party "Harmony", employees of social care, the victim, suspected dean Zeiļa, his advocate, residents from Rēzekne. To assess the event, also secondary data and documents have been used, for example, information about Zeiļa from site katolis.lv and statistics about crimes committed by church officials. If frequency and scope of the information provided by the mentioned sources of information is compared, church representatives dominate the media publications by the number.

The main topics and sub-topics: study of the event, police activities, reaction of the Catholic Church, reaction of the residents, responsibility of the social institutions for the event, mood among the believers in Rēzekne, explanation why Zeiļa would continue working at the church after change of the security measures.

In the media opinion, this is a significant topic, the publications seek to assess the event and analyse its context. Delfi stands out by its regular investigation of the event, offer of original content. For example, Delfi journalist goes to Rēzekne and prepares coverage about residents' picket to defend Zeiļa. Delfi analyses also the situation context because it offers a structure of crimes committed by the church officials, to

conclude that the church cannot be related to a high level of crime. Following the information disclosed by the police that sexual abuse of a person with mental disability has been committed, Delfi investigates whether this event leads to systemic problems in institutions of social care. This case has two dilemmas of professional ethics: first, although during investigation the police is not allowed to disclose the detainee's name and it should not have been disclosed to journalists, to secure that the presumption of innocence is observed, Delfi still publishes Zeiļa's name (however, the names of two other detainees have not been mentioned). Second, from the point of view of the journalism ethics, it is a disputable decision to publish the victim's story in detail about the sexual abuse, the material created by LTV "Panorāma" is repeatedly broadcast by other media. Delfi explains that because of dean Zeiļa's influence and because the company talks to the society about its values, therefore in the public interests it was decided to publish the detainee's name.

Journalist Laura Dzērve stresses that she found it unacceptable from the point of view of professional ethics to interview the victim and publish the events in detail.

Laura Dzērve: "I am not a psychologist (a psychologist participates in questioning), I do not have such knowledge and skills to interview a crime victim with mental disabilities. I do not find it justifiable to reflect an event, tell how sexual abuse is carried out."

The journalist was the first person who interviewed dean Zeiļa after operation at the hospital.

Laura Dzērve: "It happened in a rush because I understood: if I knew where he was, colleagues from other media would also soon find it out. As Zeiļa denied any connection to the crime, the interview was not a success. There were no reasons to ask how he met the victim, or other details. Although the dean was very weak after the operation, I did not stress this information in order to avoid creating compassion towards him, I tried to be neutral. In my opinion, the visualisation was correct, I showed beds in a hospital. The dean refused from taking pictures."

Laura Dzērve, who in a team of journalists has worked at this topic, tells that this case had problems with information from the police and from institutions of social care.

She stresses that it would have been very significant to detect the following: "Why a person with mental disabilities came into contact with the alleged offenders and became a human trafficking victim. I am interested in how the paths of the victim and the suspects crossed by taking into account that one of them was a caretaker in the social care centre who works directly with patients with mental disabilities and who probably had experience in communication. It is

significant, as we wrote, that the police or court failed to inform the work place about his status in the criminal proceedings, therefore no clarification of circumstances occurred at his work place. He himself left the job.

Taking into account that the person suffers from mental disabilities, I have a question: can we exclude that he is not a victim of deinstitutionalisation or other bad system? If he, for example, left the institution of social care and went his own way, did anyone check what happened to him afterwards? It was important to me to detect, whether his case is an exception or there are problems in the system that upon “going one’s own way” no one follows the person’s condition afterwards. Unfortunately, I did not get any answers to this question because in the interests of the investigation the police did not disclose what circumstances led to the crime, and organisations that provided support to the victim did not disclose any circumstances in the interests of the victim and the investigation. It was a task that I did not manage.”

In this case, the publication reveals a framework of situation investigation and human rights.

Example No. 2. Litigation on enslaving two milkers in Vaives municipality. The principal information about the litigation is provided by LETA, but Latvijas Avīze has prepared two publications “Slave times in Latvia?” where it reflects the court hearings and provides information about the victims, defendant, shows the prosecutor’s assessment. Artis Drēziņš stresses that he chose this topic because “it is unusual, but it could also be a very significant precedent – no one wants to do the dirty works in rural areas, farms employ people who have no place to live, mentally handicapped people, alcoholics”. The journalist stresses that the topic becomes interesting because of its many nuances, it is not easy to understand a crime, each party has important arguments why the enslavement did or did not occur. To protect the victims, the articles mention only their names, but the other participants were disclosed because the litigation procedures were open. He obtained detailed information at court where witnesses were interrogated for several hours, the only difficulty was to persuade the advocate of the accused farmer to meet the defendant in the case.

Artis Drēziņš: “The court case is followed by other farmers because Latvia has many farms where the workers do dirty, unskilled work and live in similar conditions. They probably are not so informed to protect themselves, but farmers can also be understood because people apply for a job, they are unable to complete the work, they simply eat all the earnings.” Therefore, by expanding this one event the title draws attention to the notion that this practice could be something more than an isolated event.

Articles of Latvijas Avīze show the particular cattle-shed where the enslaved milkers worked because the visualisation used the video of the cattle-shed owner (it was leased to the accused farmer) regarding situation in the particular place. Instead of analysing this event, as analysis sometimes lack sufficient time, and instead of moralising, Artis Drēziņš wanted to tell an unusual story because “in my opinion, the story itself is the best lesson”. While the events develop and in a hope of a fast judgement from the court, the journalist will keep writing about this case. In the materials published until now, the case has been framed in compliance with the framework criteria of enslavement and human rights.

Example No. 3. Enslavement of Tajikistan nationals

The topic about the first case of enslaving third country nationals in Latvia was started by LNT News Service. Information about this case was provided by the State Labour Inspectorate, Ministry of the Interior, NGO Shelter “Safe Home”, representatives of the involved company, victims. By keeping informed about event, a story was developed about alleged relation of a former athlete and Parliament deputy, Viktors Ščerbatihš, with enslavement of Tajikistan nationals. Journalist Ieva Vārna stresses that the event is very important, she used various sources, also documents (employment contract of the enslaved workers), discussion records, met the victims twice. The message of each source, also the information provided about Viktors Ščerbatihš, victims’ statements, were verified, compared, critically assessed.

“I tried to put aside my emotions, and to reflect the event as correctly as possible, without causing harm to any involved party,” says Ieva Vārna. The most difficult job was to visualise the event, she had to search the construction site, registered address of the involved firm, which happened to be in nine-storey multi-apartment buildings.

Ieva Vārna: “For me, the most important thing is to create understanding about this type of crime, otherwise I felt the lack of understanding why such violations are reported at all. All the involved institutions did a quality job to provide information, also the victims were thankful for the quick response. I tried to show everything as neutral as possible, also the shoots of the construction site must show the place, but they may not reveal any other companies, their names, logo. Likewise, I had to show the victims in a reflection, unrecognisable, because they still need to find a job here.”

The journalist informs, the LNT story has been translated in Tajikistan, and after its demonstration another group of guest workers, who were ready to go to Latvia, did not come. Coverage of this event reveals also the framework of human rights.

6.2. Conclusions and discussion

The research of Latvian media shows that coverage of human trafficking is characterised also by the tendencies detected in the media of other countries: effect of campaigns on selection of the topic, domination of the political agenda and information given by officials, limitations to the variety of genres.

Nevertheless, coverage of human trafficking messages is different in Latvia and foreign countries. The information on migration or other human trafficking cases is given by foreign news agencies and other media. These messages have already been framed by the particular editors, and they mainly offer a study of human rights, regulatory framework or cases. They are delivered with informative titles and a full range of information sources. But at the same time, they make a part of the international news routine.

Answers to the research questions.

RQ No. 1. What is the place of human trafficking content on the media agenda?

In the media view, human trafficking is a significant topic, it is given an important place on the media agenda. Interest about the topic determines several message values that are important for the media: uniqueness of the event (one can seldom manage to show these crimes), importance (violation of law), proximity, locality (when speaking of the cases that occur in Latvia or are related to Latvian residents), prominence (connection of a known person in Latvia with potential enslavement). Cases of human trafficking in Latvia are detected by the police or other law enforcement institutions. Coverage of the event is dominated by coverage in compliance with the frequency of information provided by external sources, analytical approach is rare. The coverage of human trafficking is affected by general media practices: speed of information and necessity to immediately notify about new details (in a known or new case of human trafficking), as well as lack of available variety of information sources in cases of human rights. The principal genre of the publications is criminal news that are published in the column of social and political news. Messages dedicated to sex trafficking can be found in the portal sections

addressed to women; therefore, their significance is decreased, and the potential audience is narrowed down. However, during the research period the sex trafficking is the only topic that has been analysed with the aim to help the potential victims avoid potential enslavement (Latvijas Radio 1) or provide a broader analysis how sex trafficking victims can be helped and how the public attitude towards the victims can be changed (Latvijas Avīze).

In the media representatives' view, human trafficking is a significant topic, its coverage is aimed at seeking to explain the essence of these crimes, educate the audience and desire to protect people who might become human trafficking victims. In general, journalists use information provided by the police or other law enforcement institutions, using most energy to get to interview the detainees and victims. This ensures variety of information, objectivity, neutrality, balance, but draws attention away from the necessity to analyse causes of the crime. The media agenda is determined by activities carried out by institutions (police, prosecutor's office, courts, Ministry of the Interior); however, in case of covering Latvian events, the media seek to ensure a broad range of information sources, and human trafficking has been reflected in many forms - the media speak about various related topics. The main sources of information are responsible officials of various levels and experts, when possible, the media uses also the information provided by the accused and victims. Having assessed this practice according to the journalists' professional roles, the coverage of human trafficking discloses the role of monitoring because they follow the policy processes and political actors; certain publications disclose the role of cooperation, when the media and journalists try to support and protect the state policy and actions in this issue.

RQ No. 2. What is the human trafficking framework in the Latvian media content?

Latvia media frame human trafficking in the context of human rights, as enslavement, in relation to security of persons and society, and prostitution. The framework of human trafficking in the media shows that causes of human trafficking are the following: migration, enslavement caused by economic differences in various countries or certain social groups, employers' greed, public security issues (mainly in

the context of migration or labour trafficking), political framework (migration), also prostitution, fictitious marriage (as cause of sex trafficking).

The media does not analyse causes of human trafficking because they mainly study particular cases, collect information about them, and mention the regulatory aspects of human trafficking in this context. The journalists see human trafficking mainly as an expression of criminal offences. Only by following dean Zeiļa's case on sexual abuse and human trafficking, a question is asked about relation of the church with crime in general, as well as the options of social institutions to protect their clients from cases of human trafficking.

The journalists consider that human trafficking is a topic that helps to inform the society, facilitate recognition of this crime, acknowledging that the role of education is important because various expressions of human trafficking (especially labour and sex trafficking) cannot be easily understood.

Artis Drēziņš: "It was not the case that people would be locked in, they could leave the cattle-shed, but they simply had nowhere else to go, and they did not know how to change this situation. This is the group of people who are ill, probably mentally disabled, without education, addicts."

Lack of understanding has been directly noted also when speaking about sex trafficking, when in the assessment of this crime the victims were blamed (analytical material of Latvijas Avīze regarding help to former prostitutes), as well as persons with mental disabilities in cases when the person cannot determine whether he / she is a crime victim.

The media talk about human trafficking mainly by applying a neutral language and titles that correspond to the topic. In cases when the title frames one aspects, it has been a professional method to attract the audience's attention (jauns.lv, delfi.rus.lv and others), or as part of the format (radio and TV stories). A professional approach to this problem is disclosed by decisions on ethics with the aim to protect the crime victims against stereotyping, secondary victimisation, attempts not to cause more harm to their condition.

The journalists see human trafficking as a criminal occurrence, assess expressions of the crimes, are aware that these cases should be covered carefully and neutrally. Therefore, the media publications, texts, as well as visual material show neutral attitude

towards human trafficking victims, they are not blamed or stereotyped. Nevertheless, it has been done by the images, especially in cases of sex trafficking, by associating sex trafficking with work at places of entertainment. The images show human trafficking by approximation because lack of information and in the usual media practices, as well as to avoid identification of the victims, the crimes are reflected by the help of associative images. These images mainly reflect one aspect - the environment or details related to the crime (church attributes, night clubs, when speaking about sex trafficking). Thus, the visualisation (especially photos) lose the documentary features and authenticity.

The journalists are aware that human trafficking crimes are difficult to recognise and assess, but they rarely provide an assessment about quality of solving these crimes, prevention policy and practice. It has been disclosed by the genre analyses because the media present the content dedicated to human trafficking as news, they lack the situation context and tendency analysis, explanations given by the data sources have not been critically assessed, especially the officials' words about human trafficking prevention practice and human trafficking prevention policy in Latvia.

6.3. Proposals to improve the media practice

Upon covering human trafficking, the journalists:

- Use precise terms that are explained in case of necessity;
- Use neutral language, avoiding use of emotionally tinted words upon featuring crimes and involved parties;
- Upon telling about crime victims and offenders, draw attention to precise details and do not use generalised features to characterise individuals (nationality, race, profession, place of residence, level of income or education), whereby representatives of certain groups could be stereotyped;
- Avoid sensationalisation and dramatization when speaking about the crime circumstances and the involved parties;
- Are aware of risks of stereotyping, therefore they are careful and avoid generalisation, they reflect the events, expressions, circumstances precisely;
- In the characterisation of the crime and persons, they include information that discloses the context;

- When reflecting victims, they follow the principles that apply to representatives of vulnerable groups, and they highlight and protect the individuals' rights;
- Carefully check and critically assess information that has been received from official sources, victims, offenders, witnesses, without granting a higher degree of trust to any of the information sources;
- Critically analyse the opinions expressed and activities by officials to allow the public to assess the quality of human trafficking prevention measures and policy;
- Upon facing information sources that express lack of tolerance (use hate speech, discriminate) against human trafficking victims, the journalists (broadcast presenters) actively disassociate themselves to prevent causing an impression that the source of information expresses the media position.

Media editors and producers:

- Take care of variety of human trafficking coverage offering analysis of the events and broader descriptions (features);
- Establish a practice of creating precise and informative titles or broadcast introduction;
- Create formats that analyse human trafficking causes (historical, social conditions, public culture, global processes);
- Explain the editors' decisions to the audience if the human trafficking coverage protects the rights of a certain party, observes the presumption of innocence, cannot access a significant source of information or the publication is encumbered by other important conditions;
- Are aware that one-sided reflection of human trafficking or other complicated problems can cause both negative and positive stereotyping.

In the visual coverage of human trafficking:

- Where possible, use documentary images that portray the place, time and conditions of the crime;
- Create precise and exhaustive signatures under the images, allowing to understand the essence of the publication;

- To decrease objectivisation, avoid sexualised or erotic portrayal of the victims involved in prostitution;
- Take care that crime victims and suspects were not easily recognised;
- In cases when the victim agrees to publish his/her image, assess whether overly exposed images could harm the victim involved in the publication.

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