Commercial sexual exploitation of children and young people
Attitudes towards the problem in selected countries of Central and Eastern Europe

Report from qualitative research
Nobody’s Children Foundation
2015
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## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Object and context of the study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Research objectives and methodology</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Results</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed results by country</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-country comparison of results</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal context in project countries</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Summary</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. OBJECT AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

This section of the report is based on: Żurkowska, D. (2015), Komercyjne wykorzystywanie seksualne dzieci i młodzieży. Postawy Polaków wobec zjawiska w latach 2011-2014, Dziecko Krzywdzone, no. X(X).
COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This report presents the results of an international research project carried out by the Nobody’s Children Foundation in 6 countries of Central and Eastern Europe within the programme „Prevention of child sexual abuse and exploitation in Central and Eastern Europe – a comprehensive approach”. The study explored social attitudes towards commercial sexual exploitation of children and young people.

DEFINITION

COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN is defined as sexual abuse where any form of compensation in cash or in kind is made to the child or a third person(s). This definition was developed by the authors of the Declaration and Agenda for Action against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, adopted in 1996 in Stockholm, also by the Polish government.

Commercial sexual exploitation of children is a contemporary form of slavery in which children are treated as sexual and commercial objects.

The problem takes several forms including: child prostitution and child pornography, child sex tourism, trafficking of children for sexual purposes, and child marriages (ECPAT International; FDN, 2012).
COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION
OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

DEFINITION: VARIOUS FORMS OF COMMERCIAL
EXPLOITATION (in: Włodarczyk, Hamela, 2011)

- **Survival sex** – occurs when children are unable to meet their basic needs (such as food) in any other, socially accepted way.

- **Aspirational prostitution** – occurs when prostitution is a means to achieve a higher economic and social status and is motivated by a desire to belong to a specific group; here sex is often traded for money or for branded or luxury goods.

- **Sponsoring** – providing sexual services in exchange for long-term financial support offered by a „sponsor” (who may pay the rent, tuition fees, etc.)

- **Commercial cybersex** – exchanging pictures and videos (which show the child naked or in underwear), sexual text messages, or sexual chats for payment or other benefits, such as mobile phone top-ups)
Experts note that commercial sexual exploitation of children is a **global problem**. It is constantly changing with the on-going **globalization processes** and the development of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies (ECPAT International; FDN, 2012).

The International Labour Organisation estimates that **each year about 1.2 million children become victims of human trafficking**, mainly for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation or forced labour. Commercial exploitation of children in child prostitution and child pornography is a major **source of income for organised criminal groups** that often operate on an international scale (FDN, 2012).

**However, it is difficult to estimate the scale** of commercial exploitation of children on the global level. The main **obstacles** include: the lack of coherent systems of data collection and classification; the diversity of legal systems and solutions which leads to different ways of classifying cases; and the limitations of the official statistics which only include reported or detected cases (Wojtkowska, 2012).
II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY
**Research Objectives**

- To assess **social attitudes** towards the problem of commercial sexual exploitation of children in selected countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

- To obtain **moral evaluations** of various forms of children and young people’s sexual behaviour for commercial purposes, and their **perceived prevalence** on the national level.

- To elicit the respondents’ opinions about the existence of **risk groups** that are especially likely to engage in such sexual behaviour.

- To assess the **level of public support for penalizing** various behaviours regarded as forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children and young people.
To accomplish the research objectives, a **qualitative study** was conducted in 6 countries using the **same research instrument** (questionnaire) within a **limited time frame** (2014-2015). The study was conducted on **nationally representative samples**, which enabled international comparisons of data.

The **questionnaire** included 6 close-end questions, both single choice and multiple choice. The respondents expressed their views on **various aspects of children’s and young people’s engagement in commercial sexual behaviours**, such as: moral evaluations of such behaviours and their perceived prevalence in each country; the causes and motivations behind such behaviour; the existence of risk groups – children and young people who are especially susceptible to the problem; and the respondents’ support for penalising the provision and use of such services.
The survey was conducted in 6 European countries: Bulgaria, Lithuania, Latvia, Moldova, Poland, and Ukraine.

In each country the study was conducted on a **nationally representative sample** (except for Bulgaria where the data were weighed to make sure they are representative for the population).

Depending on the local conditions and capacities, the study was conducted using the CAPI, CATI or CAWI methods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bulgaria</th>
<th>Lithuania</th>
<th>Latvia</th>
<th>Moldova</th>
<th>Poland</th>
<th>Ukraine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sample size</strong></td>
<td>N=611</td>
<td>N=1000</td>
<td>N=1007</td>
<td>N=1015</td>
<td>N=988</td>
<td>N=1039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Method</strong></td>
<td>CATI</td>
<td>CAWI</td>
<td>CAWI</td>
<td>CAPI</td>
<td>CAPI</td>
<td>CAWI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research company</strong></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="GALLUP INTERNATIONAL" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="RAIT" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="SolidData" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="IMAS" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Millward Brown" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="iVOX" /></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The survey addressed 4 forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children and young people that were presented to the respondents as brief case descriptions:

**OPERATIONALISATION**

- **ASPIRATIONAL PROSTITUTION**: A boy or girl of 16 or 17 has sex with adult partners in exchange for various gifts (e.g., clothes, cosmetics, electronic gadgets, etc.).
- **SURVIVAL SEX**: A boy or girl of 16 or 17, living in a poor family, has sex in exchange for means of subsistence, basic needs, education, etc.
- **SPONSORING**: A boy or girl of 16 or 17 has sex with one adult partner or sponsor in exchange for regular financial support.
- **COMMERCIAL CYBERSEX**: A boy or girl of 16 or 17 shares his/her naked photos online in exchange for payment or other benefits.
III. RESULTS
Detailed results by country
Detailed results by country:

BULGARIA
In Bulgaria the most negatively evaluated form of commercial sexual activity was cybersex. 94% of respondents regarded this behaviour as wrong or very wrong.

Survival sex was perceived as the least reprehensible. Still, the vast majority (73%) of respondents considered such behaviour to be wrong or very wrong.

Among the examined forms of commercial sexual exploitation, aspirational prostitution was seen as the most prevalent or real problem. 71% of respondents believed many people in Bulgaria engaged in such behaviour.

71% of the sample thought there were groups of children and young people in Bulgaria who were at higher risk of engaging in sex in exchange for payment or other benefits. According to most respondents, those are children from pathological or poor families and families where parents have no time for their kids.
**Description:** A boy or girl of 16 or 17 has sex with adult partners in exchange for various gifts (e.g., clothes, cosmetics, electronic gadgets, etc.).

**Moral evaluations**

1. This behaviour is not wrong at all
2. 81%
3. 10%
4. 5%
5. 1%

**Perceived prevalence**

- Almost non-existent: 26%
- Marginal and true for very few people: 71%
- Real problem, true for many people: 3%
- I don't know / It's hard to say: 0%

N=611
**Description:** A boy or girl of 16 or 17 has sex with one adult partner or sponsor in exchange for *regular financial support*.

**Moral evaluations**

- 1%: This behaviour is not wrong at all
- 3%: This behaviour is very wrong
- 21%: Somewhat wrong
- 63%: Absolutely wrong

**Perceived prevalence**

- 2%: Almost non-existent
- 32%: Marginal and true for very few people
- 64%: Real problem, true for many people
- 2%: I don't know / It's hard to say

N=611
Description: A boy or girl of 16 or 17, living in a poor family, has sex in exchange for means of subsistence, basic needs, education, etc.
Description: A boy or girl of 16 or 17 shares his/her **naked photos online** in exchange for payment or other benefits.

**Moral evaluations**

- 1%: 1 - This behaviour is not wrong at all
- 4%: 2
- 10%: 3
- 84%: 4 - This behaviour is very wrong

**Perceived prevalence**

- 2%: Almost non-existent
- 29%: Marginal and true for very few people
- 68%: Real problem, true for many people
- 2%: I don't know / It's hard to say

N=611
**Perceived motivations of children and young people**

Why do you think children and young people under 18 choose to engage in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits? *multiple choice question*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They are forced into it by difficult life circumstances</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of attention/poor communication with parents</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They want to impress their peers</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They want to have fashionable clothes, gadgets, etc.</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of control/discipline</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of values/norms in the immediate environment</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack or low level of education in the family</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They want to make easy money, raise their status</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity, seeking adventure</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's trendy; they want to be like celebrities</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They were forced by someone else</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They want to take pleasure in sex</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of media: TV, press, Internet</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Impact of media: TV, press, Internet

N=611
The risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits is the same among children and young people in all environments/groups.

In some groups of children and young people there is a higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits.

I don't know / It's hard to say

Which of the following statements do you agree with more?
In your opinion, which groups of children and young people are at higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits? (multiple choice question)

- Children from pathological or problem families (e.g., substance abuse, violence): 73%
- Children from poor families: 64%
- Children from families where parents have no time for their kids: 56%
- Children from families where parents don't talk to children about sex: 48%
- Persons who have been sexually abused in childhood: 32%
- Minority children: 5%
- Children from well-off families / "spoiled" children: 2%
- Children abusing drugs/alcohol: 1%
- Children living in care institutions: 1%
- It's hard to say: 1%

N=434; the question was only asked to the respondents who agreed with the statement that there were groups at higher risk.
**Support for Penalizing Various Behaviours**

*Do you think the following behaviours should be punishable?*

- Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the CLIENT: 97%
- Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the CHILD: 89%
- Provision of sexual services by persons of 15 to 16 in exchange for payment or other benefits: 74%

N=611
Detailed results by country:

LITHUANIA
In Lithuania the most negatively evaluated forms of commercial sexual activity were cybersex (94% of respondents regarded it as wrong or very wrong) and aspirational prostitution (91% of the sample chose one of those answers).

Survival sex was perceived as the least reprehensible. Still, the vast majority (85%) of respondents considered such behaviour to be wrong or very wrong.

Among the examined forms of commercial sexual exploitation, aspirational prostitution was seen as the most prevalent or real problem. 37% of respondents believed many people in Lithuania engaged in such behaviour.

60% of the sample thought there were groups of children and young people who were at higher risk of engaging in sex in exchange for payment or other benefits. According to most respondents, those are children from pathological or poor families and families where parents have no time for their kids.
**ASPIRATIONAL PROSTITUTION**

*Description*: A boy or a girl of 16 or 17 has sex with adult partners in exchange for *various gifts (e.g., clothes, cosmetics, electronic gadgets, etc.)*.

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**Moral evaluation**

- 1%: This behaviour is not wrong at all
- 6%: 2
- 11%: 3
- 80%: 4
- 2%: 5 - This behaviour is very wrong

---

**Perceived prevalence**

- 1%: Almost non-existent
- 41%: Marginal and true for very few people
- 37%: Real problem, true for many people
- 21%: I don't know / It's hard to say

N=1000
**Description:** A boy or girl of 16 or 17 has sex with one adult partner or sponsor in exchange for *regular financial support.*

**Moral evaluation**
- 1%: 2% - This behaviour is not wrong at all
- 8%: 2% - This behaviour is very wrong
- 20%: 45% - This behaviour is very wrong
- 69%: 33% - This behaviour is very wrong

**Perceived prevalence**
- 2%: 2% - Almost non-existent
- 45%: 45% - Marginal and true for very few people
- 33%: 33% - Real problem, true for many people
- 21%: 21% - I don't know / It's hard to say

N=1000
**Description:** A boy or girl of 16 or 17, living in a poor family, has sex in exchange for **means of subsistence, basic needs, education, etc.**

### Moral evaluations

- **1 - This behaviour is not wrong at all**: 23%
- **2**: 11%
- **3**: 2%
- **4**: 3%
- **5 - This behaviour is very wrong**: 62%

### Perceived prevalence

- **Almost non-existent**: 3%
- **Marginal and true for very few people**: 47%
- **Real problem, true for many people**: 31%
- **I don't know / It's hard to say**: 20%

*N=1000*
**COMMERCIAL CYBERSEX**

*Description:* A boy or girl of 16 or 17 shares his/her **naked photos online** in exchange for payment or other benefits.

**Moral evaluations**

1. 2% - This behaviour is not wrong at all
2. 1% - 5% - This behaviour is not wrong
3. 13% - This behaviour is marginally wrong
4. 79% - This behaviour is very wrong

**Perceived prevalence**

1. 5% - Almost non-existent
2. 48% - Marginal and true for very few people
3. 24% - Real problem, true for many people
4. 24% - I don't know / It's hard to say

N=1000
Why do you think children and young people under 18 choose to engage in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits? (multiple choice question)

- They want to have fashionable clothes, gadgets, etc. 67%
- They are forced into it by difficult life circumstances 61%
- They were forced by someone else 49%
- They want to impress their peers 37%
- Curiosity, seeking adventure 28%
- They want to take pleasure in sex 17%
- Other 5%
- I don't know / It's hard to say 4%

N=1000
The risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits is the same among children and young people in all environments/groups.

In some groups of children and young people there is a higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits.

I don't know / It's hard to say

Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

- The same risk
- There are groups at higher risk
- I don't know / It's hard to say
In your opinion, which groups of children and young people are at higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits? (multiple choice question)

- Children from pathological or problem families (e.g., substance abuse, violence): 89%
- Children from poor families: 64%
- Children from families where parents have no time for their kids: 55%
- Individuals who were sexually abused in childhood: 33%
- Children from families where parents don’t talk to children about sex: 27%
- Other: 1%
- It's hard to say: 1%

N=597; the question was only asked to the respondents who agreed with the statement that there were groups at higher risk.
SUPPORT FOR PENALIZING VARIOUS BEHAVIOURS

Do you think the following behaviours should be punishable?

- Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the CLIENT: 87%
- Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the CHILD: 65%
- Provision of sexual services by persons of 15 to 16 in exchange for payment or other benefits: 66%

N=1000
Detailed results by country:

LATVIA
In Latvia the most negatively evaluated form of commercial sexual activity was **cybersex**. **88%** of respondents regarded it as wrong or very wrong.

**Sponsoring and survival sex** were perceived as the least reprehensible. Still, the vast majority (**80%**) of respondents considered such behaviour to be wrong or very wrong.

Among the examined forms of commercial sexual exploitation, **aspirational prostitution** was seen as the most prevalent or real problem. **57%** of respondents believed many people in Latvia engaged in such behaviour.

**60%** of the sample thought there were groups of children and young people who were at higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits. According to most respondents, those are **children from pathological families**, **families where parents have no time for their kids**, and **poor families**.
**Aspirational Prostitution**

*Description:* A boy or girl of 16 or 17 has sex with adult partners in exchange for various gifts (e.g., clothes, cosmetics, electronic gadgets, etc.).

**Moral evaluations**

- 1 - This behaviour is not wrong at all: 2%  
- 2: 3%  
- 3: 8%  
- 4: 14%  
- 5 - This behaviour is very wrong: 72%

**Perceived prevalence**

- Almost non-existent: 19%  
- Marginal and true for very few people: 57%  
- Real problem, true for many people: 24%  
- I don't know / It's hard to say: 0%

N=1007
Description: A boy or girl of 16 or 17 has sex with one adult partner or sponsor in exchange for regular financial support.

Moral evaluations:
- 1 - This behaviour is not wrong at all: 3%
- 2: 14%
- 3: 27%
- 4: 53%
- 5 - This behaviour is very wrong

Perceived prevalence:
- Almost non-existent: 1%
- Marginal and true for very few people: 24%
- Real problem, true for many people: 56%
- I don't know / It's hard to say: 20%

N=1007
**Description:** A boy or girl of 16 or 17, living in a poor family, has sex in exchange for means of subsistence, basic needs, education, etc.

**Moral evaluations**
- 1 - This behaviour is not wrong at all: 3%
- 2: 2%
- 3: 14%
- 4: 22%
- 5 - This behaviour is very wrong: 58%

**Perceived prevalence**
- Almost non-existent: 1%
- Marginal and true for very few people: 21%
- Real problem, true for many people: 54%
- I don't know / It's hard to say: 24%

N=1007
**Description:** A boy or girl of 16 or 17 shares his/her **naked photos online** in exchange for payment or other benefits.

**Moral evaluations:**
- 1%: 1 - This behaviour is not wrong at all
- 23%: 2
- 46%: 3
- 29%: 4
- 73%: 5 - This behaviour is very wrong

**Perceived prevalence:**
- 2%: Almost non-existent
- 7%: Marginal and true for very few people
- 60%: Real problem, true for many people
- 30%: I don’t know / It’s hard to say

N=1007
Why do you think children and young people under 18 choose to engage in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits? (multiple choice question)

- They want to have fashionable clothes, gadgets, etc. 58%
- They want to impress their peers 55%
- They are forced into it by difficult life circumstances 47%
- Curiosity, seeking adventure 37%
- They were forced by someone else 33%
- They want to take pleasure in sex 15%
- Poor value/ethical system in the society 3%
- Lack or low level of education in the family; family problems 3%
- Need for compensation, low self-esteem 3%
- Depravation, low intelligence 3%
- I don't know / It's hard to say 3%

N=1007
Which of the following statements do you agree with more?

- The risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits is the same among children and young people in all environments/groups.
- In some groups of children and young people there is a higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits.
- I don't know / It's hard to say

- The same risk: 27%
- There are groups at higher risk: 60%
- I don't know / It's hard to say: 13%

N=1007
In your opinion, which groups of children and young people are at higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits? (multiple choice question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children from pathological or problem families (e.g., substances abuse, violence)</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children from families where parents have no time for their kids</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children from poor families</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals who were sexually abused in childhood</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children from families where parents don't talk to children about sex</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's hard to say</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=604; the question was only asked to the respondents who agreed with the statement that there were groups at higher risk.
**Support for Penalizing Various Behaviours**

*Do you think the following behaviours *should be punishable*?*

- Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the CLIENT: 87%
- Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the CHILD: 71%
- Provision of sexual services by persons of 15 to 16 in exchange for payment or other benefits: 57%

N = 1007
Detailed results by country:

MOLDOVA
In Moldova the most negatively evaluated form of commercial sexual activity was cybersex. 93% of respondents regarded it as wrong or very wrong.

It should be emphasized that in Moldova all forms of commercial sexual activity were seen as definitely negative (i.e., rated as wrong or very wrong) and there were no significant differences in terms of their evaluations: sponsoring (92%), aspirational prostitution (92%) and survival sex (91%).

Among the examined forms of commercial sexual exploitation, sponsoring and survival sex were seen as the most prevalent or real problem. 63% of respondents believe many people in Moldova engage in such behaviour.

53% of the sample thought there were groups of children and young people who were at higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits. According to most respondents, those are children from pathological and poor families, and from families where parents have no time for their kids.
ASPIRATIONAL PROSTITUTION

Description: A boy or girl of 16 or 17 has sex with adult partners in exchange for various gifts (e.g., clothes, cosmetics, electronic gadgets, etc.).

Moral evaluations

- 1% - This behaviour is not wrong at all
- 4% - This behaviour is mildly wrong
- 4% - This behaviour is moderately wrong
- 88% - This behaviour is very wrong
- 2% - Don’t know / No reply

N=1015

Perceived prevalence

- 4% - Almost non-existent
- 25% - Marginal and true for very few people
- 61% - Real problem, true for many people
- 11% - I don't know / It's hard to say

N=1015
Description: A boy or girl of 16 or 17 has sex with one adult partner or sponsor in exchange for regular financial support.
Description: A boy or girl of 16 or 17, living in a poor family, has sex in exchange for means of subsistence, basic needs, education, etc.
**Commercial Cybersex**

*Description:* A boy or girl of 16 or 17 shares his/her *naked photos online* in exchange for payment or other benefits.

**Moral evaluations**

- 1%: 1 - This behaviour is not wrong at all
- 1%: 2
- 3%: 3
- 3%: 4
- 90%: 5 - This behaviour is very wrong
- 3%: Don’t know/ No reply

**Perceived prevalence**

- 4%: Almost non-existent
- 22%: Marginal and true for very few people
- 62%: Real problem, true for many people
- 12%: I don’t know / It’s hard to say

N=1015
PERCEIVED MOTIVATIONS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Why do you think children and young people under 18 choose to engage in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits? (multiple choice question)

- They are forced into it by difficult life circumstances: 61%
- They want to have fashionable clothes, gadgets, etc.: 52%
- They were forced by someone else: 47%
- Curiosity, seeking adventure: 44%
- They want to impress their peers: 37%
- They want to take pleasure in sex: 30%
- Other: 6%

N=1015
The risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits is the same among children and young people in all environments/groups.

In some groups of children and young people there is a higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits.

I don't know / It's hard to say
In your opinion, which groups of children and young people are at higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits? (multiple choice question)

- Children from pathological or problem families (e.g., substance abuse, violence) - 76%
- Children from poor families - 76%
- Children from families where parents have no time for their kids - 72%
- Children from families where parents don't talk to children about sex - 52%
- Individuals who were sexually abused in childhood - 27%
- Other - 8%

N=542; the question was only asked to the respondents who agreed with the statement that there were groups at higher risk.
Do you think the following behaviours should be punishable?

- Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the child: 80%
- Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the client: 73%
- Providing sexual services by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits: 78%

N=1015
Detailed results by country:

POLAND
In Poland the most negatively evaluated form of commercial sexual activity was aspirational prostitution. 91% of respondents regarded this behaviour as wrong or very wrong.

Survival sex was perceived as the least reprehensible. Still, the vast majority (85%) of respondents considered such behaviour to be wrong or very wrong.

At the same time, aspirational prostitution was seen as the most prevalent or real problem among the four forms of commercial sexual exploitation. 56% of respondents believed many people in Poland engaged in such behaviour.

49% of the sample thought there were groups of children and young people who were at higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits. According to most respondents, those are children from pathological families and poor families.
**Aspirational Prostitution**

*Description*: A boy or girl of 16 or 17 has sex with adult partners in exchange for various gifts (e.g., clothes, cosmetics, electronic gadgets, etc.).

**Moral evaluations**

- 1 - This behaviour is not wrong at all: 2%
- 2: 1%
- 3: 7%
- 4: 9%
- 5 - This behaviour is very wrong: 82%

**Perceived prevalence**

- Almost non-existent: 3%
- Marginal and true for very few people: 29%
- Real problem, true for many people: 56%
- I don't know / It's hard to say: 13%

N=988
**Description**: A boy or girl of 16 or 17 has sex with one adult partner or sponsor in exchange for regular financial support.

**Moral evaluations**

- 1%: 1 - This behaviour is not wrong at all
- 9%: 2
- 9%: 3
- 80%: 4
- 1%: 5 - This behaviour is very wrong

**Perceived prevalence**

- 3%: Almost non-existent
- 28%: Marginal and true for very few people
- 54%: Real problem, true for many people
- 15%: I don't know / It's hard to say

N=988
**Survival Sex**

**Description:** A boy or girl of 16 or 17, living in a poor family, has sex in exchange for means of subsistence, basic needs, education, etc.

**Moral evaluations**

- 1%: This behaviour is not wrong at all
- 2%: This behaviour is very wrong
- 73%: This behaviour is somewhere in between

**Perceived prevalence**

- 3%: Almost non-existent
- 30%: Marginal and true for very few people
- 51%: Real problem, true for many people
- 15%: I don't know / It's hard to say

N=988
**Description:** A boy or girl of 16 or 17 shares his/her **naked photos online** in exchange for payment or other benefits.

**Moral evaluations**

- 1%: 1 - This behaviour is not wrong at all
- 2%: 2
- 8%: 3
- 8%: 4
- 81%: 5 - This behaviour is very wrong

**Perceived prevalence**

- 4%: Almost non-existent
- 26%: Marginal and true for very few people
- 54%: Real problem, true for many people
- 16%: I don’t know / It’s hard to say
PERCEIVED MOTIVATIONS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Why do you think children and young people under 18 choose to engage in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits? (multiple choice question)

- They want to have fashionable clothes, gadgets, etc. (47%)
- They are forced into it by difficult life circumstances (34%)
- They want to impress their peers (23%)
- Curiosity, seeking adventure (20%)
- They were forced by someone else (10%)
- Other (8%)
- They want to take pleasure in sex (4%)
- It's hard to say (14%)

N=988
The risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits is the same among children and young people in all environments/groups.

In some groups of children and young people there is a higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits.

I don't know / It's hard to say
In your opinion, which groups of children and young people are at higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits? (multiple choice question)

- Children from pathological or problem families (e.g., substance abuse, violence) - 57%
- Children from poor families - 49%
- Children from families where parents have no time for their kids - 29%
- Children from families where parents don't talk to children about sex - 10%
- Individuals who were sexually abused in childhood - 5%
- Other - 4%
- I don't know / It's hard to say - 7%

N=485; the question was only asked to the respondents who agreed with the statement that there were groups at higher risk.
Support for Penalizing Various Behaviours

Do you think the following behaviours should be punishable?

- Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the CLIENT: 94%
- Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the CHILD: 89%
- Provision of sexual services by persons of 15 to 16 in exchange for payment or other benefits: 88%

N=988
Detailed results by country:

UKRAINE
In Ukraine the most negatively evaluated form of commercial sexual activity was aspirational prostitution. 84% of respondents regarded this behaviour as wrong or very wrong.

Survival sex was perceived as the least reprehensible. Still, the majority (72%) of respondents considered such behaviour to be wrong or very wrong.

Sponsoring and aspirational prostitution were seen as the most prevalent or real problem among the four forms of commercial sexual exploitation. 60% of respondents believed many people in Ukraine engaged in such behaviour.

60% of the sample thought there were groups of children and young people who were at higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits. According to most respondents, those are children from pathological families, from families where parents have no time for their children, and from poor families.
**ASPIRATIONAL PROSTITUTION**

*Description:* A boy or girl of 16 or 17 has sex with adult partners in exchange for various gifts (e.g., clothes, cosmetics, electronic gadgets, etc.).

**Moral evaluations**

- 3%: 1 - This behaviour is not wrong at all
- 10%: 2
- 16%: 3
- 68%: 4
- 3%: 5 - This behaviour is very wrong

**Perceived prevalence**

- 2%: Almost non-existent
- 33%: Marginal and true for very few people
- 60%: Real problem, true for many people
- 5%: I don't know / It's hard to say

N=1039
**Description:** A boy or girl of 16 or 17 has sex with one adult partner or sponsor in exchange for **regular financial support**.

**Moral evaluations**
- 6%: 1 - This behaviour is not wrong at all
- 3%: 2
- 14%: 3
- 22%: 4
- 55%: 5 - This behaviour is very wrong

**Perceived prevalence**
- 2%: Almost non-existent
- 35%: Marginal and true for very few people
- 60%: Real problem, true for many people
- 4%: I don't know / It's hard to say

N=1039
**Description:** A boy or girl of 16 or 17, living in a poor family, has sex in exchange for means of subsistence, basic needs, education, etc.

**Moral evaluations**

- 8%: 1 - This behaviour is not wrong at all
- 17%: 2
- 23%: 3
- 49%: 4
- 3%: 5 - This behaviour is very wrong

**Perceived prevalence**

- 3%: Almost non-existent
- 37%: Marginal and true for very few people
- 55%: Real problem, true for many people
- 6%: I don't know / It's hard to say

N=1039
**COMMERCIAL CYBERSEX**

*Description:* A boy or girl of 16 or 17 shares his/her *naked photos online* in exchange for payment or other benefits.

- **Moral evaluations**
  - 3%: 1 - This behaviour is not wrong at all
  - 11%: 2
  - 16%: 3
  - 66%: 4 - This behaviour is very wrong

- **Perceived prevalence**
  - 6%: Almost non-existent
  - 42%: Marginal and true for very few people
  - 45%: Real problem, true for many people
  - 8%: I don’t know / It’s hard to say

N=1039
Why do you think children and young people under 18 choose to engage in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits? (multiple choice question)

- They want to have fashionable clothes, gadgets, etc.: 67%
- They are forced into it by difficult life circumstances: 52%
- They want to impress their peers: 45%
- Curiosity, seeking adventure: 38%
- They were forced by someone else: 24%
- They want to take pleasure in sex: 12%
- Other: 8%
- It's hard to say: 4%

N=1039
The risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits is the same among children and young people in all environments/groups.

In some groups of children and young people there is a higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits.

I don't know / It's hard to say

Which of the following statements do you agree with more?
In your opinion, which groups of children and young people are at higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits? (multiple choice question)

- Children from pathological or problem families (e.g., substance abuse, violence) 84%
- Children from families where parents have no time for their kids 67%
- Children from poor families 64%
- Individuals who were sexually abused in childhood 29%
- Children from families where parents don't talk to children about sex 22%
- Other 3%
- I don't know / It's hard to say 2%

N=1039; NOTE: In Ukraine all respondents were asked this question.
Do you think the following behaviours should be punishable?

- Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the CLIENT: 89%
- Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the CHILD: 70%
- Provision of sexual services by persons of 15 to 16 in exchange for payment or other benefits: 70%

N=1039
Inter-country comparison of results
ASPIRATIONAL PROSTITUTION: NEGATIVE MORAL EVALUATION

- Moldova (N=1015): 4% very wrong, 88% very wrong
- Bulgaria (N=611): 10% very wrong, 81% very wrong
- Lithuania (N=1000): 11% very wrong, 80% very wrong
- Poland (N=988): 9% very wrong, 82% very wrong
- Latvia (N=1007): 14% very wrong, 72% very wrong
- Ukraine (N=1039): 16% very wrong, 68% very wrong

4 5 - This behaviour is very wrong
ASPIRATIONAL PROSTITUTION

AS A REAL PROBLEM IN THE COUNTRY

- Bulgaria (N=611) 71%
- Moldova (N=1015) 61%
- Ukraine (N=1039) 60%
- Latvia (N=1007) 57%
- Poland (N=988) 56%
- Lithuania (N=1000) 37%
COMMERCIAL CYBERSEX: NEGATIVE MORAL EVALUATION

Ukraine (N=1039)
- 16% (4)
- 66% (5 - This behaviour is very wrong)

Latvia (N=1007)
- 15% (4)
- 73% (5 - This behaviour is very wrong)

Poland (N=988)
- 8% (4)
- 81% (5 - This behaviour is very wrong)

Lithuania (N=1000)
- 13% (4)
- 79% (5 - This behaviour is very wrong)

Moldova (N=1015)
- 3% (4)
- 90% (5 - This behaviour is very wrong)

Bulgaria (N=611)
- 10% (4)
- 84% (5 - This behaviour is very wrong)
COMMERCIAL CYBERSEX
AS A REAL PROBLEM IN THE COUNTRY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Positive Rating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova (N=1015)</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland (N=988)</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania (N=1000)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria (N=611)</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia (N=1007)</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine (N=1039)</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SPONSORING: NEGATIVE MORAL EVALUATION

4 5 - This behaviour is very wrong
SPONSORING AS A REAL PROBLEM IN THE COUNTRY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=1000 to N=611)
SURVIVAL SEX: NEGATIVE MORAL EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>(N)</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 -This behaviour is very wrong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>1015</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>988</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>1007</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>1039</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SURVIVAL SEX
AS A REAL PROBLEM IN THE COUNTRY

- Bulgaria (N=611): 64%
- Moldova (N=1015): 63%
- Ukraine (N=1039): 55%
- Latvia (N=1007): 54%
- Poland (N=988): 51%
- Lithuania (N=1000): 31%
## Perceived Motivations of Children and Young People

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BULGARIA</td>
<td>They are forced into it by difficult life circumstances (61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of attention / poor communication with parents (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LITHUANIA</td>
<td>They want to have fashionable clothes, gadgets, etc. (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They are forced into it by difficult life circumstances (61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LATVIA</td>
<td>They want to have fashionable clothes, gadgets, etc. (58%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They want to impress their peers (55%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOLDOVA</td>
<td>They are forced into it by difficult life circumstances (61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They want to have fashionable clothes, gadgets, etc. (52%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLAND</td>
<td>They want to have fashionable clothes, gadgets, etc. (47%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They are forced into it by difficult life circumstances (34%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UKRAINE</td>
<td>They want to have fashionable clothes, gadgets, etc. (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They are forced into it by difficult life circumstances (52%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In some groups of children and young people there is a higher risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits.

- **Bulgaria** (N=611): 71%
- **Ukraine** (N=1039): 65%
- **Lithuania** (N=1000): 60%
- **Latvia** (N=1007): 60%
- **Moldova** (N=1015): 53%
- **Poland** (N=988): 49%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Risk Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BULGARIA</td>
<td>Children and young people from pathological or problem families (e.g., substance abuse, violence) (73%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children and young people from poor families (64%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LITHUANIA</td>
<td>Children and young people from pathological or problem families (e.g., substance abuse, violence) (89%)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Children and young people from poor families (64%)</td>
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<td>LATVIA</td>
<td>Children and young people from pathological or problem families (e.g., substance abuse, violence) (85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children and young people from families where parents have no time for their kids (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOLDOVA</td>
<td>Children and young people from pathological or problem families (e.g., substance abuse, violence) (76%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>POLAND</td>
<td>Children and young people from pathological or problem families (e.g., substance abuse, violence) (57%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children and young people from poor families (49%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UKRAINE</td>
<td>Children and young people from pathological or problem families (e.g., substance abuse, violence) (84%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children and young people from families where parents have no time for their kids (67%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Support for penalizing various behaviours: using services (initiated by the client)

Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the client

- Bulgaria (N=611): 97%
- Poland (N=988): 94%
- Ukraine (N=1039): 89%
- Lithuania (N=1000): 87%
- Latvia (N=1007): 87%
- Moldova (N=1015): 80%
Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the client

- Bulgaria (N=611) 89%
- Poland (N=988) 89%
- Moldova (N=1015) 73%
- Latvia (N=1007) 71%
- Ukraine (N=1039) 70%
- Lithuania (N=1000) 65%
Support for Penalizing Various Behaviours: Provision of Services

Provision of sexual services by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits

- Poland (N=988): 88%
- Moldova (N=1015): 78%
- Bulgaria (N=611): 74%
- Ukraine (N=1039): 70%
- Lithuania (N=1000): 66%
- Latvia (N=1007): 57%
• **BULGARIA:** Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits is not an offence according to the Criminal Code of Bulgaria regardless of whether such contact has been initiated by the client or by the child. However, it may be prosecuted in certain cases, according to an interpretative decision of the Supreme Court. Regarding the specific situation of children, in Bulgaria is applied the so called Act for Combating antisocial behaviours of children minors (8-14) and juveniles (14-18). This act, adopted in the ‘50s, establishes a system which is parallel to the criminal justice system and correctional measures are adopted in case of antisocial behaviors of children. According to the last available data of the National Statistics Institute, in 2014 “prostitution” is the 4th more often prosecuted antisocial behavior.

• **LITHUANIA:** According to Criminal Code of the Republic of Lithuania using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other in the absence of characteristics of a rape, sexual assault or sexual abuse, shall be punished by community service or by a fine or by restriction of liberty or by arrest or by imprisonment for a term of up to five years regardless if the contact is initiated by client or a child. According to the Code of Administrative Violations an adult person and a minor who is older than 16 providing sexual service shall be punished by a fine of eighty six to one hundred and forty four euros. A person who has provided sexual services shall not be held liable under the Code of Administrative Violations if the person was involved in prostitution being dependent on his financially, subordinate in office or otherwise or was involved in prostitution by using physical or mental coercion or by deceit, or in any manner was involved in prostitution being a minor or (and) suffered from trafficking in human beings and is recognized as a victim in criminal proceedings.
**LEGAL CONTEXT IN PROJECT COUNTRIES**

- **LATVIA**: Using sexual services provided by persons under 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits is punishable with imprisonment regardless of whether such contact has been initiated by the client or by the child.

- **MOLDOVA**: Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits if the contact is initiated by the child is not punishable.

  Using Sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the client shall be punishable with imprisonment from 3 to 7 years.

  Sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits are not punishable.

- **POLAND**: Using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment or other benefits is punishable with imprisonment regardless of whether such contact has been initiated by the client or by the child.

- **UKRAINE**: According to the Criminal Code of Ukraine there is criminal responsibility for “sexual intercourse with a person under the age of puberty” (up to 8 years of imprisonment) and for “defilement of minors” (up to 8 years of imprisonment) regardless of whether such contact has been initiated by the client or by the child.
IV. SUMMARY
ATTITUDES TOWARDS VARIOUS FORMS OF COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

MORAL EVALUATIONS AND PERCEIVED PREVALENCE

All the examined forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children and young people received strong negative evaluations in the six CEE countries participating in the project. The Moldovan respondents were the harshest in their negative evaluations of all forms of commercial sexual exploitation (from 91% to 93%), while in Ukraine the percentages of negative ratings were the lowest (from 72% to 84%). The most negatively judged behaviours were aspirational prostitution, commercial cybersex, and sponsoring. The respondents were relatively more lenient, though still strongly negative, in their evaluations of survival sex.

This tendency can be explained by a difference in perceived motivations of children and young people who engage in these forms of commercial sexual activity. While the first three behaviours are seen as guided by motivations related to the consumptionist lifestyle, survival sex is largely a means of meeting basic needs.
At the same time, in all the project countries except for Lithuania the majority of respondents perceive these behaviours as a real problem affecting many people in their societies. This is especially true for aspirational prostitution and less so for survival sex.

Bulgaria stands out against the remaining countries with the highest perceived prevalence of all forms of commercial exploitation (from 64% to 71%), whereas in Lithuania the percentages of the „real problem” responses were significantly lower than in other countries (between 24% and 37%).
PERCEIVED MOTIVATIONS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

PERCEIVED MOTIVATIONS

The project countries do not vary significantly in terms of perceived motivations of children and young people who engage in commercial sexual activity. The most frequently indicated motivations include: a desire to have fashionable clothes, cosmetics, and gadgets, which fits into the above mentioned consumptionist lifestyle, and difficult life circumstances that force children into such behaviours.
In all six countries the dominant opinion is that there are groups of children and young people in which the risk of engaging in sexual activity in exchange for payment or other benefits is higher than in other groups.

The most frequently mentioned risk groups, in all project countries, are: children and young people from pathological and problem families (e.g., substance abuse, violence), children and young people from poor families, and children and young people from families where parents have no time for their kids.
In all six CEE countries the vast majority of respondents expressed their support for making different forms of commercial sexual activity involving children punishable, with punishments including: imprisonment, fine, community service, and court supervision.

Support for making such behaviours punishable was the strongest with respect to using sexual services provided by persons of 15 to 18 in exchange for payment of other benefits, when such contact is initiated by the client. The percentage of respondents supporting the opinion that this behaviour should be penalized was the highest in Bulgaria (97%) and the lowest in Moldova (80%).
Support for making commercial sexual exploitation punishable was relatively lower, though still very strong, with respect to using such sexual services when the contact is initiated by the child. The highest percentage of supporters was found (again) in Bulgaria (89%) and in Poland (89%), while in Lithuania the percentage was significantly lower, that is 65%.

The provision of commercial sexual services by children should be punishable according to 88% of the Polish respondents, while in Lithuania this view was supported by 57% of the sample.
I. PRZEDMIOT I KONTEKST BADANIA

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