

# EDITOR'S CHOICE OF THE MONTH

ISSUE 17 | SEPTEMBER 2025



**CENTRUL PENTRU STUDIUL DEZVOLTĂRII  
INTERNAȚIONALE ȘI MIGRAȚIEI**  
CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MIGRATION

## **Women's Vulnerability to Human Trafficking in the European Union: An Institutional Analysis through the Lens of Principal-Agent Theory**

*Roxana Diana CONSFERENȚ*

### **Introduction**

Human trafficking represents one of the most persistent and violent violations of fundamental rights, affecting tens of thousands of people each year. Although this phenomenon cuts across multiple social categories, women continue to be disproportionately exposed to exploitation, particularly in forms such as sexual exploitation. According to recent data, more than 60% of identified global trafficking victims are women (UNODC 2024, 3), and sexual exploitation remains the main form of trafficking detected in most European Union member states (Migration and Home Affairs, 2025). These realities confirm that gender-based vulnerability is not only a consequence of human trafficking but also a condition that facilitates it.

This study starts from the premise that international and European regulations provide a solid framework for combating human trafficking, but their implementation at the national level varies significantly. This variation can be explained not only by differences in administrative capacity or resources but also, and more importantly, by the institutional dynamics between the European Union, as the main normative actor, and the member states, as agents implementing these policies. In this context, it becomes necessary to employ a principal-agent theoretical framework to analyze human trafficking, in order to highlight how institutional dysfunctions can perpetuate or even intensify women's vulnerability.

To illustrate these dynamics, the paper includes a comparative case study between Romania and Germany, capturing the differences between a country of origin (Romania) and a country of destination (Germany) in terms of the transposition and implementation of EU anti-



trafficking policies. This case study provides a concrete framework for understanding how European policies, once transposed differently at the national level, affect the vulnerability of trafficked women.

## Methodology

The main objective of this paper is to analyze how dysfunctions in the principal-agent relationship between the European Union and its member states contribute to sustaining women's vulnerability in the context of human trafficking.

To achieve this objective, the research focused on identifying lines of inquiry that capture both the complexity of the human trafficking phenomenon and the institutional relationships that shape European policies in this field. Accordingly, the research question was formulated to reflect the dynamics between European norms and their implementation at the national level, emphasizing the impact of governance dysfunctions on the effective protection of victims. The analysis does not limit itself to a strictly legal perspective but also integrates administrative, institutional, and gender dimensions, in line with the interdisciplinary approach adopted in this study. Thus, the research question is: *How does the principal-agent relationship between EU institutions and member states contribute to the vulnerability of women in the context of human trafficking?*

The methodology follows a mixed approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods. From a qualitative perspective, the study relies on content analysis of the European and national legislative framework, international conventions, and relevant strategic documents. Both legal texts and their application by national institutions were examined, with the aim of identifying discrepancies between formal commitments and implementation practices.

The quantitative component consisted of analyzing official statistical data, such as the percentage of transposition of EU legislation in the field of migration and home affairs, the distribution of victims by sex,

age, and nationality, as well as the frequency of reported cases in Romania and Germany. These data complemented the institutional perspective with measurable indicators regarding effectiveness and vulnerability within national systems.

The main theoretical tool used is principal-agent theory, applied to examine the relationship between the European Union (as principal) and the member states (as agents) in the process of transposing and implementing anti-trafficking policies. The comparative case study between Romania and Germany was designed to highlight institutional and legal differences between a country of origin (Romania) and a country of destination (Germany), in order to assess each state's actual capacity to protect women from exploitation.

### **Theoretical Framework: Principal-Agent Theory and Human Trafficking in the EU**

Principal-agent theory is an analytical tool rooted in the foundations of the new institutional economics (Williamson 1975; Moe 1984; Miller 1992 apud Braun and Guston 2003, 303). It starts from the idea that individuals are rational actors who operate according to well-defined and hierarchized interests. The theory is based on a specific social relationship, namely delegation, between two parties – the principal and the agent – who engage in an exchange of resources. The principal holds resources but lacks the necessary competencies to achieve their goals, and therefore delegates part of their responsibilities to an agent who possesses the required skills (Braun and Guston 2003, 303). From this perspective, delegation is a means by which the principal extends their capacity for action through another actor (Coleman 1990 apud Braun and Guston 2003, 303).

The main problems in this relationship are moral hazard, when the agent exploits informational advantages to avoid tasks, and adverse selection, when a lack of information prevents the choice of a suitable agent (Braun and Guston 2003, 303-304). These risks generate the

phenomenon of agency loss, namely the gap between the optimal action desired by the principal and the actual action taken by the agent (Gailmard 2014, 5). Agency loss does not necessarily reflect institutional failure; it often represents the best possible compromise given costs and informational constraints (Gailmard 2014, 5–6).

The literature suggests several solutions for limiting opportunistic behaviour by agents. One option is the involvement of multiple agents within a system of delegation, which creates a market-like structure and reduces opportunities for shirking responsibility. Alternatively, institutional systems may develop contractual and monitoring mechanisms designed to strike a balance between autonomy and control (Braun and Guston 2003, 304). However, such solutions carry their own limitations, as contracts cannot anticipate all possible behaviours and oversight is costly. The balance between agent autonomy and principal control therefore becomes essential for the effective functioning of delegation.

Both the principal and the agent seek to maximize their own benefits, which may lead to strategic behaviours such as withholding information, avoiding tasks, or manipulating the relationship. Thus, their interaction is characterized by both cooperation and conflict (Braun and Guston 2003, 304). Incentive compatibility is crucial to reducing opportunism (Gailmard 2014, 5), yet contracts and monitoring remain costly and incomplete. While the involvement of multiple agents or contractual mechanisms may mitigate risks, each approach has clear limits (Braun and Guston 2003, 304).

The theory also explains situations where accountability mechanisms do not function perfectly. Dysfunctions may arise even when actors behave rationally, as outcomes of structural constraints and informational asymmetries (Gailmard 2014, 20). The theory therefore provides a useful framework for understanding both the benefits and the limitations of delegation and institutional control. Applying principal-agent theory to human trafficking in the EU highlights how institutional

dysfunctions can contribute to the persistence of the phenomenon, particularly affecting women. Within this framework, the EU acts as the principal, setting strategic directions and the normative framework, while the member states act as agents, responsible for implementation. The success of these policies depends on the degree of compliance by member states, but the relationship is marked by tensions stemming from preference discrepancies, information asymmetries, and opportunistic behaviour (Delreux and Adriaensen 2019, 3).

Delegation generates risks such as shirking (deliberate reduction of effort) and slippage (redirecting policies toward domestic interests), particularly when EU oversight is insufficient (Hawkins et al. apud Menz 2015, 313). Oversight itself is constrained by high costs, the principle of subsidiarity, and sovereignty sensitivities, leading to uneven implementation and unequal protection for victims (Delreux and Adriaensen 2019, 4–9). While national autonomy may have advantages in adapting policies to local contexts, in practice it produces fragmentation and incoherence (Blanton et al. 2018, 4, 8).

The problem is further aggravated by limited state capacity: lack of administrative resources, corruption, and the influence of criminal networks undermine the enforcement of legislation, lowering costs for traffickers and encouraging their activities (Blanton et al. 2018, 1–3; Shelley 2010, 46 apud Blanton et al. 2018, 4). In some cases, state agents are themselves directly involved in trafficking networks, reflecting a distorted relationship in which the agent undermines the principal's mandate (Blanton et al. 2018, 5).

Moreover, cooperation between EU agencies (Frontex, Europol, EUSA) and national authorities is essential but often hindered by lack of coordination and continued reliance on member states (Zhong 2025, 30–34). Examples such as the “hotspot” centers reveal how excessive delegation to EU agencies coexists with insufficient engagement by states, weakening accountability. Similarly, resistance from national



police forces toward Europol demonstrates clear shirking and slippage behaviours (Busuioc et al. 2011; Busuioc 2016 apud Zhong 2025, 34).

Thus, while the EU sets the legal and strategic framework, effectiveness ultimately depends on national agents, whose political will and administrative capacity vary considerably. This dynamic creates gaps between declared objectives and actual implementation, confirming the usefulness of principal-agent theory in explaining the structural vulnerabilities that allow human trafficking to persist within the European Union.

### **Women's Vulnerability and Institutional Dysfunctions**

In the context of combating human trafficking, women's vulnerability is directly linked to the institutional shortcomings of the European Union and its member states. From the perspective of principal-agent theory, this issue can be understood by analyzing the relationship between the European Union as principal, which sets policies and standards, and the member states as agents, responsible for implementing these policies. This delegation relationship is often marked by informational asymmetries, differences in political will, and administrative capacity, all of which undermine the effectiveness of measures designed to protect trafficking victims, particularly women.

The EU presents itself as a complex institutional actor engaged in shaping anti-trafficking policies at the multinational level (FitzGerald and Freedman 2021, 3). Yet, in practice, the voices of trafficked women are frequently excluded from these processes. Anti-trafficking policies often intersect with fields such as border security, asylum, and migration, which means that the perspective of victims – especially women – becomes secondary to security-driven agendas (FitzGerald and Freedman 2021, 1). These broad-brush approaches are reinforced by governance structures that, while formally including “gender expertise,” tend to translate feminist principles into managerial solutions with limited power to challenge inequalities (FitzGerald and Freedman 2021, 5).

In many cases, when experts adopt critical positions or question proposed policies from a gender perspective, their recommendations are disregarded by EU institutions (FitzGerald and Freedman 2021, 6), pointing to institutional resistance to change. Principal-agent theory helps explain this phenomenon: agents (member states) retain a significant degree of discretion, while the principal (the EU) does not always have the tools to correct deviations from common objectives. Moreover, coordination structures tend to privilege the views of national ministries, sidelining alternative voices, including those of victim support organizations (FitzGerald and Freedman 2021, 10–12).

The problem is aggravated by the lack of genuine accountability for member states that fail to effectively implement anti-trafficking measures. Women's vulnerability is thus perpetuated by the shortcomings of the delegation system, which fails to ensure compliance with shared commitments. For example, neo-abolitionist policies that conflate trafficking with prostitution ignore the complexity of victims' experiences and contribute to their stigmatization (FitzGerald and Freedman 2021, 8). This normative framework, upheld by member states through rigid national policies, limits the EU's ability to promote a human-rights-based approach.

Fouladvand and Ward (2019) offer a complementary perspective, emphasizing that vulnerability is a general human condition that becomes more acute in contexts of socio-economic and institutional crisis. Women who end up being trafficked for forced labor or sexual exploitation are often those already affected by austerity measures, lack of social protection, or systemic corruption. In such cases, member states, acting as agents, fail to fulfill the mandate entrusted to them by the EU, thereby perpetuating systemic dysfunction.

Corruption among authorities, insufficient resources, or lack of political will act as structural factors that facilitate trafficking and hinder the identification of victims (Fouladvand and Ward 2019, 44–47). At the same time, women from marginalized communities, such as Roma



women or those from rural areas, are particularly vulnerable, not only due to economic hardship but also because of the absence of institutional protection measures (Lesko 2005 apud Fouladvand and Ward 2019, 48; Mece 2016 apud Fouladvand and Ward 2019, 48). These realities highlight a profound imbalance between the EU's objectives as principal and the performance of its agents (member states) in adapting policies to the real needs of victims.

According to principal-agent theory, shirking occurs when the agent, benefiting from its autonomy, avoids delegated tasks, whether out of indifference or in pursuit of political or economic self-interest. The lack of meaningful state engagement in protecting trafficked women thus becomes a form of agency loss, whereby the EU fails to ensure consistency and effectiveness in its intervention. Women's vulnerability is often the product of state policies, laws, procedures, or practices which, instead of mitigating risk, exacerbate it (Fouladvand and Ward 2019, 41-47).

In a context where migration control is prioritized over victim protection, measures such as border closures, migrant detention, or forced deportations contribute to the creation of "situational vulnerability," which pushes individuals - especially women - toward informal networks, including traffickers (Fouladvand and Ward 2019, 40-48). These realities expose a major dysfunction in the principal-agent relationship: although the EU sets clear objectives for preventing trafficking and protecting victims, implementation remains fragmented, contradictory, and sometimes even harmful.

Thus, women's vulnerability to trafficking in the EU is not merely the result of economic or cultural conditions but is directly tied to the institutional system's failure to function coherently. From a principal-agent perspective, this dysfunction is manifested in the absence of effective control by the principal over its agents, resulting in divergent behaviours, lack of accountability, and ultimately the perpetuation of structural injustice against the most exposed groups, particularly women.

## **Comparative Analysis between Romania and Germany: The Principal-Agent Theory Applied to Gender Vulnerability**

It can be argued that the European Union currently has a broad legislative and institutional framework for combating human trafficking. This framework is built on relevant international conventions, complemented by directives, policy strategies, and multiple institutional mechanisms, integrating a vision based on human rights, gender sensitivity, and international cooperation. However, the effectiveness of this system largely depends on the capacity of member states to coherently transpose and implement the norms and strategies adopted at the European level. This demonstrates the relevance of principal-agent theory in analyzing human trafficking. In the absence of effective monitoring and interest-alignment mechanisms, the risk of “agency loss” becomes significant, undermining the efficiency of interventions and the real protection of victims. Cooperation and coordination are therefore imperative in transforming policies into tangible outcomes, particularly for the most vulnerable groups, such as women victims of trafficking.

A comparative analysis of how Romania and Germany have transposed and implemented EU legislation on human trafficking highlights differences between the two states in terms of institutional capacity, political priorities, and sensitivity to the gender dimension. From the perspective of principal-agent theory, the European Union acts as the principal, imposing directives and common objectives alongside monitoring mechanisms (e.g. GRETA or the European Commission), while member states are agents tasked with implementing these policies. The discrepancies identified in the application of norms reflect what is known as “agency loss,” meaning the deviation of the agent’s behaviour from the interests of the principal (Gailmard 2014, 5), caused either by lack of capacity or by lack of political will. Within European regulatory networks, direct control by the principal over the agents is often weak or nonexistent, which allows for institutional deviations, particularly in the absence of formal enforcement tools (Blauberger and Rittberger 2014, 369).

Romania, as a country of origin, faces persistent structural vulnerabilities that hinder the coherent implementation of EU anti-trafficking policies. Although the legislative framework has been formally harmonized through the Criminal Code and Law 678/2001, and recent amendments (Law no. 202/2024 and Law no. 269/2024) have brought significant progress, the effectiveness of enforcement is undermined by weak institutional coordination, lack of resources, and political instability (Constantin 2025; ANITP 2024). These conditions generate a high degree of “agency loss,” as implementation fails to meet the standards assumed at the European level, especially regarding the protection of trafficked women. Although women account for 80% of victims (ANITP 2024, 10), protection policies do not clearly reflect a gender-sensitive approach, and the concept of “vulnerability” remains vaguely defined, inconsistently applied in court jurisprudence. Moreover, the limited number of specialized lawyers, the lack of training for judges, and the ineffective application of the non-punishment principle contribute to perpetuating a system that does not sufficiently protect victims.

Germany, on the other hand, as a country of destination, has stronger institutional capacity and legislation relatively well-adapted to the federal context. The transposition of Directive 2011/36/EU was delayed but led to significant amendments in the Criminal Code (Sections 232, 232a) and the adoption of additional provisions for the protection of victims, including those experiencing psychological abuse. However, from a principal-agent perspective, another type of “agency loss” emerges: discrepancies among Länder in implementing legislation and the absence of a national referral mechanism for victims. Variation across Länder reflects structural differences in the design of regulatory networks, which can be more rigid or more permissive depending on the degree of convergence among the actors involved (Blauberger and Rittberger 2014, 372). Although Germany has developed counseling centers and compensation mechanisms for victims, access to these services varies by region, and inter-institutional cooperation remains weak in certain areas.



Thus, even though the agent possesses strong means, the principal's control is incomplete, and performance falls short of expectations.

These institutional differences are reflected in how women's vulnerability to human trafficking manifests in practice. In Romania, the direct exposure of young women from disadvantaged backgrounds facilitates recruitment and exploitation, while in Germany the main challenges concern the identification of victims and ensuring equal access to adequate support services.

A common critical issue in both states is the deficient application of the principle of non-punishment for crimes committed under coercion. Although this principle is recognized in both legal systems, its inconsistent application in court illustrates insufficient principal control over the agent regarding the *de facto* implementation of victims' rights. This is particularly relevant for women trafficked for sexual exploitation, who are more frequently subjected to multiple forms of coercion (emotional, psychological, economic). Trafficking victims may thus be unfairly held criminally liable for acts committed under coercion or as a result of exploitation. Without adequate legal safeguards, such individuals risk being prosecuted rather than recognized as victims.

The differences between the two states can be explained, in principal-agent logic, through several mechanisms. In Romania's case, the higher degree of dependence on external support (EU funds, international expertise) and weak administrative capacity encourage opportunistic behaviour by the agent, which formally complies with EU requirements but fails to invest sufficient resources in implementation. In Germany's case, the agent's behaviour is influenced by administrative fragmentation inherent in federalism, which reduces the ability to provide a uniform response to the principal's directives. Thus, although Germany appears to be a more "disciplined" agent, intra-Länder variation undermines implementation effectiveness.

Another relevant aspect is the relationship between normative transposition and practical implementation. Both states have formally

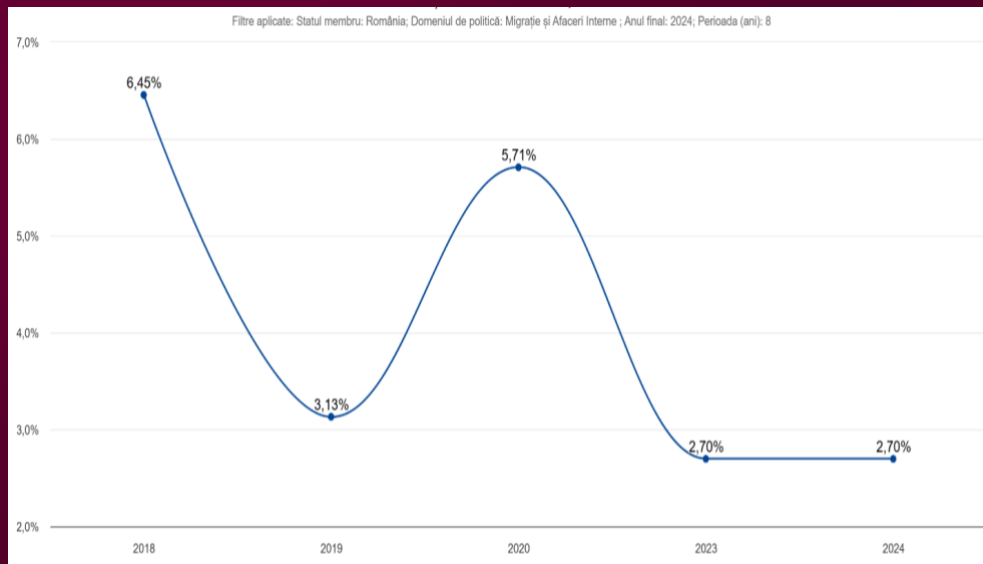
transposed the directive, but from that point their paths diverge: while Germany has functional but fragmented support mechanisms for victims, in Romania the lack of adequate infrastructure (centers, specialized personnel, clear procedures) leads to uneven or superficial enforcement of rights provided by EU legislation. This again illustrates the discrepancy between the principal's requirements and the agent's actions, where not only political will but also effective capacity limits compliance with the principal's expectations.

Sensitivity to the gender dimension of trafficking also differs substantially between the two states. In Germany, national action plans explicitly address gender inequalities, psychological trauma, and the need for differentiated protection (Council of Europe 2024), while in Romania such aspects are addressed more formally, without clear indicators or specific measures (Council of Europe 2021). This contrast suggests that the German agent, though imperfect, is better aligned with the values promoted by the principal, including gender mainstreaming in public policies.

An important indicator for evaluating member states' ability to effectively implement EU legislation is the transposition deficit. This indicator refers to the percentage of EU legislative acts not fully or timely transposed into national law by a member state. In simpler terms, it measures the delay or incompleteness of EU directive transposition into domestic legislation. Although this indicator is general and not specific to human trafficking, the field of migration and home affairs, where trafficking legislation is included, offers a relevant framework for comparative analysis.

For Romania, data available for the period 2018–2024 show a fluctuating but overall improving trend (Figure 1):

**Figure 1. Trends in the Transposition Deficit (Romania)**



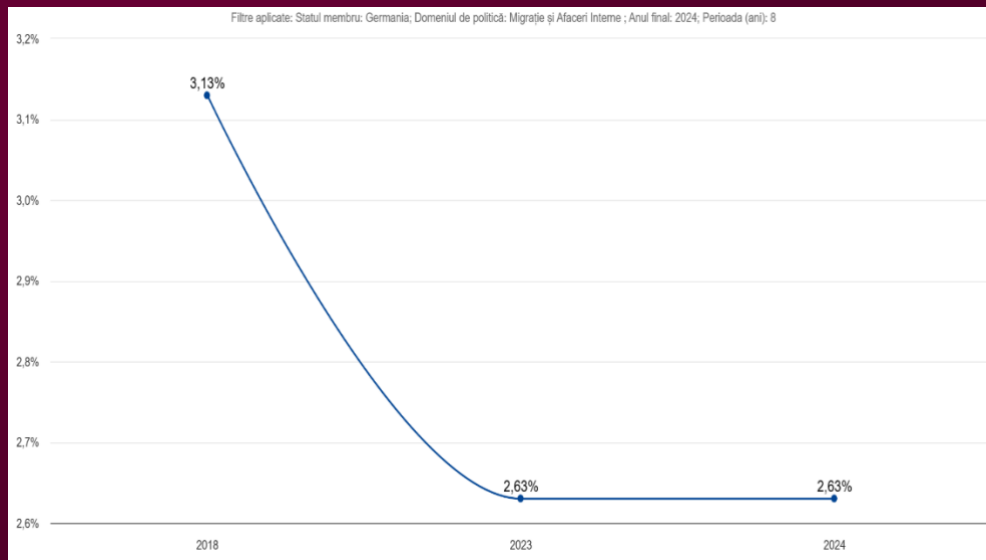
**Source: Comisia Europeană n.d.**

The high level recorded in 2018 (6.45%) can be associated with structural deficiencies in the legislative process and limited administrative capacity, aspects frequently highlighted in official reports (Council of Europe 2021; USDOS 2024a). Although a significant decrease can be observed in subsequent years, the increase in 2020 illustrates the persistence of implementation challenges, including adaptation to new EU policy requirements in the field of trafficking. The stabilized value of 2.70% in 2023 and 2024 suggests a certain degree of institutional consolidation.

For Germany, data are available for three relevant years (Figure 2):

**Figure 2. Trends in the Transposition Deficit (Germany)**





***Source: European Commission n.d.***

Although Germany's values are generally lower than those of Romania, they still point to a persistent structural problem of transposition, which is all the more notable given Germany's reputation as a member state with high administrative capacity. The 2.63% level in 2023 and 2024 shows that, while Germany has overcome earlier transposition difficulties (e.g., the delayed implementation of Directive 2011/36/EU until 2016), certain bottlenecks – stemming from the federal structure and the autonomy of the Länder – continue to negatively influence compliance rates.

Thus, applying the principal-agent theory to the cases of Romania and Germany highlights that the formal transposition of EU legislation is not sufficient to guarantee the effective protection of trafficking victims, particularly women. Institutional factors, administrative capacity, political will, and sensitivity to gender inequalities profoundly influence the behaviour of member states as agents of the European Union. Therefore, reducing the phenomenon of "agency loss" in this field requires not only sanctions or conditionality imposed by the principal, but also sustainable investments in infrastructure, professional training, and policies centered on the rights and real needs of victims. The general conclusion is that the effective protection of trafficking victims –

especially women – and the fight against this phenomenon depend not only on legislative harmonization but also on the ability of member states to put into practice the principles of equality, justice, and dignity promoted at the European level.

## **Conclusions**

This paper aimed to analyze the way in which institutional dysfunctions in the relationship between the European Union and its member states contribute to the persistence of women's vulnerability in the context of human trafficking. Using principal-agent theory, the research has shown that although the EU normative framework is consolidated and well-structured, its application at the national level remains fragmented and often inconsistent, particularly with regard to the protection of women.

Women's vulnerability is shaped by interconnected factors such as pre-existing gender inequalities, limited access to economic resources, the absence of support networks, and deficiencies in public prevention policies. These vulnerabilities manifest differently in Romania and Germany: in Romania, through the direct exposure of young women from disadvantaged backgrounds to recruitment and exploitation, and in Germany, through persistent challenges in identifying victims and ensuring equal access to adequate support services.

Coordination between the European and national levels remains insufficient. Instruments such as Directive 2011/36/EU or the EU Strategy 2021–2025 include clear provisions on victim protection and the integration of a gender perspective, yet these requirements are not consistently translated into effective national policies. Romania has adopted relevant legislative reforms, but implementation problems persist, while Germany, despite having a more developed legal framework, faces fragmented and uneven application across the Länder.

These discrepancies directly affect the level of protection offered to victims. The lack of effective monitoring and impact assessment mechanisms, combined with ambiguities in institutional responsibilities, contributes to the persistence of structural weaknesses. Principal-agent theory provides a relevant explanation, illustrating how the EU, as the “principal,” exercises insufficient control over its “agents” (the member states), leading to institutional losses and inequalities in victim protection.

Integrating the gender dimension into anti-trafficking policies is essential but, in practice, remains incomplete. Although women constitute the majority of identified victims, national legislation often addresses vulnerability in generic terms. GRETA’s recommendations and Directive 2011/36/EU call for measures tailored to gender-specific needs, but their concrete application remains limited. In this regard, the effective implementation of the Istanbul Convention, which recognizes violence against women as a form of systemic discrimination, could provide a necessary complementary framework for developing coherent prevention and protection policies.

Therefore, women’s vulnerability in the context of human trafficking reflects institutional deficiencies in the enforcement of EU norms, rather than being solely the result of individual or cultural factors. Reducing these vulnerabilities requires the genuine integration of a gender perspective across all stages of legislative and administrative processes, the clarification of institutional responsibilities, and the strengthening of monitoring mechanisms. The relationship between the European Union and its member states must be reinforced not only on legal grounds but also as an active partnership in addressing the structural inequalities that enable human trafficking to persist.



## Bibliography:

- Agenția Națională Împotriva Traficului de Persoane (ANITP). 2024. „STRATEGIA NAȚIONALĂ ÎMPOTRIVA TRAFICULUI DE PERSOANE pentru perioada 2024-2028.” Accessed on 23 May, 2025. Available at: [https://sgglegis.gov.ro/legislativ/docs/2024/04/hqv3c0\\_znjkbrd9s45tm.pdf](https://sgglegis.gov.ro/legislativ/docs/2024/04/hqv3c0_znjkbrd9s45tm.pdf)
- Blanton, Robert G., Shannon Lindsey Blanton, and Dursun Peksen. 2018. “Confronting Human Trafficking: The Role of State Capacity.” *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 37 (4): 471–89. Accessed on 25 February, 2025. Available at: doi:10.1177/0738894218789875.
- Blauburger, M., and Rittberger, B. 2014. “Conceptualizing and theorizing EU regulatory networks.” *Regulation & Governance* 9 (4): 367–376. Accessed on 23 May, 2025. Available at: doi:10.1111/rego.12064
- Braun, Dietmar, and David H. Guston. 2003. “Principal-Agent Theory and Research Policy: An Introduction.” *Science and Public Policy* 30 (5): 302–308. Accessed on 25 February, 2025. Available at: doi:10.3152/147154303781780290.
- Comisia Europeană. n.d. „Transpunerea directivelor.” Accessed on 24 May, 2025. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/implementing-eu-law/transposition-directives/ro>
- Constantin, Eduard. 2025. “Legislative Changes Regarding Trafficking and Exploitation of Vulnerable Persons – Evolution and Current Justifications.” *International Journal of Legal and Social Order* 5 (1). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.55516/ijlso.v5i1.245>.
- Council of Europe. 2024. *Evaluation Report: Germany. Third Evaluation Round: Access to Justice and Effective Remedies for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings*. Strasbourg: GRETA. Accessed on 20 May, 2025. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/greta-evaluation-report-on-germany-third-evaluation-round-focus-access/1680b04977>
- Council of Europe. 2021. *Evaluation Report: Romania. Third Evaluation Round: Access to Justice and Effective Remedies for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings*. Strasbourg: GRETA. Accessed on 20 May, 2025. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/evaluation-report-on-the-implementation-of-the-council-of-europe-conve/1680a2b0f8>
- Delreux, Tom, and Johan Adriaensen. 2019. “Principal-Agent Analysis and the European Union.” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, October. Accessed on 24 February, 2025. Available at: doi:10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1048.
- FitzGerald, Sharron, and Jane Freedman. 2021. “Where Is the Justice in EU Anti-Trafficking Policy? Feminist Reflections on European Union Policy-Making

Processes." *European Journal of Women's Studies* 28 (4): 440–454. Accessed on 28 April, 2025. Available at: doi:10.1177/13505068211029324.

- Fouladvand, Shahrzad, and Tony Ward. 2019. "Human Trafficking, Vulnerability and the State." *The Journal of Criminal Law* 83 (1): 39–54. Accessed on 27 February, 2025. Available at: doi:10.1177/0022018318814373.
- Gailmard, Sean. 2014. "Accountability and Principal-Agent Theory." In *Oxford Handbook of Public Accountability*, edited by Mark Bovens, Robert E. Goodin and Thomas Schillemans. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Migration and Home Affairs. 2025. "New Progress report on combatting Trafficking in Human Beings." Accessed on 13 May, 2025. Available at: [https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/new-progress-report-combatting-trafficking-human-beings-2025-01-20\\_en](https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/new-progress-report-combatting-trafficking-human-beings-2025-01-20_en)
- Menz, Georg. 2015. "The Promise of the Principal-Agent Approach for Studying EU Migration Policy: The Case of External Migration Control." *Comparative European Politics* 13 (3): 307–324. Accessed on 24 February, 2025. Available at: doi:10.1057/cep.2013.29.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. 2024. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2024*. United Nations Publication.
- U.S. Department of State (USDOS). 2024a. "2024 Trafficking in Persons Report: Romania." Accessed on 24 May, 2025. Available at: <https://www.state.gov/reports/2024-trafficking-in-persons-report/romania/>
- Zhong, Yichen. 2025. "A Principal-Agent Analysis of Inter-Agency Cooperation in EU Border Management." *Journal of European Integration* 47 (1): 23–42. Accessed on 23 February, 2025. Available at: doi:10.1080/07036337.2024.2356843.

**To republish or redistribute the content published by the Centre for the Study of International Development and Migration, please contact us at the e-mail address: [mdim@politice.ro](mailto:mdim@politice.ro).**

**WEBSITE:** <https://dim.politice.ro/>

**SOCIAL MEDIA:**

Facebook: - <https://www.facebook.com/mdim.snsipa>;

Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/mdim.snsipa> ;

YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/@mdim\\_fsp](https://www.youtube.com/@mdim_fsp)