

EMN Roundtable on Migrant Smuggling

Brussels, 21.03.2016

Social media and people smuggling

Andrea Di Nicola (Scientific coordinatore of eCrime – Università degli Studi di Trento)

Andrea Di Nicola \ Social media and people smuggling
\ 21st March 2016

Section 1

How do we know what we know

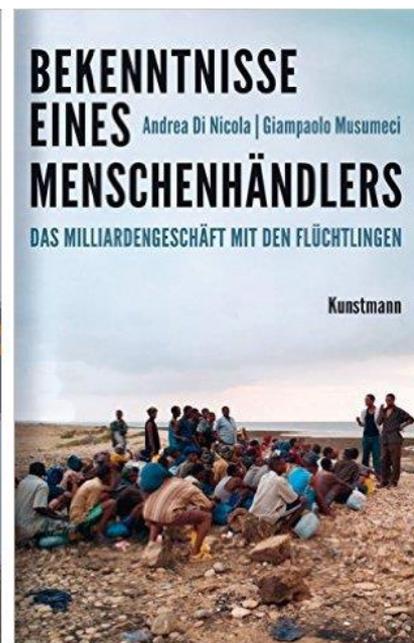
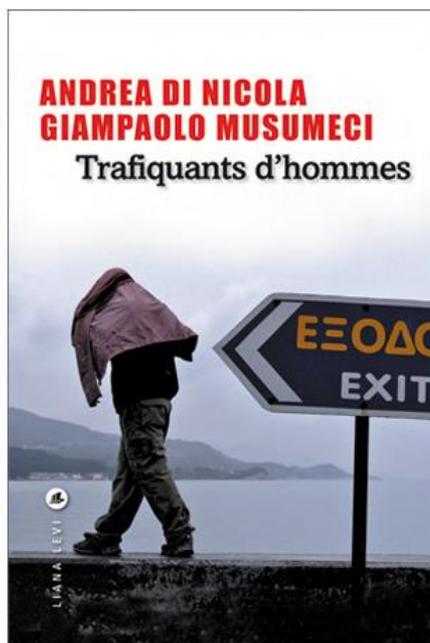
Confessions of a human smuggler

Chiarelettere, 2014 and 2015

“ Moses was the first smuggler in history, and I'm Moses

”

[Aleksandr, Siberian smuggler]



Virtual ethnography on Facebook

 **لقمان زواراة**
8 mai, 22:31

لمن يهمه الامر من الاخوة السوريين
السودان لاتحتاج فيزة فقط تكت
من سودان إلى ليبيا يوجد طريق صحراوي على ضمانتي بعد وصول لليبيا وليبتي
تجهز رحلات بقوارب ممتازة لايطاليا
ويلي بدو اي استفسار يحكي معي
00218917267022

 **سفر للسوريين من تركيا الى اوروبا**
17 aprile alle ore 18.55 · 🌐

السلام عليكم
الى الأخوة الراغبين بالسفر من اسطنبول على متن بواخر بطول 80 متر والطلعة من
اسطنبول الطلعة يوم الاثنين باذن الله للجادين التواصل عبر الارقام
00905376737968 مكالمة +فاير 00201010744500 فايبر للاستفسار اكثر...

[Visualizza traduzione](#)

18:35 33%

البحر والغرامى
Ultima volta online un attimo fa

Questo numero non è presente nell'elenco di contatti

Aggiungi Blocca

Oggi

Chiamata in uscita (00:00) 18:13

Salam Alaikom 18:14

Ana Ibrahim Dafe 18:14

Nuovi messaggi

عليكم السلام 18:21

الف هلا بيك عيوني 18:21

تفضل 18:21

+ 🐾 |bigita per comporre 📞

Internet and human trafficking and smuggling: an EU project

Surf and Sound



Improving the knowledge on the use of the Internet (including social media) in the migration-related crimes (trafficking in human beings, smuggling of migrants and asylum seekers) by exploring the visible/dark Web in order to draft guidelines for the identification of potential at risk Web contents and/or data, and to spread such knowledge via training/dissemination activities.

Project title

www.surfandsound.eu - Improving and sharing knowledge on the Internet role in the human trafficking process

Funding body

European Commission - DG Home Affairs

Funding programme

Prevention of and Fight against Crime
ISEC 2013

Andrea Di Nicola \ Social media and people smuggling
\ 21st March 2016

Section 2

What we know

What is the role and what are the effects of social media on people smuggling?

Effects on:

1. Organization of deviants (of smugglers, of criminal networks). Recruitment of workforce. Connections among criminals. Example: Aleksandr
2. Organization of deviance (criminal activities). Recruitment phase. Examples in FB (to advertise specific trips, to liveblog progresses of clients across the sea, to share stories and advice in chat rooms for migrants, to tone down concerns over migrant safety)

Keywords:

Anonymity

Speed

Trust

Reduction of law enforcement risk

Expansion of operations and penetration

Are social media really playing an increasing role in the smuggling business (compared to some years ago)?

More and more evidence

Spread of internet and smartphones

More and more asylum seekers, also with smartphones

Rational, situational approach

Similar uses in other organized crime activities

Recent Facebook statements (to USA TODAY): *"It's against Facebook's community standards to coordinate or encourage human smuggling, and we remove any such content as soon as we become aware of it. We encourage people to use the reporting links found across our site so that our team of experts can review content swiftly."*

Are social media used to the (dis)advantage of smugglers and/or smuggled migrants?

Advantages for smugglers

Chip and effective ads

Direct and fast communication of prices, itineraries, tools, document options

Accelerator for the negotiation phase

Reduction of distance

Building of trust (sentences, telephone numbers, private talks, other clients)

Advantages and disadvantages for migrants

Comparison

Counseling

Web communities, networking among migrants and asylum seekers

Risk assessment

Deception

Are social media used as a screen by smugglers hiding behind pseudonyms?

They use pseudonyms, but as it happens in the real world

Coupled with Viber, strong anonymity

Technology... acts as a screen. Smugglers often hide behind pseudonyms and change SIM cards, making it impossible for migrants to make contact if there is a problem (according to Interpol)

.

Andrea Di Nicola \ Social media and people smuggling
\ 21st March 2016

Section 3

Where we can go from here

What can/should be done about it? Can such content be prevented/identified/removed?

ICT tool to automatically identify people smuggling related contents over the internet

Profiling of potential at risk web contents

Crawling

Semantic engine

Classification (definition of risk scores)

Support for intelligence analysis and investigation

Data and information for tactical and strategic analysis

Strong connection among researchers, law enforcement agencies, public prosecutors and social media

Do social media offer innovative ways to actors fighting smuggling?

Useful source for anyone trying to track the routes and strategies of the smuggling networks

Awareness campaigns for potential 'clients'

How to keep up to date with this and with links between crime and Internet/social media?

A multi-stakeholder observatory?

Private-public dialogue

Interdisciplinary work

Applied research for operational purposes

Involvement of social media

Constant monitoring

EMN Roundtable on Migrant Smuggling

Brussels, 21.03.2016

Social media and people smuggling

Andrea Di Nicola (Scientific coordinatore of eCrime – Università degli Studi di Trento)