**DESIrE** is a project that has received funding from the European Union’s Internal Security Fund Police (2014-2020) under grant agreement no. 4000008408. Additional information about the project and the consortium can be found at www.project-desire.eu.

**Deliverable No. 1.4:**
Report on Demand for Sexual Services that can fuel Sexual Exploitation in the Context of Human Trafficking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project acronym</th>
<th>DESIrE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project title</td>
<td>DEmand for Sexual Exploitation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant number</td>
<td>4000008408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start date of project</td>
<td>02 January 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>24 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractual delivery date</td>
<td>30 June 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual delivery date</td>
<td>10 July 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead beneficiary</td>
<td>Prof. Conny Rijken &amp; Maria Shaidrova (TiU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing beneficiary</td>
<td>Dr Wanjiku Kaima-Atterhög &amp; Marina Nart (UU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr Chloé Brière, Sibel Top &amp; Amy Weatherburn (VUB), UW and FLIGHT (reviewers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissemination level</td>
<td>public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Version</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table of Contents

Change Records .................................................................................................................................................. 3
Acronyms .......................................................................................................................................................... 3
Executive summary ............................................................................................................................................ 5
  1. Introduction .................................................................................................................................................. 6
  2. Holistic approach to studying the sex industry ........................................................................................ 8
  3. Conceptualisation of demand: An economic perspective and beyond ............................................... 9
     3.1. Services versus goods .......................................................................................................................... 9
     3.2. Economic approach to demand/supply terminology ........................................................................ 10
     3.3. Identifying actors and markets in the sex industry ........................................................................... 12
     3.4. Interrelation of actors who are supplying and demanding services within different markets in the sex industry ........................................................................................................... 16
  4. Sexual exploitation, coercion and capacity to take decisions in the sex industry ................................ 17
     4.1. Theoretical explanation of exploitation ............................................................................................ 18
     4.2. The paradox of “choice” in the context of vulnerability .................................................................. 20
     4.3. Coercion and examples of coercion in the sex industry .................................................................... 21
     4.4. Sexual exploitation in the sex industry .............................................................................................. 23
     4.5. Trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation ............................................. 25
  5. Explanation of decision-making processes of economic actors through cost-benefit approach .......... 27
     5.1. Cost-benefit approach ....................................................................................................................... 27
     5.2. Individual characteristics and the context that influences choices of facilitators, clients and sex workers ........................................................................................................................................... 29
  6. Conclusion ....................................................................................................................................................... 37
References ............................................................................................................................................................ 39
Change Records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reason for change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>Prof. Conny Rijken &amp; Maria Shaidrova (TiU), Dr Wanjiku Kaim-Atterhög &amp; Marina Nart (UU), Dr Chloé Brière &amp; Sibel Top (VUB)</td>
<td>02/2017 - 06/2017</td>
<td>Literature Reivew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>Prof. Conny Rijken &amp; Maria Shaidrova (TiU)</td>
<td>9 June 2017</td>
<td>First draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>VUB, FLIGHT, UU, UW</td>
<td>16 June 2017</td>
<td>Review by partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>Prof. Conny Rijken &amp; Maria Shaidrova (TiU), Dr Chloé Brière, Sibel Top &amp; Amy Weatherburn (VUB)</td>
<td>21 June 2017</td>
<td>Amendments by TiU and VUB &amp; review by Independent Reviewer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>Amy Weatherburn (VUB)</td>
<td>30 June 2017</td>
<td>Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>Dr Wanjiku Kaim-Atterhög &amp; Marina Nart (UU)</td>
<td>8 July 2017</td>
<td>Review and update to section 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>Amy Weatherburn (VUB)</td>
<td>10 July 2017</td>
<td>Final version</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A-Z</th>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>DESirE DoA</td>
<td>DEmand for Sexual Exploitation In Europe Description of Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>Expert Reflection Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>FLIGHT</td>
<td>FLIGHT, NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>THB, TiU</td>
<td>Trafficking in human beings, Tilburg University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>UU, UW</td>
<td>University of Uppsala, University of Warsaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>VUB</td>
<td>Vrije Universiteit Brussels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>WP</td>
<td>Work Package</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D. 1.4. - Report on Demand for Sexual Services that can fuel Sexual Exploitation in the Context of Human trafficking

⚠️ The information contained in this document is provided by the copyright holders "as is" and any express or implied warranties, including, but not limited to, the implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose are disclaimed. In no event shall the members of the DESIrE collaboration, including the copyright holders, or the European Union be liable for any direct, indirect, incidental, special, exemplary, or consequential damages (including, but not limited to, procurement of substitute goods or services; loss of use, data, or profits; or business interruption) however caused and on any theory of liability, whether in contract, strict liability, or tort (including negligence or otherwise) arising in any way out of the use of the information contained in this document, even if advised of the possibility of such damage.
Executive summary

The overall objective and expected impact of the DESIrE project is to provide a deepened understanding, based on, empirical and comparative research, on the extent to which law and policy can be used as a way to reduce trafficking in human beings. In this report we build upon the deliverables submitted under the Work Package 1\(^1\) of the DESIrE project. The work undertaken this far in the DESIrE project has consisted of three stages. Firstly, demand and supply in the context of the sex industry were conceptualized using an economic approach. At this stage, we mapped all markets involved in the sex industry, and identified which actors operate within these markets. Furthermore, we aimed to illustrate how actors involved in the sex industry are interrelated and what influence their decisions and willingness to supply/demand services (e.g., cost-benefit analysis) to show the complexities in the sex industry. Secondly, we refer to exploitation theory in order to develop a more comprehensive conceptual definition of sexual exploitation that provides a deeper understanding of this complex phenomena within and beyond the context of human trafficking. A more comprehensive definition of sexual exploitation will also serve the purpose of understanding the possible motivations behind it from the side of facilitators of sexual services and clients. Thirdly, we examined the international legal definition of human trafficking\(^2\) and identified its shortcomings for addressing sexual exploitation. We further examine the role of demand/supply in the context of trafficking in human beings. The report is a state of the art based on literature review. Based on the data collected in the empirical part of the DESIrE project new insights might give rise to further develop the findings in this report.

In line with the broader aims of the DESIrE project, the report seeks to understand how human trafficking for sexual exploitation can occur within the sex industry and reflect upon what needs to be done in order to develop a useful tool for designing new effective policies in order to prevent human trafficking for sexual exploitation by using a holistic approach to the sex industry (e.g., make policies more specific by focusing on one particular group of actors, while taking into account how they are related to other actors in the sex industry).\(^3\) As a caveat, sexual exploitation and trafficking in human beings for the purpose for sexual exploitation are discussed within the sex industry; although it is recognised that incidence of sexual exploitation can also be documented in the context of labour exploitation and forced marriages.

---


3. This report is based on the literature review performed by the consortium members of the DESIrE project (Dr Wanijku Kaimé-Atterhög & Marina Nart (UU), Dr Chloé Brière & Sibel Top (VUB). In the remaining work packages of the DESIrE project, we intend to confirm or expand given theoretical insights.
1. Introduction

Over the past twenty years, demand reduction in the context of human trafficking prevention have been debated extensively both in public and academic spheres. One of the first campaigns aimed at “ending demand” was launched by a group of feminists called the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women in 1988 (Cyprus, 2015). They were actively lobbying for the criminalization of male clients and viewed all forms of sex work as exploitative and a violation of human rights (Cyprus & Vogel, 2015; Wijers & Ditmore, 2003). At that time, demand was mainly associated with male clients purchasing sexual services. Other social activists did not support these radical feminist stances, for example, a counter-movement appeared in 1990, the Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP). They emphasized the importance of distinguishing between consensual and forced prostitution for understanding sexual exploitation (Cyprus & Vogel, 2015). A similar group, the Human Rights Caucus, was especially involved in negotiations on the UN Trafficking Protocol by advocating the rights of sex workers (Wijers & Ditmore, 2003). They mainly opposed the view of the CATW about commercial sex work being exploitative in nature. Eventually, social activism bore its fruits, when in 2000 the first international legal definition of trafficking in persons was presented in the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children, 2000 (hereinafter the Palermo Protocol). The Palermo Protocol included a call “to discourage the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation of persons, especially women and children, that leads to trafficking” (Article 9 (5) UN Palermo Protocol, emphasis added). A central role in Article 9 was given to the concepts of demand and exploitation, which are therefore crucial for understanding how to respond to this call. However, the Protocol did not include a robust formulation of either of these concepts.

Despite the relative lack of conceptualization, the call of the UN Palermo Protocol was taken seriously by organizations and policymakers who attempted to implement different demand reduction strategies and policies at regional and national levels. For example, in the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings from 2005 and the EU Directive 2011/36/EU, the problem of demand in the context of trafficking was emphasized (Cyprus & Vogel, 2015), albeit only in the context of criminalizing the use of services provided by victims of human trafficking. Additionally, within the EU, demand-related measures were discussed: the EU Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA invites Member States to “consider taking measures to establish as a criminal offence the use of services (...) with the knowledge that the person (providing them) is a victim” of trafficking and the “EU Strategy towards the eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings” (2012-2016) also focused on demand reduction strategies. The Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT), a group composed of UN-affiliated organisations, published a report dedicated to the question of demand in the context of prevention of human trafficking (2014), and the OSCE has also developed its own policy recommendations concerning demand. Although academic researchers and policy strategists used the concept of demand, few attempts were made to conceptualize it in order to produce a suitable analytical category for further research and policy-

---

4 Article 3. Paragraph (a) of the UN Palermo Protocol defines human trafficking as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.” The expressions “trafficking in persons”, “trafficking in human beings” and “human trafficking” will be used in this report, and refer to the behaviour defined in the definition above.

5 See the 2013 Addendum to the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings: One Decade Later (PC.DEC/1107/Corr.1).
making. A bright example of such analysis of the demand/supply concepts in the context of human trafficking is reflected in the working papers of the Demand.AT project.⁶

Many studies focused exclusively on demand and sexual exploitation in the context of the definition of human trafficking, without considering the broader picture of the sex industry within which such exploitation can occur. Unfortunately, there has been a tendency to speak of demand and supply without considering the origin of these concepts in economic theory, which has given rise to confusion amongst policy-makers and scholars. Phrases like “demand for exploitation” or “demand for human trafficking victims” are common in the field (e.g., Hughes, 2005 published an article titled “The Demand for Victims of Sex Trafficking”).⁷ However, as noted by Cyprus and Vogel (2015), the terms of demand and supply can be applied in economics to the final services provided (e.g., sexual services) and not to the method of provision as such (e.g., by means of exploitation of women, possibly involving trafficking). This means that there is an explicit demand among clients for sexual services, but not for “exploitation” or “human trafficking victims.” It is indeed possible that clients will demand degrading or unacceptable services from the sex workers that can be only achieved by using explicit coercion; only in this case, it might be argued, that clients demand “exploitative sexual services”. The same can count for facilitators of sexual services, who might demand workers who can perform such “degrading” services. In this case, it can also be argued that facilitators may demand for “victims”. At this stage of research, the hypothesis is that only a small group of clients will demand such services, and exploitation is rather a tactic used by facilitators to generate (higher) profits. The inconsistency observed in the literature illustrates why it is important to understand the economic roots of the concepts used and why in this report the understanding of the concepts of demand and supply are based on their economic definition.

Despite the debates surrounding demand, “demand reduction strategies”, and related research topics, apparently contradictory viewpoints can also complement each other. As an example, we can discuss the reaction of Walby and colleagues (2015)⁵ to the publication of Vogel (2015). In the final report of the recent study on Gender Dimension of Trafficking in Human Beings, Walby and colleagues mentioned that the proposal of Vogel (2015) is too economically oriented and does not conceptualize demand in the broad sociological sense. These authors presented an institutional approach to the market relationship by arguing that markets represent socially embedded relations between sellers and buyers of products or services (see also Campell & Lindberg, 1990, Fligstein, 2001). The demand and supply concepts were not explicitly defined in the study of Walby and colleagues. Simultaneously, Vogel (2015) proposed the following economic definition basing it on the economic handbook of Mankiw (2009): “demand as willingness and ability to buy products or services” (see below section 2.2). Vogel (2015) argued that the willingness to buy something is based on desires and needs that are influenced by specific circumstances (e.g. norms, culture, and psychological state). It could be argued that Vogel did not underestimate the importance of the institutional approach, but emphasized that institutions indeed shape demand and supply, but so do other factors that influence markets (e.g., culture, individual characteristics). It is commonly acknowledged by academics that markets are indeed influenced by a range of factors and institution regulations take an important role in the establishment of the market (Aronowitz & Koning, 2014; Cyprus & Vogel, ILO report, 2006). For example, all economic transactions are guided by legal frameworks, and even simple transactions, like buying something at the street shop, are regulated by law. Thus, the approaches of Walby et al. (2016) and Vogel (2015) do not contradict each other, but rather complement by focusing on different aspects of one phenomenon. In this report and the DESiRE project in general, the aim is to take the current debates a step further by identifying and examining factors that may shape demand, in order to complete the picture on demand in general and more

---

⁶ For example, Demand.at project presents an in-depth analysis of demand. The finding of the project serve as a starting point for our literature review in the Working paper: A holistic approach to conceptualizing demand for sexual services (April 2017): Cyprus and Vogel (2015) and Vogel (2016).

⁷ Such debates were reflected during the DESiRE, Workshop, Seminar on Lessons Learned from Previous Projects (June 2017). Retrieved from: http://project-desire.eu/2017/06/29/workshop-in-warsaw/.

particularly the picture on demand for sexual services; and to understand how it may affect trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation.

Debates and discussions in the field point to the necessity of a productive dialogue between academics and policy-makers to be able to adopt an inclusive and holistic approach to the study of the demand concept in the context of human trafficking prevention. This approach calls for interdisciplinary cooperation of researchers and active utilization of research findings that are implicitly or explicitly related to the research of the sex industry (e.g. criminology, psychology, behavioural economics, market sociology). The debates around the concept of demand are not limited to conceptual issues, but also include different views on actors involved in the provision and utilization of services within the sex industry. For example, victimization and stigmatization of sex workers effectively minimizes their role as actors on the market of sexual services. This is unfortunate because viewing their decisions (albeit within a limited range of options at certain stage of their working relationship) as informed by cost-benefit analyses could produce important insights for policy-makers. Another example is that market relations always involve interactions between actors. However, in the literature, the question of demand has often been addressed by focusing on particular groups of actors separately. For example, demand was described from the perspective of male clients in the study of O’Connell Davidson (2003).

Therefore, the DESIrE project intends to address different debates and gaps in the field by performing a careful analysis of the concepts of demand, sexual exploitation and prevention (WP1). This report reflects the state of the art in literature and will be divided in four sections. The importance of following a holistic approach will firstly be demonstrated (Section 2). Attention will then be given to the conceptualisation of demand from an economic perspective and the identification of actors that may shape demand (Section 3). The discussions will afterwards focus on the concepts of exploitation and coercion, in particular to better analyse the concepts of sexual exploitation and trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual exploitation (Section 4). Finally, the processes through which actors may make their decisions will be analysed (Section 5).

2. Holistic approach to studying the sex industry

Regardless of the national position taken towards the purchase and provision of sexual services, studying the sex industry is a complex task. Contrary to other types of industry, it presents a complex structure, with legal and illegal aspects, public and private dimensions, or visible and invisible features. In order to grasp its complexity and to understand as best as possible the behaviours of its actors that may shape demand for sexual services, this report aims to address the sex industry holistically.9

To be able to conceptualize and obtain the full picture of the sectors, actors and markets that are operating in the sex industry, it is necessary to make use of an economic approach. In Economics handbooks, demand and supply are defined as: “willingness and ability to supply or demand services or products” (Mankiw, 2009).10 It especially assists in conceptualizing demand and supply terminology. Conceptualization and understanding of the demand/supply terminology will further help in identifying what is demanded and supplied in different markets of the sex industry and who is operating within these markets. Although classical economic theory can be an excellent starting point to map the sex industry, there are certain limitations. For instance, it is not sufficient to understand why sexual exploitation occurs in the industry and why actors choose to exploit sex workers. Therefore, the next step is to address the behaviour and decision-making process of the actors involved in the industry to understand why some actors will opt to exploit and traffic sex workers.

9 See Working Paper: A holistic approach to conceptualizing demand for sexual services (April 2017), retrieved from: http://project-desire.eu/2017/05/01/demand/
10 This definition is also adopted as a working definition for the Demand.at project
Behavioural economics fairs well on the assumption that all actors decide between their available options based on the perceived costs and benefits of these options (figure 1). Such cost-benefit analyses are influenced (but never fully determined) by factors on different, interconnected scales (including vulnerability). Both socio-cultural contexts (macro- and mesoscales) and individual characteristics (microscale) are factors that shape the behaviour of individual actors. Conversely, the behaviour of these actors shapes the socio-cultural contexts in which they operate. In order to be able to study the context in which decisions are made, findings from different relevant disciplines (e.g., criminology, sociology, neuroscience, psychology, law) will be taken into account.

![Figure 1 - Decision-making process of the actors involved in the sex industry](image)

Demand and supply for sexual services will thus be approached holistically, which shall address the limitations of a pure economic approach. Figure 1 illustrates the complexity of the situation, highlighting the interconnectivity and embeddedness of all elements concerned: the demand and supply of services, the actors involved in the sex industry, and the contextual and individual factors that influence the decisions of actors.

### 3. Conceptualisation of demand: An economic perspective and beyond

The concept of demand has been used frequently in policy documents and legal instruments, especially outside the field of economics. In the context of the sex industry, it has often been used to refer to the demand for sexual services coming from clients. However, its content is not always clearly understood. This section aims at filling this gap and elaborating on an economic definition of the demand and supply concepts. We explain the economic foundations of the concept of demand and apply this to the sex industry. By doing so we show the complexity of the sex industry, with a great variety of actors and markets related to the sex industry. By identifying factors beyond the economic perspective we indicate that a merely economic perspective is too limited to fully understand demand in the sex industry.

#### 3.1. Services versus goods

One of the complicating issues that influences the conceptualization of demand are the (theoretical and) political perspectives on the ‘rights and wrongs’ of the sex industry. These perspectives fall broadly between the (neo) abolitionists who claim that prostitution is oppressive,
perpetuating male dominance and subjugating women to violence and victimization, and those who believe commercial sex can be considered a form of labour (Brewis & Linstead, 2000; Smith and Vardaman, 2010; Cyrus, 2015).

These contrasting views strongly affect the perception of “sexual interactions” and therefore sex workers. Generally speaking, neo-abolitionists would rather define commercial sex and a person who is providing it as a “commodity”, often eliminating the role of the sex workers’ agency. In contrast, people who consider sex as a form of labour would view it as a service. Thus, in the research that supports abolitionist stances, sex workers are often commodified. However, proponents of the view on commercial sex as a form of labour relations would make a distinction between services and people who provide them. The question is whether the two approaches can intersect and how?

Rathmell (1966) posited that one of the most implicit differences between goods and services is that “a good” is a noun and “a service” is an act. He argued that: “The former is an object, an article, a device, or a material . . . whereas the latter is a deed, a performance, or an effort. When a good is purchased, the buyer acquires an asset; when a service is purchased, the buyer incurs an expense.” However, Rathmell further argued that it is difficult to make a precise distinction between these two concepts. Vargo and Lusch (2004) also described that the line between tangible and intangible goods is often blurred. The reason is that in markets oriented on consumers, the satisfaction of clients will depend on how well the product is presented and which services are provided to make a successful presentation.

Applying discussed theoretical insights to the sex industry; it is indeed difficult to separate the person and the action when describing sexual services. It can be argued that sex workers can be perceived differently. Some clients might perceive sex workers as products, whereas others will look at them as service providers. Facilitators might also commodify sex workers by viewing them as assets that can be bought and sold, or they can also perceive them as workers (even in case of exploitation). At the same time, the possibility of sex workers to make choices shall not be underestimated, although sometimes the possibility can be very limited. In the context of sex work, it is controversial to speak of products as sexual services produced by persons that cannot morally be commodified. However, when analysing the concept of demand from an economical perspective, it is initially looked at the final product of the transaction. This final transaction represents a sexual interaction that is as an act in its nature and therefore can be referred to as a service. Notably, most of the clients in the sex industry are predominantly interested in sexual services or a particular profile offered by the sex worker rather than a sexual service provided by an exploited sex worker who has become involved in the sex industry as a result of their background.

### 3.2. Economic approach to demand/supply terminology

As was emphasized earlier, it is essential to understand the economic origins of demand/supply terminology. Economics study books, such as the handbook “Essentials of economics” by Gregory Mankiw (2009), define demand as “the willingness and ability to purchase a good or service”, and supply as “willingness and ability to sell goods or services”. The terms demand and supply describe the relationship of buyers and sellers of a certain good or service. This relationship eventually constitutes the market (Mankiw, 2009). Supply and demand are interrelated concepts that usually presuppose each other.

---

11 It can be especially relevant if unaccepted and degrading sexual practices are involved; e.g., Gailey & Prohaska (2011) studied “hogging practices” and their respondents referred to women as “sex toys”. (p.377).

D. 1.4. - Report on Demand for Sexual Services that can fuel Sexual Exploitation in the Context of Human trafficking

One of the essential economic notions is a so-called “Law of Demand”. When the price of a product or service increases, the demand falls, and vice versa, when the price of a service/product decreases, the demand increases (see Figure 2). This leads to the hypothesis that if the price for sexual services is getting higher, the demand of such services will decrease. Sometimes, a change can occur in demand and accordingly in supply when the entire demand curve moves to the right or to the left (see figure 2). This change creates new price and quantity relationships that are influenced by several factors that are specific for a certain market. In economics, these factors can vary from micro-scale factors such as tastes and preferences to macro-scale factors such as demographic change (Hofstrand, 2007; Cyprus & Vogel, 2015).

**Figure 2 - The demand curve**

Some researchers attempted to test the “Law of demand” in the context of human trafficking (Aronowitz & Koning, 2014; Wheaton et al., 2010). However, when reflecting on this issue from the perspective of clients, there is not necessarily a specific demand for sexual services provided for by victims of sex trafficking, or a demand for exploitation. Clients generally do not look specifically for sexual services provided by a Trafficking victim. For instance, clients often do not visit sex workers to sexually assault them in the first place (although it can happen), but to receive a “consensual service.” Even stronger, in most cases they will use their services without knowing it was provided by a trafficking victim. In this case exploitation can be perceived as a tactic utilized by the third parties, such as facilitators, to increase their profits, especially if the sex worker is coerced. However, in some cases, clients can demand sexual services that cannot be consensual (e.g., degrading services, sex with children). Only in this case can we argue that clients might demand “exploitative services.” Furthermore, it shall not be forgotten that the “law of demand” is applicable in the situation of ideal markets, where there are no exploitative conditions. However, considering the complex structure of the sex industry, there are rarely simple transactions between a sex worker and clients, but rather it often involves the intervention of the third parties (recruiters, brokers, intermediaries, etc.). Even if a transaction appears to be simple, relations with third persons and other actors might be behind the transaction. The hypothesis can thus be formulated that exploitative conditions set by the third parties will make sex workers work more, and there might be no need in increasing the number of workers to make more services available. Moreover, the price can remain high. Therefore, it is not always helpful to apply the “law of demand” as it can be applied in economics, but it is helpful in understanding the basics of market relations.

---

14 There are many anthropological studies that confirm this assumption: Huschke & Schubotz, 2016; Bernstein, 2007; Di Nicola, A., Cauduro, A., Lombardi, M., Ruspini, P. (Eds.), Prostitution and Human Trafficking. Focus on Clients (New York: Springer Science, 2009), 245 p.
There are two kinds of demand: primary and derived. Primary demand is the demand for the final product, and derived demand results from the primary demand. Primary demand is illustrated by the demand for sexual services by clients of prostitution. To be able to provide these services, sex workers might demand rental services, driving services, website management services, and/or registration services in case of regulated prostitution – this will be derived demand.

Although the economic definition of demand is an excellent starting point for the further conceptualization process of the demand and supply concepts, it is not sufficient to represent the complex structure of the sex industry. Yet, the adoption of this definition requires careful identification of markets that operate in the industry, which is essential when taking a broader perspective on the sex industry. Since the sex industry includes different markets, focus will be placed on actors operating within these markets.

### 3.3. Identifying actors and markets in the sex industry

In this subsection, the aim is to identify the main actors who are involved in the sex industry, the services they demand and supply and the markets on which they do so. As a first step, the actors will be conceptualized/categorised in three main groups: the facilitators, the sex workers, and the clients.

**Facilitators**

Considering the category of facilitators/third parties, Brucket & Law (2013) proposed to divide them in three subcategories: (1) agencies; (2) associates; (3) contracts (see figure 3).

**Figure 3 - Sub-categories of facilitators**

source: the authors, on the basis of Brucket & Law (2013)

Agencies are defined as: “a business that organizes service transactions between two other parties in an employee-employer like relationship. The agency will typically take a percentage of the fees, set rates and have codes of conduct to follow. Agencies can be in call (the agency receives clients at location), or outcall (workers are sent out to see a client in his/her location)” Brucket & Law (2013: p.103). Agencies might differ in size and proposed services. For instance, some agencies operate with more than 40 employees including sex workers, mentors, guards, cleaners, and others represent a small online escort consist of five sex workers.
The second category is called “associates”, he/she is defined as: “an individual who organizes or facilitates transactions between sex workers and clients. Associates generally charge sex workers a fee-for-service.” (p. 103)

Finally, contractors are those who provide services for independent sex workers or for agencies (individual management services, protection, transfer, web hosting for internet marketing, recruitment services). Sometimes, associates or contractors are less structured and facilitators have a situational relationship with sex workers, it is especially popular in street prostitution (Marcus et al., 2011; Verhoeven 2017).

The category of trafficker is not included in the list of third parties/facilitators, because this category is closely linked to the legislation applicable in a given State. However, some researchers did propose general definitions. Wheaton et al., (2010) conceptualized traffickers as: “intermediaries to provide employers, who use trafficked labour, with workers who have the desired characteristics.” Following this definition, the hypothesis can be formulated that traffickers can be recruiters, or even smugglers, but this definition discards that employers themselves can be traffickers as well. Smugglers can be considered as traffickers, given the blurring boundaries between smuggling and trafficking. According to Surtees (2008), the process that started as smuggling with consent from both parties may end up as trafficking (see also a.o. Triandafyllidou, 2016; Triandafyllidou & Maroukis, 2012). Such a process may for instance happen when a smuggled migrant is subjected to travelling conditions worse than those initially agreed, and the prices / smuggling fees become higher during the mobility process. In order to reimburse their debt, sex work sometimes becomes an option (Surtees, 2008). Similarly, the line between employers/agency and traffickers can also sometimes be blurred. Wheaton further argues that: “As with human traffickers, employers may use coercion, threats to family, and confiscation of documentation to keep individuals from complaining to officials”. Therefore, actors of sex markets will be described in general and attention will be paid to how these actors may use exploitative and coercive tactics.

Sex workers

Sex workers are people who provide sexual services for money (or sometimes non-monetary benefits) through Internet and/or face-to-face interactions. Sexual services provided by sex workers may not be limited only to direct intercourse, but they may also include other sexual activities (e.g. masturbation on camera, lap dancing) performed for money or other benefits. They can work independently, for agencies or managers. Some independent sex workers do not have a permanent manager, but they might situationally use protection or promotion services provided by facilitators (“spot pimps”, Marcus et al., 2016). Some sex workers work informally for a family member, partner or friend. In this case, it is difficult to model such relationship. Although female sex workers are highlighted in the studies more often, and seem to represent a majority of sex workers, there are also male and transgender sex workers.

Clients

Clients of sex workers can be both female and male, and in rare cases transgender people and couples. 15 Although male clients received the most attention in academic and policy fields, female clients also use sexual services. They are often represented as sex tourists, and almost never as clients of street prostitution or brothels (Richards & Reid, 2015). Recently, media started paying more attention sexual services provided by heterosexual male sex workers to female clients, and those provided to lesbian female clients, 16 usually via escort agencies. 17 Both female and male clients can

---

15 To our knowledge there are no specific research on couples, however some blogs and media resources are actually mentioning this: https://becauseimawhore.com/2011/09/23/do-you-ever-have-female-clients/

16 O. Goldwill, “Inside a lesbian escort agency”. The Telegraph, 3 August 2015, retrieved from http://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/sex/11780276/Lebian-escort-agency-How-it-works.html

have different preferences and sexual orientations. In addition, the way services are provided and advertised to male and female clients can differ (see Wosick-Correa & Joseph, 2008; Minichello & Scott, 2014; Ellison & Weitzer, 2016).

These three categories of actors appear complex and not uniform, and they are all involved in the sex industry, as well as in the shaping of demand and supply in this context. In this report, the focus will be more placed on actors involved in primary demand, although markets involving both primary and derived demand/supply are mapped and it is acknowledged that both groups of actors can use exploitation to generate higher profits. The focus on primary actors will be placed especially when analysing their decision-making processes and their evaluation of costs and benefits when joining the sex industry. Further research on all actors (primary and derived demand/supply actors) is needed to expand our knowledge on the topic even more.

One of the next steps of building a holistic understanding of the sex industry is to identify markets where actors demand or supply services (see Table 1). Table 1 can be further specified and adjusted to the context of a certain state. As emphasized in the table, there are different actors who make decisions in market relations. Among all involved in the sex industry, three main actors can be identified, namely: sex workers, clients, and facilitators. The table illustrates how all three actors are involved in both primary and derived demand/supply relationship. For example, sex workers demand safe working conditions and facilitators supply it. At the same time, customers demand sexual services and sex workers supply them.

**Table 1. Setting the scene: sex industry markets**

---

C. Sebag-Montefiore, Male escorts, When it comes to buying sex are women different from men, AEON, 12 November 2014, retrieved from: https://aeon.co/essays/when-it-comes-to-buying-sex-are-women-any-different-from-men

18 Sex workers, facilitators, Clients
### Markets for sexual services (primary demand/supply)

- Direct intercourse, other sexual activities without direct interaction (webcam).
- Unsafe sexual intercourse.
- Specific kinds of sex interactions (BDSM).
- Sex with young persons between 13-18 years old.
- Webcam services, live sex streaming.

### Markets for services associated with sex work: protection, real estate, transfer demand/supply)

- Housing for sex workers. The building for brothel, street windows,
- Cleaning services
- Protection (guards)
- Mentoring services
- Healthcare services
- Web hosting (e.g. escort websites)
- Transfer services (from the workplace to the house, brothel location)
- International travel arrangements;

### Markets for recruitment (derived demand/supply)

- Recruitment agencies
- People who want to move abroad specifically to work in sex industry.
- People who want to move abroad with a different reason than being involved in the sex business.
- People who do not move abroad, but are looking for the job in the sex industry.

---

### Demand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clients</th>
<th>Facilitators</th>
<th>Facilitators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Direct intercourse, other sexual activities without direct interaction (webcam).  
  - Unsafe sexual intercourse  
  - Specific kinds of sex interactions (BDSM)  
  - Sex with young persons between 13-18 years old  
  - Webcam services, live sex streaming | Housing for sex workers. The building for brothel, street windows,  
  - Cleaning services  
  - Protection (guards)  
  - Mentoring services  
  - Healthcare services  
  - Web hosting (e.g. escort websites)  
  - Transfer services (from the workplace to the house, brothel location)  
  - International travel arrangements; | - Recruitment agencies  
  - People who want to move abroad specifically to work in sex industry.  
  - People who want to move abroad with a different reason than being involved in the sex business  
  - People who do not move abroad, but are looking for the job in the sex industry. |

### Sex workers

| Housing personal,  
  - Rent of the windows (in case of the Netherlands), apartments  
  - Assistance in settling down in the new city/country.  
  - Safe working conditions and protection.  
  - Managing services  
  - Transport services  
  - International travel arrangements  
  - International documents | - Recruitment services |
### 3.4. Interrelation of actors who are supplying and demanding services within different markets in the sex industry

As in any business relationship, actions and choices of actors in the sex industry will influence each other and aim to be mutually beneficial. Since all markets in a certain sector are interconnected, all actors are interested in maintaining market relations, they are willing to supply and demand services (see Table 1). Moreover, since actors are demanding and supplying services to get benefits (monetary or non-monetary), they will aim at identifying and attracting their clients and/or other actors.

Facilitators might for instance want to attract sex workers by promising them high wages and good working conditions. From the perspective of sex workers, Brucket & Law (2013) outlined the following benefits from working with agencies:

- **(1) Provide the opportunity of working indoors which sex workers told us is safer, more pleasant (e.g., not standing in the cold) and less subject to criminalization and harassment;**

- **(2) Provide an establishment that fosters a sense of community and workplace solidarity with others that is not available when working independently; establish rules and protocols that assist sex workers in their negotiations with clients;**

- **(3) Provide useful business (e.g., clients, booking) and security (e.g., drivers, security persons) services.”** (p.29)

Furthermore, sex workers and/or sexual services providers might also want to attract potential clients through the use of various marketing strategies. For instance, an expensive escort agency will use classy images on websites that are popular among wealthy clients. By contrast, less ambitious escort agencies will propose relatively low prices and advertise their services as “affordable for

---

everyone” (Brucket & Law, 2013). Other techniques of online advertising, such as Google search optimization, place advertisements on porn websites or forums, may be used by sex workers and/or facilitators. These marketing strategies might also be gender specific. Lee-Gonyea and colleagues, (2007) indicated that there are differences between websites depending on whether they aim to attract female or male clients. Exploitative conditions and coercion do not imply that sex workers would not use similar marketing strategies. For example, exploited sex workers might be coerced by facilitators to use various strategies to attract potential clients.

The places where sexual services are provided are also carefully chosen. A distinction can be made between public places, for example, windows, streets, highways, special districts, and secluded places, such as hotel rooms, private apartments, brothels et cetera. Different parameters might influence the choice in favour of one place instead of another. For instance, highways can be chosen because street sex workers are aiming at attracting drivers who have long distance routes. Other places, especially red light districts, can be generally associated with deviant activities and people who are searching specifically for sexual services can feel relatively safe in such districts. Some of red light districts might even become a touristic attraction (Hubbard et al., 2016; Aalbers & Sabat, 2012).

Similarly, clothes can be used as methods to attract clients. Looking at how street sex workers dress themselves, it can be considered that they mostly attract male clients. As a result of an experiment performed by Bradley and colleagues (2001), where men’s and women’s affective reactions were measured through the display of pictures with varied emotional and neutral content, it was found that men reported “feeling sexy” and excited when viewing erotic pictures of the opposite sex. At the same time, women reported feeling primarily amused and embarrassed. This indicates that visual materials especially the ones of sexual content can trigger excitement among men more easily than among women. Chivers and colleagues, (2004) also indicated that sexual arousal patterns play fundamentally different roles in male/female sexuality. Symons (1979) mentioned that both men and women can be aroused by visual stimuli (e.g., pornography), but male are much more likely to purchase and view such material (see also Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard, 1953). Consequently, it is logical for female workers to use visual stimuli to attract male clients. Modern technologies may also transform of the marketing strategies used by sex workers and/or facilitators (see supra). Many full-time facilitators started employing so-called “hybrid strategies”, where along with street marketing, associates or contractors (pimps) are using Internet to find clientele for their workers.

The importance of attracting the clients, combined with technological developments, may also influence the behaviours of the actors. Both sex workers and facilitators are interested in positive references from their clients, and this satisfaction is obviously connected with sex workers’ performance. That is why facilitators do not always use explicit, violent coercion (e.g., physical), often visible and which might reduce the attraction of clients. Indirect (e.g., psychological) coercion is one of the most prevalent tactics among facilitators (Marcus et al., 2016; Zhang, 2011, see infra). However, in case of “specific services”, such as sex with children, anal sex, the idea of making their fantasies reality can already satisfy clients. In this case, the well-being of sex workers is not their concern.

This analysis of the concept of demand suggests that if the economic approach of the concept constitutes a good basis, it is necessary to go beyond. This is particularly necessary when considering the complex interactions between the three categories of actors identified in the sex industry (facilitators, clients and sex workers). This reinforces the importance of following a holistic approach when studying the sex industry and especially the demand/supply phenomena.

4. Sexual exploitation, coercion and capacity to take decisions in the sex industry

The holistic approach followed in this report requires a closer look at the possibilities of sexual exploitation and of trafficking in human beings for this purpose within the sex industry. The issue of exploitation in the field of commercial sex research is often seen through the lenses of moral and
ethical stances regarding sex work. As discussed earlier, neo-abolitionists would consider the entire sex industry “exploitative”, while the opposing party views exploitation as something that might occur within the sex industry (as in any other industry). These groups present different understandings of the same concept, without defining it.

In legal instruments, the concept of exploitation is not defined in detail, and references are made to minimum elements. For instance, Article 3(2) of the UN Palermo Protocol provides that that: “Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.” (emphasis added). Subsequent instruments remain as vague. The Council of Europe’s Convention against Trafficking in Human Beings repeats the same definition, and the EU Directive 2011/36 also provides for minimum rules, even though it adds a few elements of exploitation, i.e. begging and the exploitation of criminal activities (Art. 2 (3)). The issue of consent is addressed and there is a consensus for considering that the consent of a victim of “trafficking in human beings” to the intended exploitation shall be irrelevant where any of the means (of trafficking) have been used (Art. 3 (b) UN Protocol, Art. 4 (b) CoE Convention and Art. 2 (4) EU Directive).

Considering the “vagueness” of international legislation, both the definition of exploitation and the role of consent in exploitative relations require further analysis. The first steps of analysis will be to determine from a theoretical perspective what is exploitation and what is coercion. The following steps will be to examine - more from a practical perspective- the concept of sexual exploitation, the possibility for sex workers to make decisions and the limits of the definition of trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

4.1. Theoretical explanation of exploitation

Following the view of Alan Wertheimer, one of the famous political philosophers who studied the exploitation concept, exploitation can be defined in simple words: ‘A exploits B when A takes unfair advantage over B’ (Wertheimer, 1996: p.10). Notably, exploitation can either be transactional or structural; it is transactional when the unfairness is a property of a discrete transaction between two or more people and it is structural when the unfairness is embedded in the market structures and institutions in which the “rules of the game” unfairly benefit one group of people to the detriment of another. However, if transactional exploitation is systematic, it can become embedded in the institutional system and therefore become more structural. Whereas unfairness of individual transactions is slightly easier to establish, because it is possible to approach it using market standards, structural exploitation requires the simultaneous and contextual analysis of multiple indicators and dynamics where market standards are a necessary but non-sufficient approach to the deeper understanding of the phenomenon.

The notion of “unfairness” and how to define “unfair relations” triggered many debates in the field of political philosophy, ethics and legal studies and it is still up for debate to what extent exploitation can be considered “unfair”. Does unfairness manifest as a human rights violation, or as physical harm to a party or both? Is the unfairness in the procedure, in the substance or in the outcome of the transaction? To what extent is the history and background prior to the transaction relevant to determine whether it was unfairly exploitative? It is hoped that the findings of the data collected during the empirical research phase of the DESIrE project will further strengthen defining sexual exploitation. As such, data will be collected on the situation at outcome, process and contextual


levels in order to develop indicators that can be used to operationalize exploitation. These indicators will be based upon the following dynamics that have already been identified in literature:

- Harmfulness vs. Mutually Beneficial (Outcome)
- Coercion vs. Fully Informed Consent (Process)
- Vulnerability (Context)

**Harmfulness vs. Mutually Beneficial (Outcome)**

One of the commonly agreed indicators exploitation is that it should be harmful for one of the involved parties. Zwolinski (2012) states that: “The victim, in turn, might be harmed in the sense that she suffers a setback to her interests relative to how she would have fared in the absence of any interaction.” In this case, it does not imply that such interaction cannot be beneficial, even in seemingly beneficial interactions; one party can be harmed directly or indirectly at a psychological, physical and/or economic level.

**Coercion vs. fully informed consent (Process)**

Another important point in defining exploitative conditions is the absence of possibility for an effective decision-making process (Hill, 1994). Hill (1994) views exploitation in terms of psychological consequences for the exploited party that makes it impossible to make decisions. Yet, being deprived of options is not necessarily a crucial point in defining exploitative conditions, though it is certainly important. In some cases, the absence of alternative choices, or perception about such absence, can also keep the person in “unfair” conditions. Therefore, an important indicator is the harm caused “in the sense that she suffers a setback to her (victim’s) interests” (Zwolinski, 2012).

Zwolinski (2012) argued that exploitative transactions could be fully voluntary, by this; it is meant that such interaction excludes any form of force, deception, or fraud. Moreover, in some cases exploitation can be mutually beneficial, even when such interaction can be later qualified as “unfair” and to some extent harmful. It occurs for instance when the exploited party had a good reason to enter the exploitative relationship, or when the vulnerable status of the person was abused (Zwolinski, 2012). One example was adapted from the paper of Wertheimer (1997) where he described the case of a poor Egyptian mother who accepted the payment of 3,000 euro for her kidney. In this case, the woman desperately needed finances to support her children. Whereas this transaction is beneficial from her perspective, it can also be qualified as exploitative given the real (black) market price of the kidney22, or ethical considerations. Although an “unfair advantage” can be taken with or without consent of a person, in some cases the consent is given when the person is in vulnerable position and such consent can be triggered by different factors, which might affect its validity. This was for instance the case of Egyptian women, whose consent was triggered by the urgent need to resources.

**Mutually beneficial but in an unfair context (Context)**

An indicator of “Unfairness in the context” is vulnerability, which will be further elaborated under section 4.2 below. In situations of severe exploitation, the exploiting party can especially abuse the vulnerability of someone to profit from it, by using the cost of another person involved in the relationship. In this regard the vulnerability of the person is a factor favouring exploitation, and it can result from various circumstances. Legal instruments refer to this notion and to the abuse of the “position of vulnerability” as one of the element of trafficking in human beings (Art. 4 (a) CoE Convention, or Art. 3 (a) UN Protocol); the EU Anti-Trafficking Directive provides a definition of the

---

22 For an example of the black markets for kidneys in different countries, see Havoscope, Global Black Market Information, Organ Trafficking Prices and Kidney Transplant Sales, retrieved from: http://www.havoscope.com/black-market-prices/organs-kidneys/
notion, which reads as follows: “A position of vulnerability means a situation in which the person concerned has no real or acceptable alternative but to submit to the abuse involved.” (Art. 2 (2)). It does not mean that vulnerability qualifies as exploitation, but it can be used by the exploiting parties to coerce their employees by limiting their choices. Rijken (2015) described that vulnerability might consist of poverty, lack of education, irregular status et cetera. Vulnerability can develop against a “backdrop” of social attitudes, marginalisation, unemployment, religious attitudes (Kaime-Atterhög, 1996) and can also be linked to “individual circumstances and state of mind (that) are relevant in creating a heightened risk of vulnerability” (Rijken 2015).

4.2. The paradox of “choice” in the context of vulnerability

The “choice” of someone to engage in exploitative situations can be “triggered” by the context of structural, family and personal socio-economic, psychological and/or physical vulnerability and a “false and misinformed” or “genuine and legitimate” offer for a job, money or in kind benefits made by a facilitator. Put simply, the decision to accommodate the offer will take place when the combined effects of all factors exceed the costs and risks of remaining in the same situation of vulnerability. Taking this into account, we suggest that the understanding of Sexual Exploitation in the context of Human Trafficking needs to move beyond the discourse on “forced” vs. “voluntary” choice by including the context of vulnerability in which these choices to enter the sex-industry are made.

Kaime-Atterhög (1996) has developed a conceptual framework for mapping and understanding the context and dynamics that can lead to exploitation of vulnerable people in society. This framework has been adapted and applied in various contexts (UN-ESCAP 2000; Kaime-Atterhög, 2012) and is now being applied to understand the context of trafficking for sexual exploitation within and to Europe (Kaime-Atterhög, forthcoming 2017). Figure 4 shows the complex and interlinked societal or structural factors that characterize the process that “pushes”, “triggers”, and “pulls” (causal factors) and increases the risk of people to become victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. The framework also maps the context of vulnerability in transit and destination countries including the “intervening factors” and “aggravating factors” that facilitate the exit from the exploitation cycle or its continuation respectively. In some cases, those who opt to continue in the sex work industry may eventually become perpetrators themselves thereby enabling the scaling of the phenomenon significantly. According to this framework, sex work can be a vehicle to human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

Figure 4_A Framework to Map the interrelatedness between Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation and the Context of Vulnerability (adapted by Kaime-Atterhög, 2017)
It is important to note that not all people who are vulnerable end up being exploited and, thus, further research is needed on resilience and different exit strategies from poverty in different country and cultural contexts. Exploitative or “unfair” conditions are indeed defined by norms in a particular culture, and thus are subject of variations. Thus as with unfairness, any assessment of the decision-making process of a sex worker in source, transit and destination countries must be made on a case by case basis bearing in mind contextual factors from which such decisions are made.

4.3. Coercion and examples of coercion in the sex industry

The problem of consent in exploitative relations is directly linked to the understanding given to the concept of coercion. As will be shown in the present section and in section 4.5, coercion is of particular importance when referring to the understanding of sexual exploitation in the context of human trafficking, where the “means” is a key element when determining a situation as one of human trafficking. The question whether coercion is a necessary element of exploitation and in what way it intersects with exploitation are especially relevant to the study of sexual exploitation. It must be stressed that exploitation can occur without coercion (Zwolinski, 2012; Rijken 2015), even though it is easier to establish exploitation in situations which coercion has been used (Rijken 2015). Coercion can be defined in simple terms as a technique that is used to make someone do something.
Historically, coercion was associated with violence, punishment and use of force. Later, the understanding of coercion has expanded. Wertheimer (1987) believed that coercion cannot be classified as such, if it does not include a violation of human rights, and the assessment of such violation requires a careful moralized judgment. Sometimes, coercion is given a positive meaning and it is used to push people to comply with a legal system in a particular State. In this report, coercion will be analysed as an explicit (direct) and an implicit (indirect) phenomena. Explicit or direct coercion refer to situations where force, direct threats, or violence are used. Implicit coercion can include but is not limited to: brainwashing techniques, coercive persuasion, blackmail, and fraud. Some types of coercive behaviour can be both direct and indirect, and it is possible that both direct and indirect coercion techniques are used simultaneously. When implicit coercion is used, people might not be aware of the fact that there is coercion, whereas physical or explicit coercion implies the acknowledgement. Psychological coercion is very difficult to prove and consequently it impacts the understanding of consent. It is indeed much more difficult to argue about consent in exploitative relations when indirect coercion techniques have been used and/or when the person is in a position of vulnerability. That is why when objectified criteria (e.g., physical harm, legal system) are lacking; a case-by-case assessment needs to be made considering a specific situation (Rijken, 2015). Such assessment is further reinforced by the fact that it is not always possible to fully draw the line between coercive and consensual situations, resulting in the existence of a so-called “grey zone”. In addition, the presence or absence of consent is not static, but rather constitutes a fluid process that is grounded in a changing context and that can change over time.

In the sex industry, specific circumstances may influence the exercise of coercion over sex workers. One of the practical attempts to classify coercion in the sex industry was undertaken by Stalans and Finn (2016). They proposed the following categories: psychological abuse, sexual abuse, drug addiction (supplying drug to sex workers), and economic coercion as part of indirect coercion; and, physical, and possessive ownership as part of severe coercion. Psychological coercive tactics were defined as the use of verbal tactics to manipulate sex workers, as well as making sex worker fall in love with pimps to control workers emotionally. Sexual abuse included sex with workers as a “reward or for training”. Sometimes, more than one strategy can be used. For instance, Anderson and colleagues (2015) described that one of the coercive tactics of facilitators was to make a sex worker pregnant, and use the child later as a manipulation tool. In this case, sex workers were continuing working with their child’s father. The drug supply also represents a form of coercion, undertaken through regular distribution of drugs among sex workers. Economic coercion was present when pimps demanded 70 percent of income from sex workers. Finally, as for severe coercive tactics, namely physical and possessive ownership, the first was defined as physical and sexual aggression, and the second was conceptualized by following bullet points: (1) pimps requiring permission before workers made eye contact or could speak to other people; (2) pimps recruiting runaway children or illegal migrants; (3) pimps using surveillance to keep track of workers; (4) forcing to pay for the decision to leave. These researches pinpoints the diversity of the coercive techniques used in the sex industry, and support the existence of grey zones in which it is difficult to consider whether a person consented to work as a sex worker.

More generally, in the context of the sex industry, like in other labour markets, coercion is used with the ultimate goal of generating higher profits and/or obtaining non-monetary benefits (e.g., pleasure). If the generation of certain benefits requires coercion, it would logically be disadvantageous for the party who is being coerced. Facilitators may for instance use coercion to either recruit persons as sex workers or to keep them working for them under exploitative conditions. Therefore, it seems logical to consider that coercion involves exploitation in the sex industry, and this often applies to labour markets in general. However, as mentioned earlier, any exploitative relationship can in principle

---

23 Stanford encyclopaedia, retrieved from: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/coercion/
24 Fraud in this context refer to situations where the persons are deceived through promises of legitimate employment and/or half-truths (information about a work in entertainment, dancing or even stripping, but no mention of prostitution).
be based on mutual consent and exploitation does not necessarily always involve coercion. This can be illustrated via the following figure (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Exploitation and Coercion

![Diagram showing the relationship between no consent, consent, fair conditions, coercive exploitation, consensual exploitation, and no exploitation.]

The box in the left corner is crossed because coercion almost always involve exploitation and situations where fair conditions would be imposed on a non-consensual basis are inexistent. Lines are blurred between fair conditions, consensual exploitation and coercive exploitation in order to reflect the existence of grey zones mentioned above. It is indeed sometimes difficult to draw the line between consent and coercion, for instance, in cases when consent was made under psychological coercion or influenced by the position of vulnerability of the person. Also, it is difficult to make a clear distinction between consensual “fair” conditions and consensual “exploitative conditions”.

4.4. Sexual exploitation in the sex industry

Although exploitation is not defined in detail in legal instruments, such as the UN Palermo Protocol, the CoE Convention and the EU Anti-Trafficking Direction, different domains where such exploitation can occur were outlined, including "the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation";26 that may be particularly present in the sex industry.

Some attempts to clarify what is meant by "the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation" were made in the Annotated Guide to the Complete UN Trafficking Protocol (Jordan, 2002),27 according to which sexual exploitation means "the participation by a person in prostitution, sexual servitude, or the production of pornographic materials as a result of being subjected to a threat, coercion, abduction, force, abuse of authority, debt bondage or fraud"; and

---

26 This type of exploitation is explicitly left undefined notably by the negotiators of the UN protocol, see Interpretative notes, A/55/383/Add.1, 2000, p. 12: “the terms “exploitation of the prostitution of others” or “other forms of sexual exploitation” are not defined in the Protocol, which is therefore without prejudice to how States Parties address prostitution in their respective domestic laws.”

“exploitation of the prostitution of others” could be defined as “the obtaining by a person of any financial or other benefit from the sexual exploitation of another person”. Since this explanation is focused on what is meant by “exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation”, it is logical that the definition clearly addresses only the sex industry, without envisaging a possibility for a person to be sexually exploited in other spheres (e.g., when sexual exploitation accompanies labour exploitation). Although this report focuses on sexual exploitation within the sex industry, one should note that sexual exploitation can occur beyond the sex industry as well. Even if the approach to conceptualize exploitation proposed in the Annotated Guide to the Complete UN Trafficking Protocol follows to some extent the theoretical reasoning discussed earlier, it is not clear who exactly might exploit victims in the sex industry. Referring to the exploitation of “the prostitution of others” might be interpreted as referring only to the exploitation by facilitators of sex business. In this case the question remains whether clients might also exploit children, women, men, or transgender people who appeared to be in the sex industry, either by choice, or due to coercion. Another critique of the definition is that it is not clear from the definition whether exploitation can occur without the “abuse of vulnerability” and in consensual relationship as was mentioned earlier.

A more inclusive definition was proposed by the United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan (2003), who defined exploitation as: “any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes, including but not limited to profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from sexual exploitation.” (United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, 2003). In contrast with the previous attempt, this definition is more generalized and it captures the possibility to profit from exploitation by third parties in many ways. However, like in the previous definition, it does not take into account the possibility that exploitation can occur without coercion and be consensual, while it is clear that coercion always implies exploitation/is in dissociable from sexual exploitation. These examples illustrate a need to adopt a comprehensive definition of sexual exploitation, and especially of sexual exploitation within the sex industry.28

In instances where sex-work is defined as a job within the formalized labour markets, then exploitation in the sex industry can be understood in a similar way as exploitation within other labour markets. A determination between the distinction between sex-work and sex-work that amounts to sexual exploitation could look to labour exploitation, wherein legal systems and labour market standards propose objective criteria for determining exploitation in the form of minimum wages, maximum work hours et cetera. Whilst such an approach is sometimes viewed as paternalistic, because it can disregard the free will of a person, it can assist in determining the definitional scope of exploitation according to the market price for a product or a service and the norms for producing the product or service (Rijken, 2015). In such contexts, the first element to consider is who might exploit sex workers, who may or may not be victims of trafficking in human beings,29 in the sex industry. As we mentioned earlier, exploitation can be used to either generate higher profits by third parties, or to receive non-monetary benefits, such as pleasure by clients. In this case, sexual exploitation would appear as a tactic for obtaining a desired outcome at the expense of the interests of the party providing sexual services.

Taking all the defining elements of the concept of exploitation as a tool to craft a definition of sexual exploitation that is able to capture its existence beyond the context of trafficking, we suggest the following as an operational definition for the DESIrE project, which will be tested, developed and sharpened throughout the project:

“Sexual exploitation is any actual or attempted interaction retrieval of sexual activity that leaves one party worse off (e.g. psychologically, physically, economically) than it was before the

---


29 It is important to pinpoint that sex work does not always amount to trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation, but it may do so when all constitutive elements of the offence are present.
interaction and/or than it was entitled to or that is mutually beneficial but occurs in an “unfair” and/or “vulnerable” context.”

As mentioned above the ‘vulnerable context’ can lead to sexual exploitation if due to the vulnerable context a person is unable to take an informed and well-considered decision to enter or leave the sex industry, or to continue working in the sex industry or if for a person to sell sex is the only choice available to survive or live outside poverty, war or other life threatening situations. In the same way if due to the ‘vulnerable context’ a person cannot freely decide to enter, continue or stop the sexual interaction or sexual activity we speak of sexual exploitation. The definition is considered to be an operational definition, which can be improved or developed throughout the project’s development. It illustrates a broad perspective on sexual exploitation that was necessary in order to understand the phenomenon at the beginning of the project and will now be operationalized specifically in the context of the sex industry. Specifically, the three indicators of exploitation discussed in section 4.1 will be tested, further developed and measured during the data collection phase.

Consequently, and in line with the findings above not all situations in which sexual activity takes place in a ‘vulnerable context’ can be considered sexual exploitation. The DESIrE project hopes to further identify indicators and insights on when a situation can be qualified as sexual exploitation in a vulnerable or unfair context.

To be able to identify sexual exploitation, specific criteria should be developed. However, since the sex industry recognised as an illicit business according to the legislative frameworks of many States, it is difficult to develop such criteria using, for instance, labour market standards and legal mechanisms as it is done to develop criteria establishing the presence of labour exploitation. Therefore, in the absence of such specific criteria, all aspects relevant for the qualification of exploitation, i.e. the benefit realised, the vulnerability of the person, the harm caused to her/him, or the capacity to effective decision-making, need to be weighed in perspective to each country’s context specific data that will be collected during the empirical phase of the DESIrE Project. The identification of subtler forms of coercion, e.g., ‘abuse of the position of vulnerability’ or use of indirect coercive methods, requires further investigation and country specific assessment (Rijken, 2015).

4.5. Trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation

The concept of sexual exploitation has frequently been addressed in the context of anti-trafficking debates. Indeed, as indicated earlier, sexual exploitation is listed among the types of exploitation that are included in the definition of trafficking in human beings. The definition provided in international legal instruments has been mentioned earlier, but it deserves further analysis, in particular to reflect upon its links with the concept of sexual exploitation.

The term “trafficking” triggered many debates among legal and social scientists, notably because of its colloquial nature, which directly influences the understanding of the word. For example, as outlined by Cyprus and Vogel (2015), the term “trafficking”: “(...) refers to trade – to carry on trade, to trade, to buy and sell – and a further meaning refers to dealings of an illicit or secret character. Thus, whenever the term trafficking is introduced, the association with trade is always evoked.” However, the internationally acknowledged legal definition of trafficking in human beings is much more complex than a mere “trade” concept. It describes three constitutive elements that must be

---

30 Article 3, Paragraph (a) of the UN Palermo Protocol defines human trafficking as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a
cumulatively met in order to qualify a situation as trafficking: 1) the commitment of certain acts (recruitment, transportation, harbouring, etc.); 2) the use of means (force, abduction, fraud, and the abuse of the position of vulnerability); 3) with the purpose of exploiting someone. Consequently, the general legal definition of human trafficking does not imply a “trade” in the first place, but it can be characterised as an illicit activity or a process that precedes exploitation. Although exploitation is not conceptualized in the trafficking definition, different domains in which such exploitation can occur are outlined in the UN Palermo Protocol, the CoE Convention and the EU Anti-Trafficking Directive (see supra). The practical implementation of this definition thus requires the presence of these three elements, for instance to consider that a person is a victim of human trafficking. Given the difficulties described above in defining coercion, consent and exploitation, the competent authorities (migration services, police and law enforcement authorities or judicial authorities) have to make yes/no decisions on the identification of trafficking cases and thus of trafficking victims.

The current formulation of the offence of human trafficking makes the task of national competent authorities problematic for multiple important reasons. A first reason is linked to the second constituent element of the definition (“means”), which hinges on establishing the presence of coercion, especially when considering that all international legal instruments (UN Palermo Protocol, CoE Convention and EU Anti-Trafficking Directive) provide that the consent of a victim of trafficking in human beings to the exploitation, whether intended or actual, shall be irrelevant where any of the means has been used. This conditions the irrelevance of the consent to the use of certain means against a person, which may be problematic in cases in which it is difficult to establish coercion, and the presence of consent might prevent the recognition of the facts as a case of human trafficking. Such theoretical analysis can be nuanced by the fact that in practice, there are many ways to interpret what can exactly count as “means”. For instance, the abuse of a position of vulnerability can receive diverse definitions. However, due to the absence of indicators in the definition of trafficking, interpretations might differ in various states and contexts, and this situation does not help competent authorities to address the grey zones discussed earlier between consent and no consent /coercion (see supra and Figure 5). In contrast, in cases of human trafficking of minors, the use of “means” is not required (Art. 3 (c) UN Palermo Protocol, Art. 4 (c) CoE Convention and Art. 2 (5) Directive), which means that their eventual consent is not taken into consideration. Children, i.e. persons below 18 years of age, are believed to have no choice and to be ultimately coerced to perform sexual activities. Consequently, in case of children, both psychological coercion (with consent) and violent explicit coercion (without consent) are taken into account.

A second reason of complexity relates to the third constitutive element of the notion of trafficking in human beings (“purpose”), which focuses on exploitation. One can first pinpoint that it refers to a broad range of phenomena, from sexual exploitation, or the commission of criminal activities to the removal of organs.\textsuperscript{31} Its definition also fails to address the grey zones existing between exploitative and non-exploitative conditions (see Figure 4). This leaves an important margin of discretion to national legislators when defining at national level trafficking in human beings, and to national competent authorities when investigating cases.

This report focuses exclusively on the phenomenon of trafficking that leads to sexual exploitation of persons. If it is considered that trafficking in human beings is the process that precedes exploitation and does not include the process of exploitation in itself, it makes it problematic to protect the rights of sex workers who are being exploited in the sex industry,\textsuperscript{32} but who fail to be recognised as victims of trafficking. Such recognition of their exploitation might be especially difficult in the states where the sex industry is criminalised or where laws criminalizing sexual services are in force. Although exploitation and violence from the side of clients and facilitators can be qualified as other

\textsuperscript{minimum, the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs”. The definition is copy-pasted in the CoE Convention and the EU directive builds upon it, and only adds new types of exploitation.}

\textsuperscript{31} With regard to the latter, Vogel (2016) suggested that every kind of exploitation should be addressed considering the circumstances that surround such exploitation.

\textsuperscript{32} it can be due to stigmatizing attitude of police or criminalization of the industry that will make sex workers fear to report exploitation.
offences (e.g. rape, pimping, etc.), stigmatizing attitudes to the sex industry from the law enforcement authorities can make exploited parties less willing to report exploitation (e.g., see Romero-Daza and colleagues, 2003). In the further work packages of the DESIrE project, special attention will be paid to different state models regarding approaching sex work and other forms of sexual exploitation, and to their influence on trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

Counter-trafficking legislation, elaborated on the basis of the international definitions analysed above, can be used to address sexual exploitation (e.g., in the Netherlands). However, under this legislation, it may be very difficult to establish the dividing lines between exploitative and non-exploitative conditions in the field of commercial sex, and therefore it may be difficult to protect the rights of sex workers that are being exploited/abused. At the same time, applying criteria of exploitation similar to those elaborated in other labour markets, and thus considering sex industry as an ordinary labour market, can contradict moral and cultural stances of the general public. It is thus required to detect and address the occurrence of sexual exploitation in the sex industry via a tailor-made approach based on country specific data. To that end, further reflections are necessary to understand better the complex processes through which actors of the sex industry may take their decisions, and detect more precisely situations where coercion and exploitation may be present.

5. Explanation of decision-making processes of economic actors through cost-benefit approach

In the previous sections, economic actors in the sex industry have been identified, their interconnectivity has been illustrated and sexual exploitation as well as trafficking in persons for its purpose have been discussed. The next step of analysis is now to discuss how economic actors in the sex industry make their decisions and why some of them choose to use exploitative tactics. As it was emphasized earlier, although all actors make decisions, their decisions are influenced by the social context and individual characteristics that shape the attitudes to risks and profits (see figure 1). This section is built on theoretical insights derived from behavioural economics, and later expands its scope by combining findings from different disciplines, such as criminology, sociology, law, psychology et cetera.

5.1. Cost-benefit approach

In the sex industry, monetary benefits and sexual satisfaction are assumed to be the central motivations for the facilitators and clients. From the perspective of sex workers, and even from the perspective of victims of human trafficking, it is possible to hypothesize that both groups might evaluate risks and profits of certain decisions. This should not be interpreted as considering that victims of human trafficking are not deceived or that their position of vulnerability was not abused. It refers to the situations where they may have decided to undertake a dangerous journey or agreed to work illegally, after making an evaluation of risks and profits. The range of options available to economic actors for obtaining desired outcomes indeed includes both legal and illegal practices, whose expected benefits and costs vary.

In 1944, economists Neumann and Morgenstern, described that people’s preferences are affected by benefits of an outcome that is relative to its costs. It does not mean that people have preference for the risk taking, because risk itself is not considered as an outcome. It is rather perceived as one of the options that influences expected utility, and it therefore has a direct impact on the outcome (McCarthy, 2002). As was described by Pezzin (1995) and McCarthy and Hagan (2002),

---

33 or in case of migration through unofficial channels, when they are not aware of the possibility to be involved in the commercial sex industry. A similar approach called “subjective-possibility-space-model” was presented by the Demand.at project
In the article of McCarthy (2002) the cost-benefit approach was discussed through lenses of rational-choice and game theories and applying it to criminal behaviour. The rational-choice approach is based on understanding that “people decide whether to commit crime by comparing the benefits and costs of engaging in crime.” (Becker, 1995). McCarthy (2002) emphasized that understanding of rationality should always include information about one’s’ preferences, tastes, and personal situation. The attitude to risk taking can also vary among individuals. Hence not all facilitators prefer to coerce employees or to pay traffickers/smugglers in order to receive new employees (see Zhang, 2011; Marcus et al., 2016). Rational choice approach cannot explain all crimes, but it is useful in understanding the behaviour of individual offenders. Rational theory does not assume that people are always conscious of their attempt to generate benefits, but it does describe that many actions/decisions people make can be understood as rational. Evolutionary game theory is more appropriate in cases when an outcome depends on several people who might be affected by one’s choices, or otherwise influence these choices (McCarthy, 2002). Evolutionary game theory explains how different strategies can develop and change in response to new situations. In the case of the sex industry, it is evident that employers adjust to new technologies, or to amendments in legislation. In contrast with the rational-choice approach, the game theory explains how group’s choices are influencing individuals and how these choices can evolve in different settings and timeframes. Both approaches are helpful in explaining the cost-benefit evaluations of all economic actors, but specifically facilitators and clients.

To illustrate the theoretical insights presented above, it is worthwhile to refer certain researches conducted about facilitators. Once again the research of Stalans and Finn (2016) discussed earlier can be mentioned. The results of the study showed that different pimps used differing coercive strategies. It was found that psychological coercion was the most prevalent among 44 respondents (40.9 percent). Since psychological coercion is difficult to determine and it problematizes consent in the economic relationship, it can be one of the safest options for facilitators, considering all risks associated with pimping. Sixteen of the pimps used at least one possessive ownership tactics, and the most common was surveillance tactic. Six pimps literally bought workers from other pimps and five of the respondents required very high exit fees (ranging from 1,000 USD to 50,000 USD). One quarter of the sample managed sex workers using non-coercive methods and had well defined employer-employee relationship. As was discussed earlier, the behaviour of facilitators concerning coercive and exploitative practices can vary depending on individual assessments.

The research of Zhang (2011), who was studying sex work and trafficking facilitators from Tijuana, a border city in Mexico also confirmed that not all facilitators among brothel and club owners preferred to hire women who were “forced into prostitution”. As it was outlined by the respondents of the study, if one is violently coercing the sex workers, it requires more work and strength in managing such workers, and in ensuring their successful performance, because “forced” sex workers may be less attractive to clients who step into bars or brothels. Yet, a small number of pimps did report the use of persuasive strategies to recruit women who had unique qualities. This is one of the bright examples of how persuasive and coercive strategies might be used when the profit outweighs risks.

Most of the club owners from the sample were not willing to spend extra money to transport workers from different cities and countries and preferred to hire women based in Tijuana. Furthermore, as was reported by the respondents, in most cases they were not in favour of using services of recruiters. Therefore, when they were looking for new workers, they encouraged current employees to spread information about the vacancy among their personal networks. However, although employers were not using the recruiting services, many sex workers did enter the industry through women pullers (or independent recruiters), and were supposed to pay them certain percentage of their income. This is an illustration of how recruiters can exploit sex workers who are working for a different employer.

Studies of Zhang (2011) and Stalans and Finn (2016) illustrate the theoretical approaches discussed earlier. Facilitators might have different considerations about risks and profits and therefore
the decisions they make are not the same. Moreover, the use of exploitative and coercive tactics will depend on how facilitators evaluate risks and profits from such activity.

5.2. Individual characteristics and the context that influences choices of facilitators, clients and sex workers

In this subsection, theoretical approaches that were discussed earlier will be further analysed in the attempt to identify what affects the decisions of economic actors to join the sex industry and why exploitative practices are being used in certain settings.

Facilitators

 Actors identified as facilitators have been previously briefly defined in this report (see figure 4). Although they represent a great diversity, we mainly focus on these facilitators who are managing the relations between sex workers and clients. Although others such as estate agents, body guards, are important they will not be thoroughly discussed here. Pimps in this section are acting as contractors, or in some cases, they maintain an informal organization where they manage several workers by organizing their work and searching for clients both online and on the streets.

The main motivation behind joining any market relations is usually based on economic benefits. Although in this section, the focus will mainly be placed on facilitators who are participating in primary demand and supply relations (e.g., brothel owners, managers, pimps), it shall not be forgotten that other contracting parties (e.g., drivers, rental companies, internet providers) may also be mainly interested in profiting from the sex industry. It is difficult to judge whether they directly exploit sex workers, but they might benefit from the exploitative conditions in which the sex workers are. On the other hand, it is possible that as contractors they might not know about exploitative conditions of sex workers and be exploited themselves, e.g. drivers working for escorts, or persons providing hosting services. However, if they are indeed aware of the possible exploitation and human trafficking, they might indirectly facilitate and profit from such criminal activity.

The setting the person is placed in terms of family, network, community, state influences the methods and strategies that are used in managing business. For instance, different approaches to legislation of prostitution can affect the way facilitators operate in the sex industry. If clients of sex workers are criminalised, they might be more careful in using the services. Accordingly, it can be assumed that such changes in clients’ demand for sexual services transform marketing strategies and force facilitators to re-evaluate risks/profits. For instance, when clients as well as facilitators began being penalized in Sweden, the whole industry moved underground (Collins & Judge, 2010). Consequently, as the services could not be advertised openly, facilitators now have to provide extra anonymity for clients. Collins and Judge also argued that where police are less present in the neighbourhood, markets seem to be “migrating” to this neighbourhood. When markets move underground, the prices might increase because of risk considerations of facilitators or independent sex workers (Aronowitz & Koning, 2014).

The absence of border controls in the EU Schengen zone might also influence the decisions of facilitators or, in fact, independent sex workers, to join the sex industry and even relocate from one country to another. Moreover, it creates perfect conditions to start transnational business operations (Aronowitz, 2001). For instance, when Romania and Bulgaria joined the EU, more Bulgarian and Romanian sex workers became visible on the streets of the Amsterdam Red Light District (Siegel, 2012).

Individual characteristics, such as social background of the facilitators can also play an important role in how they decide to join sex business and what strategies are used to manage their
workers. Stalans and Finn (2016) found that pimps who grew up in so-called “disadvantaged neighbourhoods” were more likely to use indirect coercive tactics. To some extent this tendency might be explained by the prevalence of violence and expression of violence in disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Lynch & Cichetti, 2002b; Sampson et al., 1997). However, the researchers did not find that similar correlation regarding severe coercion. Pimps, who were brought up in “decent” families and had college degree were more likely not to use coercive methods at all. These findings cannot be generalized to all situations, but they illustrate how the socialization process might influence different strategies facilitators may use in terms of “management” of their employees.

A hierarchical structure of sex business also shapes decisions of facilitators to join the sex industry. Among other researchers, Stalans and Finn (2016) especially emphasized that many facilitators started as sex workers. Moreover, those who previously served as sex workers might be even more violent and coercive than the ones who did not start their career as sex workers.

Globalization and technological revolution also affects the decisions and work of facilitators. Tidball and colleagues (2015) argued that facilitators use technology not only to promote sex workers, but also as a manipulative tool to coerce them to work in the industry. The Internet has changed derived demand and supply, from now on, facilitators and independent sex workers might demand web hosting services or assistance from online operators. In the era of the Internet, change in demand and supply of services facilitated the appearance of new cybercrimes. For example, internet operators, web hosting companies might be directly or indirectly involved in the facilitation of sexual services, exploitation and trafficking in human beings. When companies providing web hosting services to escort websites or porn websites are located abroad, it is very difficult to obtain information about their clients, who might be involved in criminal activities. This difficulty can be linked to the applicable data protection legislation in these states (e.g., the USA).34 It may imply that police authorities from a different state, such as the state where sexual services are being carried out, has difficulty to access and obtain information from the web hosting or internet providers located abroad, thus preventing the collection of information that could prove essential for an investigation. However, in case of crimes considered to be of high significance, for instance, child sexual abuse, it is easier to obtain needed information. Unfortunately, other cybercrimes committed via websites involving sexual abuse of adults might not be considered as significant and thus be more difficult to investigate, especially if coercion is difficult to establish. In this context, the use of Internet reduces risks for facilitators. However, Marcus and colleagues (2016) argued that some managers or pimps considered Internet as a threat to their business because it allowed sex workers to be more independent and avoid using their services.

Given the above the group of facilitators is diverse as is their role. They can be a legitimate business, criminal enterprise or something in between. However, under certain circumstances, pending individual and contextual factors, they can make decisions, which turn them into exploiters.

**Clients**

Clients play a crucial role in the sex industry, because they are directly interacting with sex workers. Clients enter the relationship with the goal to receive sexual satisfaction. However, individual's desires are very much shaped by (1) what is available and affordable to them, and (2) what is socially valued. On the latter, the stigma eventually attached to buying sexual services as well as the risk of getting caught if such buying is criminalised may influence their decisions, probably even more than the law concerning the criminalisation of clients (Kotsadam & Jakobsson, 2014). The availability, affordability of any type of commercial service can be manipulated by producers (sex workers) and third parties, or be based on socio-economic status of the client. As it was mentioned earlier, all actors affect each other’s behaviour, and therefore marketing strategies of facilitators or independent sex workers will directly impact availability and the use of services in general.

---
As for the exploitative practices from the side of customers, we can point out several main directions as examples: 1) situations of sexual assaults and aggressions; 2) systematic coercion and force to engage in degrading and unaccepted interactions for sexual satisfaction (for instance, rape or coercion into sex without condom); 3) degrading and non-consensual transactions on permanent basis usually involve third parties that are targeting certain group of clients and; 4) taking sexual services of a person under 18 years.

As it was outlined earlier, clients of sex workers can be both male and female. The research on male-to-female and female-to-female sex work is limited, but more and more often there can be spotted media reports about these groups (see section 2.1). One of the possible explanations of the raised attention to the new client groups of sex workers, such as female clients and couples, could also be that sexual revolution and more tolerant ideas about sexuality have affected the appearance of new directions in the sex work industry, as well as emancipation. Another hypothesis could also be the widespread use of Internet. Indeed, Internet has a tremendous impact on all clients in the sex industry and it is especially useful in providing anonymity for female clients or filtered search possibilities for those looking for specific experiences (e.g., BDSM), or sex workers with certain characteristics (e.g., race, body shape). The variety of services proposed through the Internet makes it more affordable and less stigmatizing to use sexual services. Bernstein (2007) argued that the Internet made it safer for sex workers and clients to interact without third parties. Moreover, specific online services can make both clients and sex workers feel more anonymous and therefore protected. The Internet also increases the possibilities of using criminal means in order to exploit sex workers. The Internet provides a platform for the advertisement of discussed “specific services” and anonymity makes it difficult to track the clients of such services. Also, as it was mentioned by Rocha et al. (2009), clients who arranged their meetings with sex workers via chats or forums were less likely to use condoms. The Internet however can also offer new techniques/means of exploitation by clients. Jones (2016) mentioned that some of the clients film webcam models and spread their pictures/videos on porn websites. Finally, as mentioned in the previous subsection on facilitators, the Internet can serve as a platform for international cybercrimes involving sexual exploitation. Consequently, technological developments in the sex industry create new ways of exploiting sex workers by their clients.

Legislation and especially criminalization of the sex industry also influences the decisions to use sexual services or not. For instance, Mansson (2004; 2006) argued that with the criminalization of clients, the demand for sexual services reduced among “occasional buyers”, but did not affect “habitual buyers”. There are many debates concerning which legal approach / model should be taken when tackling the risk of exploitation among sex workers, and it is one of the goals of the DESIrE project to find out how legislation and policies affect the prevalence of trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation. However, it is evident that risks for clients increase when the use of services is criminalized. In the same way, the absence of punishment for sexual assaults might also increase sexual exploitation by clients.\footnote{For example, Romero-Daza and colleagues (2003) described that in Miami, street sex workers were filing reports about sexual abuse and violence, but it was never punished or seriously taken into consideration by police.} For example, Roma & Agriolas, 1995; Oei et al, 2012). This is why positive feelings and pleasure can encourage some clients to repeatedly use sexual services.

Despite the fact that contextual factors are influencing the decisions of clients, there are certain fundamental physiological processes that also impact the decision to use sexual services. For example, one of the physiological factors that influence the behaviour of clients is pleasure, which is perceived as a reward for the decision to use the services. Basically, sexual interaction acts on one's dopamine system and it is the same system on which heroin also has an effect (see Melis & Agriolas, 1995; Oei et al, 2012). This is why positive feelings and pleasure can encourage some clients to repeatedly use sexual services.

The domination of research on male clients in the field does have valid reasons. The factors that influence the motivations of male clients range from certain biological and physical characteristics to social pressure, beliefs about masculinity, and culture. There are physical characteristics that influence prevalence of the use of sexual services by male clients. For instance, as mentioned earlier,
men report to get arousal from visual stimuli quicker than women (Bradley et al., 2001). Chivers et al., (2004) also indicated that sexual arousal patterns play fundamentally different roles in male/female sexuality. These physiological and psychological characteristics triggered the belief that men have a biological need that can be satisfied by the use of sex workers’ services. Although the idea of a “biological need” acquired more sociological meaning nowadays, it does have some biological basis that is often overlooked.

One of the possible indication of sexual exploitation and coercion is systematic aggressive behaviour towards sex workers either heterosexual or homosexual by male clients. There can be also found some biological determinants of such behaviour. For example, the research of Caspi and colleagues (2002) shows that some male children who were mistreated in the childhood are more likely to develop aggressive behaviour than others who were brought up in the same conditions. In a large sample of male children that were followed from birth to adulthood, a specific genetic marker was found that moderated the effect of mistreatment during childhood on anti-social behaviour in adulthood (Caspi et al., 2002). This neuroscientific insight is especially useful in our understanding why some clients would choose to be aggressive towards sex workers and other will not. Yet the biological explanations represent only the first level of analysis, and it is evident that the factors influencing choices to use sexual services and especially to abuse sex workers range from physiological characteristics to socio-cultural context the person is raised in. Research has long argued that male consumption of commercial sexual services is an expression of masculine power, domination, and control over power (Huschke & Schubotz, 2016; Joseph & Black, 2012; Sanders, 2008). Moreover, the attitude to masculinity is different considering the cultural backgrounds of the clients. For instance, in the research of O’Connell Davidson (2003) it was shown that for Thai clients, sexual contacts with sex workers were directly linked to the associations with masculinity, whereas Western European clients did not express similar ideas. Interestingly, these differences in perspectives on masculinity can serve as additional explanation of why Western female sex tourists are seeking to experience “cross traditional male domains using traditional male powers to reaffirm their femininity” (Sanchez Taylor, 2000).

There are more diversified reasons of seeking the services of sex workers among male and female clients. As for male clients, Weitzer (ed) (2010) described that motives for buying sex differ according to social classes, or educational level. For example, college graduates were more likely to reason their visits to sex workers to experience more variety in sexual experiences, similar interests were expressed by married clients. Non-college graduates were more likely to report being physically unattractive and having difficulties in meeting women. Although these are obviously correlative connections, it can still be argued that contextual social factors do affect the decisions of clients. As for the female clients, the ethnographic study of Wosick-Correa and Joseph (2008) carried out in strip clubs showed that one of the reasons why female ordered lap dancing was to examine their sexuality.

Furthermore, there are some interpersonal and personal factors that can also push clients to use sexual services. For example, some of the male clients reported to be shy, socially incompetent to have a meaningful relationship and/or lack non-commercial sexual alternatives (Joseph & Black, 2012; Sanders, 2006). Other clients, as argued by Weitzer (ed) (2010) showed a so-called “self-focused sexuality”. It was found that: “The desire to “have a variety of sexual partners,” the need to “be in control during sex,” and the urge to “have sex immediately when I am aroused” also point to this kind of self-focused sexuality.” (Weitzer (ed), 2010, p.). There are clients who look for specific experience that is not being provided by their partners: oral/anal sex, dominance, role playing, fetishes et cetera (Gemme, 1993; Monto, 2001b; Plumridge et al., 1997)

Religion and problems in families also influence decisions to use sexual service. Huschke and Schubotz (2016) described that in the predominantly catholic society of Ireland, divorce was considered more shaming among respondents of the study than the use of sexual services. Issues
with partners or the inability to respond to each other’s needs (lack of desire, moral restrictions) also push clients\textsuperscript{36} to seek for people who are ready to fulfil their sexual fantasies.

As in the case of facilitators, the social background also impacts the way people use sexual services. For example, it is evident from different research papers that many street sex workers are exposed to violent crimes that includes assaults and rapes (see Weitzer, 2010, ed). We are also aware that street sex workers use criminal surroundings as their working sites (Romero-Daza et al., 2003; Davis, 2000; Wenzel et al., 2001). In this case, disadvantaged neighbourhoods might affect the popularity of certain treatment of sex workers, as was mentioned by Monto (2010) many of the clients who visit street sex workers show commodifying attitudes to them.

There are a variety of motives that lay behind the utilization of sexual services. Some personal and contextual characteristics are especially relevant in our understanding of why some clients will use coercive, degrading, and violent methods in their interactions, whereas others will not. Nevertheless, what is clear is that the motives of clients are shaped by evaluation of risks and benefits (pleasure).

**Sex workers**

As it was specified above, the decision to become a sex worker can result from various factors, and although such statement may appear controversial, it could be considered that even sex workers who are victims of coercive exploitation have been able to make decisions, at least until a certain point, before the exploitation started. Linked to the issue of consent, persons working in the sex industry in exploitative conditions may have initially consented and rationally decide to engage in providing sexual services.

One category that does not have an economic interest in the sex industry is that of children. By children we mean people under 18 years old, but especially emphasizing the vulnerability of small children (under 13 years old, or in other words prepubescent children). While there is some evidence of some teenage sex workers choosing to join the industry (Jonsson et al., 2014; Cotes, 1989), such evidence cannot be found concerning small children. Children represent one of the most vulnerable categories and certain sex business facilitators force children into providing services for a specific category of clients.

Some studies have shown that at least some of the migrant women had already taken the possibility of engaging in sex work into account when they made their decision to migrate (Siegel, 2012; Brull et al., 2011). A specific example can be found in an ethnographic study by Davies (2010) on Albanian sex workers in France. This author described how women who were supposed to work as waitresses did have an idea of “other services” that they might have to perform. Despite the fact that sex workers can be at risk of exploitation or other harm (e.g., health), their economic interests (e.g., the need to provide for a family) can motivate them to decide in favour of sex business. For example, in a study by Oso Casas (2010), many Latin sex workers in Spain were working under exploitative conditions to be able to send remittances and gifts to their families. Furthermore, economic benefits associated with the sex industry could not only shape the decisions to start providing services, but they could also be crucial in making a choice to continue working in the industry, despite exploitative conditions (Agustin, 2006).

Although there are women who enjoy their work in the sex industry, the evaluation of risks and profits of joining the sex industry is mostly driven by economic interests. Such evaluations are made against the backdrop of one’s social background and situational factors. For instance, high education prices were found to influence the decision of women to engage in sex business.\textsuperscript{37} Roberts and colleagues (2010) found a correlation between high education prices and students who become

\textsuperscript{36} In this study male clients only.

\textsuperscript{37} A point raised in discussion during the DESIrE, Workshop, Seminar on Lessons Learned from Previous Projects (June 2017). Retrieved from: http://project-desire.eu/2017/06/29/workshop-in-warsaw/
engaged in prostitution (or associated sex activities: lap dancing, strip dancing) in the UK. Globalization and, particularly, the use of the Internet also influenced the choices of sex workers. In a similar way as with facilitators, the Internet creates more opportunities, makes services anonymous, and, as one may argue, less urban. According to Bernstein (2007), the Internet allows women to organize their work better, to avoid intermediary agents. The Internet can serve as a tool to present the services that will include direct sexual contact with a client, but it also creates new direction of online live streaming sex, webcam sex and other forms of sexual activities. For young generations, who are very active Internet users worldwide, the Internet has become the main source of information. That is why some under aged sex workers from Sweden (see the study of Johnson et al., 2014), described that “without the Internet, I never would have sold sex.” For this respondent (called Natalie in the study) it was impossible to find a specific kind of clients in her small Swedish town. Moreover, for some people, the Internet opened a new pathway to sex industry, for instance, Bar-Johnson and Weiss (2015) described that 40 percent of male Internet escort workers in Czech Republic who joined escort business start out as homosexual porn actors.

Internet sex work, although still economically motivated, is becoming more associated with fun, freedom, and even pleasure (Bernstein, 2007; Jones, 2016). Despite viewing the Internet as a platform for desired encounters, this anonymity might make sex workers even more vulnerable to abuse, especially minors. Jonsson and colleagues (2014) found out that not all minor sex workers in their sample initially intended to sell sex. Instead, they were interested in gathering new experiences or felt affectionate towards men they encountered on the Internet. Only later, they were proposed to perform online sexual services or meet in person for payment. Furthermore, some studies indicate that the Internet had an influence on the decrease of the street-based prostitution (Cunningham & Kendall, 2011). Apart from the positive side of the Internet sex industry, namely; (1) anonymity, (2) absence of intermediary actors, there are quite serious risks that should be considered (see sections of facilitators and clients).

Stereotypes constitute another element that may shape decisions of sex workers. Baumeister and Vohs (2004) described sex as “female resource”. They illustrated their idea by social and cultural norms that made sex provided by women more valued than the one of men. Women use this higher price as the way to acquire better status. In many societies, the women’s sexuality is much more controlled because of its higher value. It can be argued with Baumeister and Vohs’ views about sex being predominantly a female resource, however, their paper illustrates common beliefs and stereotypes that are still present in our society. The idea of viewing sex as a resource that can be highly valued in our society can also shape the choices of sex workers. They choose this work as a paid alternative to existing job opportunities (Jeffrey & Macdonald, 2006). Looking at the difference between male and female sex workers, Vanwesenbeeck (2013) illustrated that even though there is an evidence of male sex workers being quite active in the Western world, their motivations to join the industry may differ from the ones of female sex workers. In the Netherlands, 5% of all sex workers in the sample are male. However, Vanwesenbeeck further states that: “Basiclaly, we see large groups of female (and to a much lesser extent male) sex workers “follow the money” and travel or migrate to wherever large groups of men with money can be found." (p.12) Consequently, the idea of female sex as a profitable tool also makes it easier for women to get work in sex business. The presence of men in the sex industry is not underestimated, especially in the age of Internet that makes sex work more diverse and anonymous. However, it can be considered/argued that the presentation of sex work as “female business” is still very common in our society.

Not only the economic motivation and global processes might influence the choices to join or stay involved in the industry but psychological state or characteristics as well. As an illustration, the development of personal relationship with a pimp, or an employer can be mentioned. The need in love and care goes back to the pyramid of Maslow and several researchers (Bovenkerk & van San, 2011; 2013) described that relationships that develop between the pimps and employers, even when
D. 1.4. - Report on Demand for Sexual Services that can fuel Sexual Exploitation in the Context of Human trafficking

sex workers are in the prostitution business in countries where the prostitution is legalized, like the Netherlands, also play a role in the choice of sex workers to go on/continue working. Addictions and certain lifestyles associated with prostitution can also influence the individual choices of sex workers to stay in the business and to continue providing sexual services (see Young et al., 2000). As argued by Stalans and Finn (2016), drug supplement is one of the coercive tactics used by pimps. There is evidence that certain lifestyles, can develop addictions and the setting where, for instance, street prostitution occurs might make it easier for people with addiction to get drugs (see McCabe et al., 2011).

Cates (1989) in his study about male prostitution among adolescents also suggested that low self-esteem may contribute to the decision to become a sex worker. He argued that: “For an adolescent absorbed in bodily changes and questioning his sexuality, the willingness of adult males to pay for his body may increase perceived self-esteem and self-worth. Hustlers often make efforts to maintain good physical condition, and take pride in their physical appearance. Body image is recognized as an important component of adolescent self-esteem. Hustling may also satisfy "thrill-seeking" through involvement in a taboo behaviour.” (p.153) Similar findings were reported by Jonsson and colleagues (2014) on female teenage prostitution in Sweden. The authors described that young women who experienced depression “adopted more risk-taking behaviour online, including visiting self-harm sex sites, but also searching for sexual contacts and selling sex more frequently than otherwise”. Also, some researchers indicate that childhood traumas, especially concerning sexual abuse could make some people more likely to work in sex industry and consequently end up being exploited (see also Leichtentritt & Arad, 2005). Baumgartner et al., (2012) also reported that there is correlation between online risk-taking behaviour and feeling “less satisfied” or coming from unstable or problematic families.

Sex workers’ choices and a consequent position of vulnerability

The decision to provide sexual services, or even to use the services of smugglers as this might be a first step into a trafficking process, is only the first step in the process of joining the sex industry. The next step will be to plan how exactly this decision is fulfilled. The latter can affect someone’s position of vulnerability and make it easier for employers and recruiters to coerce and exploit both local and migrant sex workers. In this subsection some sociological insights will be discussed, as they might be helpful in understanding the choices of sex workers and how such choices might lead to situations of vulnerability.

The choice of the place of work is affected by culture and social norms in one’s community. For instance, if the person is better integrated in the society, he/she will not easily make a decision that is perceived as deviant. This phenomenon was described first by Durkheim (1897) and later expanded by Tubergen and colleagues (2005). By using the work of Durkheim on suicides and applying it to the situation of sex workers, it is possible to better understand why sex work is performed by migrants or even commuters from different cities. Even in societies where prostitution is legal, it is still stigmatized and might be considered as deviant. Empirical findings on mobility of sex workers indicate similar phenomena (Siegel, 2012). Sex workers prefer to work in cities or districts that are far from their homes. One more interesting idea proposed by urban sociologists Albers and Sabat (2012) is the perception of prostitution as “city/urban” phenomenon. The researchers stated that street prostitution historically represents a special quarter in the city, where other “deviant” activities are concentrated. A bright illustration of this idea is the density of sex theatres, coffee shops, bars in the Amsterdam Red Light District. Integration in a community does not only imply fear of being excluded, but because, as a part of the community, someone is sharing norms and rules, and it is unlikely that this person will consider the behaviour to be deviant in the first place, however it will be useful to further test this hypothesis. Therefore, to be able to provide sexual services, it is easier to move away from your community and not make attempts to integrate in a new setting, unless someone is assured that his/her behaviour will be fully accepted. As a matter of fact, it puts sex workers or even migrants who had different considerations about joining the industry in a vulnerable position. Consequently, red light districts can serve as an alternative community, where the majority of people are engaged in deviant or unacceptable activities. Although red light districts are not always supported by society, they
appear to be an inevitable part of the urban landscapes (Aalbers & Sabat, 2012). Even though the choice to work in the sex industry is often accompanied by mobility due to stigmatized attitudes of one’s community, Siegel (2012) described that families of migrant sex workers from Eastern Europe (e.g., Romania, Bulgaria) seemed to be quite positive about the work performed by their daughters. She explained it by the fact that the sex work becomes generally more accepted. Although the financial stability provided by sex workers who are working abroad improves significantly the situation of their relatives, it does not mean that families will support decisions of sex workers to work in their home towns. Nevertheless, financial help in some cases can outlaw moral stances and community pressure. Many households are benefiting from remittances sent by migrant (sex) workers in more developed countries (Oso Casas, 2010; Taylor, 1999; Adams & Page, 2005).

Siegel (2012) also mentioned that young girls from poor families (e.g., Roma) viewed prostitution as an opportunity to explore the Western part of Europe and be decently paid. Nevertheless, from the field of migration research, evidence can be found that migration is considered as an upward mobility step and therefore migrants wish to fulfil stereotypes of their co-citizens (e.g., see Aples, 2012). Moreover, the presentation of being successful in home communities does not require one’s real situation abroad to be revealed, and the money that is earned and demonstrated only confirms the stereotypes about “a better life in the West”. Similar ideas can be applied to the situation with Eastern European girls described by Siegel. As a result, even though the ideas of Siegel (2012) about attitudes to prostitution are valid statements, they do not necessarily imply that the overall attitude to prostitution has become better. Rather, the correct hypothesis would be that the economic benefit associated with working outside someone’s community, no matter what kind of work this is, might to some extent overweight moral reasoning.

In most of the cases, international and domestic mobility is accompanied by the demand for travel arrangements, workplace, personal networks. The possibility to work in the sex industry is not openly promoted by intermediary agents, since even though the option is being considered, it is still widely stigmatized. Agustin (2008) described that: “While illegal migrants may strike up conversations about job possibilities in a variety of migrant venues, including churches, parks, phone-call shops and cafés, mentioning sex work is problematic, because of the stigma, even when it is a common source of income.” For migrant sex workers or generally speaking migrant workers, it can be even more difficult to organize their mobility. For instance, in some countries, it is difficult to obtain residence permits, or in case of EU citizens who can move freely within the territory of the EU, there is always a language barrier that makes workers especially vulnerable. Consequently, although migrant workers might not be aware of the risk to end up in the sex industry against their will, they do take that risk by using services of smugglers or unreliable work placement agencies. Moreover, as potential migrants, sex workers demand facilitation services, such as the translation of documents, medical references, or travel advice. At this stage, facilitators, travel agents, or even family members of migrants who are vulnerable, can ask too high prices that eventually are returned through the work in the sex business (Agustin, 2006). Moreover, for migrants, outside the EU, especially for asylum seekers, it is difficult to access the legitimate work market while waiting for results of asylum applications, and this pushes them to search for illegal opportunities and consequently makes them more vulnerable to exploitation.

If a sex worker chooses the work place outside her/his familiar setting, they might also require more assistance in settling down. Aalbers and Sabat (2012) indicated that migrant sex workers in the Netherlands tend to use additional services of pimps more often than native Dutch sex workers. As for personal networks, Bar-Johnson and Weiss (2015) in their study on Czech male sex workers, described that 20 percent of bar/club sex workers were introduced to such work by friends, similarly 25 percent of Internet escort workers got information about possibility from friends. Also, even if not using the services of pimps, sex workers would require rent services, or place to meet clients. The legality of such services would be strongly influenced by state regulations. For example, in the case of the Czech Republic, where the facilitation of sexual services is formally criminalized, clubs cannot have profits from sex work facilitation, instead, they serve as a platform for encounters with clients. They rent rooms for sex workers and sell expensive drinks.

The analysis of the behaviours of the different categories of actors in the sex industry reveal the diversity of factors that may influence their decisions. Some elements are of a biological nature
(e.g. the need invoked by clients), others are linked to the actors’ social background (e.g. the propensity to have recourse to violent techniques among facilitators, or to behave violently among clients) or to social-cultural contexts (e.g. the stigma attached to the provision and/or use of sexual services, the social pressure to use such services to be masculine, etc.). Their striking diversity demonstrates the complexity of apprehending the concept of demand within the sex industry and the importance of a holistic approach. Focusing on the demand coming from clients, or eventually from facilitators, fails to take into account that demand may also come from sex workers.

6. Conclusion

As a culmination of the first work package of the DESIrE project, this report builds upon the work that has been done in the first six months after the launch of the project in order to reach a state of the art understanding of the demand for sexual services that can fuel human trafficking for sexual exploitation. The report is based on literature review. Data that will be collected in the empirical part of the DESIrE project might add new insights and give rise to further develop the findings in this report. The report consists of three main stages, and now we present the conclusions reached in each of them.

The first stage stems from the need for a precise definition of demand. Market terminology has often been used inconsistently and without considering its origin in economics. When taking economic terminology into consideration, a careful analysis of the sex industry markets is required. This analysis should always be up-to-date, because the sex industry and associated markets are rapidly changing (due to recent technological developments). Secondly, one needs to identify exactly which services and actors are represented, since it constitutes the basis for an understanding of how actors evaluate costs and benefits within the sex industry. Finally, the decisions of actors are shaped (but never fully determined) by factors on multiple scales. For example, the decision of a customer to use sexual services is influenced by biological and psychological characteristics, by social norms, and by legislation (i.e., biology, psychology, sociology, law).

The second stage sought to conceptualize sexual exploitation, in order to provide a deeper understanding of this complex phenomenon within and beyond trafficking. This definition will be developed further during the empirical phase of the DESIrE project with country-specific data collected on the situation at outcome (harmfulness vs mutually beneficial), process (coercion vs fully informed consent) and contextual (vulnerability) levels. The literature reviewed on coercion indicated that not all parties involved in the sex industry will choose exploitative strategies. Furthermore, among those that do opt for exploitative tactics, there will be some who choose not to exploit their victims by means of coercion. Looking at the decisions of actors through the lenses of cost-benefit analyses shows that exploitative strategies would be utilized only when the benefits of using these strategies outweigh the risks. Moreover, from the clients’ perspective, the perception of risks and benefits can differ from client to client. Considering the risks and profits associated with the sex industry, it is not surprising that one of the most prevalent methods of coercion are indirect, or implicit. Therefore, it is very difficult to draw a line between consensual and coercive exploitation.

In the third stage, the vagueness of the concept of exploitation in the legal definition of trafficking in human beings has been pinpointed. Although this legal definition does refer to the concept of coercion, which is mostly represented by the constituent element of “means” (threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or vulnerability). This element hinges on establishing the presence of coercion, but does not address the grey zone between coercive and consensual exploitation (e.g., in case of implicit coercion). The general and vague definition of human trafficking, as well as the absence of conceptualization of exploitation, makes it sometimes difficult to qualify facts as cases of trafficking in human beings, which impacts negatively on the protection of victims of exploitation, not being recognised as such. Therefore, it is essential to study how the identification and the protection of victims of sexual exploitation can be improved, beyond the definition of human trafficking highlighted in the Palermo Protocol. It is also in this regard essential to
understand which policies concerning commercial sex will best ensure the well-being of sex workers and victims of human trafficking.

More generally, this report has highlighted the importance of adopting a holistic approach when analysing the sex industry, and especially demand for sexual services that may fuel trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation. Such conclusion builds on the different steps of analysis such as the conceptualization of demand and supply terminology, followed by the identification of different markets within the sex industry, the actors who operate in these markets and factors that influence their decisions, and closed by reflections on the concepts of sexual exploitation and coercion, especially in the context of human trafficking. The adoption of such approach encourages interdisciplinary cooperation of researchers, especially when studying how different economic actors operate in the sex industry markets and what affects their decisions. Obviously, the holistic approach constitutes an innovative way to research the sex industry and consequently to design tailored-made, evidence-based, up-to-date policy proposals.

The approach is especially useful when developing policies centred around the call to “discourage demand that fuels human trafficking for sexual exploitation”, because it allows policymakers to base their decisions on a complete picture of the sex industry. This picture eventually helps in directing policies at particular groups of actors, while taking into account how they are related to other actors in the sex industry. Moreover, it provides a solid basis for any research and policy proposals for the prevention of human trafficking in the context of the sex industry. It also fosters more fruitful cooperation between policymakers and researchers in the context of sexual exploitation. Last but not least, it forms an understanding of the decisions of facilitators (and eventually clients) to opt for the exploitation of sex workers, and for their trafficking, which might ultimately help to influence or constrain their decisions.

The careful identification of markets and understanding of economic terminology seem to indicate that “exploitative services” are not often demanded by clients, but exploitation and human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation are often used by facilitators as a tactic to generate higher profits. Only in cases where clients demand for inherently degrading services that can never be provided consensually, and will always include coercion, it can be concluded that there is demand for “exploitative services”. Moreover, not all facilitators or clients will use exploitative strategies and their decisions to do so is based on cost-benefit considerations, when profits expected outweigh the risks. It is also essential to acknowledge that the cost-benefit analysis is influenced by personal characteristics of the person and the context. Taking into account all points discussed above, it can be highlighted that to be able to discourage the demand that fuels all forms of sexual exploitation, it is important to understand why exploitation is used by facilitators and clients and how to make the policy specific in addressing the groups who consider exploitation profitable. Consequently, it would be advisable to make policies focused on the eradication of trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation more specific by focusing on particular groups of actors.
References


**D. 1.4. - Report on Demand for Sexual Services that can fuel Sexual Exploitation in the Context of Human trafficking**


