

3.2. CLASSIFICATION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKERS

Human traffickers can be divided into several groups:

- Persons living in border areas, who assist individual immigrants or small groups to cross the border illegally. They accompany immigrants to the border and show them the direction in which they should go. Some of the people living in border areas are used also as guides by larger trafficking organizations. Truck drivers, who hide and transport immigrants across the border crossings, are also a part of such organized groups.
- Traffickers, who independently recruit persons, wishing to leave the country, accompany them across the "green border" and then return to the country either legally or illegally. Some of such traffickers used to be part of organized trafficking groups and learned how and where to cross the border illegally. Some of them have served in the army at the border.
- Persons who accompany small groups of immigrants within Bulgaria and lead them to a meeting point. There they are boarded on transport vehicles and transported to a shelter, where they stay either for a short or a long period of time.
- Organized groups of traffickers, who are in contact with foreign nationals across the border, use the services of document falsifiers and cooperate with border control officials.
- Criminal groups, using tourist package groups or bureaus for recruiting candidates for employment abroad as a cover. Such groups are the main traffickers of female sex slaves. In cooperation with foreign criminal organizations, they traffic Bulgarian women and girls to brothels in Western Europe, and, lately, also to brothels in the western Balkans.
- Trafficking organizations, operating mostly from abroad and providing false documents, transport and apartments for a sojourn. For immigrants who are well-off, the so-called "safe channels" are provided.

There is a clear difference between traffickers, who conduct illegal services for the immigrants from Bulgaria and other countries (mostly from Asia and Africa), traveling to Western Europe, and the criminal groups, specialized in trafficking and inhuman exploitation of women. The priority of counter-trafficking efforts should therefore be organized criminal groups and the corrupt state officials cooperating with them.

3.3. PRICES OF TRAFFICKING SERVICES

Traffickers are paid between 200 and 10,000 USD, depending on the final destination, the method used for crossing the border, and the means of transport used in the process. The prices depend also on the route used, the size of the group, etc.

According to the data provided by unofficial sources and by people, caught while attempting to cross the border illegally, the prices, depending on the route, are as follows:

- From Istanbul to Sofia 500-700 USD
- From Sofia to Thessaloniki or Athens 700-1,200 USD
- From Sofia through Romania or Yugoslavia to Budapest 1,000-1,200 USD
- From Sofia through Romania, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Slovakia to Austria 2,000-2,300 USD
- From Sofia to Germany 2,000-2,500 USD
- From Sofia to Italy 2,000-2,500 USD
- From Sofia to Denmark or Norway 5,000-6,000 USD